

# A BEST-PRACTICE MODEL FOR TERM PLANNING

Úna Bhreathnach, B.A., M.A.  
Fiontar, Dublin City University

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Supervisors: Dr Caoilfhionn Nic Pháidín, Fiontar, DCU  
Dr Rute Costa, Universidade Nova de Lisboa

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## 1. Introduction

This document summarises the findings of research on the Irish term planning situation carried out in January and February 2010. The aim of the interviews was to find out about how Irish term planning worked in general and in particular areas, such as research and training; the aim was also to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the particular approaches taken. Extracts from the interviews (and from other, written, sources) have been used to illustrate the answers to the questions in this document. For a list of the interviewees and their roles, see page 192.

### 1.1. Introductory notes on the Irish term planning situation

The statutory entity primarily responsible for term planning for Irish is Foras na Gaeilge. The British-Irish Agreement Act (1999) transferred responsibility for developing Irish-language terminology and dictionaries to this newly-constituted language body. Foras na Gaeilge appoints the national committee for term planning, An Coiste Téarmaíochta, the Terminology Committee. This is a voluntary committee, meeting once a month, with a permanent secretary who coordinates its work. There have, over the past ten years, been occasional contract or part-time staff, often in the form of students on work experience. Two assistant terminologists were recruited in 2006 on three-year contracts. The Terminology Committee functions as a part of Foras na Gaeilge.

Foras na Gaeilge was established as a North-South Implementation Body under the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999. The following responsibilities were transferred from other Departments and State bodies to Foras na Gaeilge: all the functions of Bord na Gaeilge (the Language Board), the funding of voluntary Irish-language organisations, the publishing work of An Gúm, and the development of terminology and lexicography. The sponsoring Government department is the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs<sup>1</sup>.

Since 2004, Foras na Gaeilge has supported research contracts with Fiontar, the Irish-medium unit within Dublin City University, to carry out terminology work on its behalf. This work has included the creation, development and management of the National Terminology Database, [www.focal.ie](http://www.focal.ie) (Focal). Tasks include routine editorial work, technical development and hosting, and the development of new collections. Editorial development, such as doctoral research on domain structure, and the updating of a collection of names of public bodies, is also carried out by Fiontar in collaboration with the Terminology Committee. Fiontar is also researching a

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<sup>1</sup> The title of this Department was changed to the *Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs* in June 2010 but its functions in relation to the language remain unchanged.

new dictionary of sports terms for publication on Focal. Technical development includes tasks such as publication on CD-ROM, and translation tools. Fiontar collaborates with the secretary of the Terminology Committee, and a Fiontar terminologist is a member of the Terminology Committee. Other terminology projects in Fiontar, which are funded directly by the sponsoring department and not by Foras na Gaeilge, include the digitisation and extraction of terms from secondary legislation (mainly statutory instruments), and the development of terms for the IATE database ([iate.europa.eu](http://iate.europa.eu)), in cooperation with and validated by the EU institutions and the Terminology Committee.

Fiontar has a team of thirteen working on digital humanities language projects, including a project manager, terminologist, technical manager, editorial manager, and a team of about nine editorial assistants. As well as terminology, this team is involved in other language- and technology-based projects, such as the development of the national placenames database and of the national database of Irish-language biographies.

There are other organisations which also have a role in terminology. Chief among these is the Translation Section (Rannóg an Aistriúcháin) of the Houses of the Oireachtas (Irish parliament), responsible for translation of primary legislation. There is also an Irish Legal Terms Advisory Committee (established by act of the Oireachtas in 1945), which is currently engaged in the verification of the translation of the Forms contained in Rules of Court (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform 2009). Both the Rannóg and the Committee are restricted to specific areas.

The relationship between these organisations is shown in the table on page 195.

## **1.2. Language usage**

The use of the language, specifically as it relates to demand for terminology, is briefly considered here.

Irish is unusual among lesser-used languages in that many of its daily users are not native speakers. Since the foundation of the State in 1922, generations of Irish people have learned Irish (mainly through the education system) and, according to the 2006 Census, there are 485,000 daily speakers in the State, including schoolchildren. Of these only 36,500 live in the Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking areas). Some thousands of daily speakers use Irish in a variety of high-level domains, principally education, media, public administration and law. Irish, however, has never been restored to any extent for such important activities as industry, trade and medicine.

The number of native speakers continued to decline all through the twentieth century, while the Gaeltacht, despite developments in industry, modern media and tourism, remained a predominantly rural economy, with industrial development achieved at a high linguistic price. Although Irish is in a strong position from a status and an official point of view, the natural everyday use of the language is limited, as is the language community itself.

Dáiríre is deacair a rá ag an bpointe seo go bhfuil pobal Ghaeilge *per se* amuigh ansin a aithníonn iad féin mar phobal Gaeilge. Tá na mionphobail Ghaeltachta atá fágtha, tá siad an-bheag agus tá líon mór Béarlóirí á lonnú ina measc etc, tá na pobail nó an pobal Gaeilge lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht an-scáinte ar fad agus ní léir dom go n-aithníonn siad iad féin mar phobal fiú amháin, rud a dhéanaidís fadó. Bhíodh comharthaí sóirt an phobail acu... Ach braithim go mb'fhéidir go bhfuil an féinaitheantas sin imithe.<sup>2</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

There have been no reliable studies of term use in Irish by native speakers in recent years. In 1983 Peadar Mac an Iomaire published a study of the effects of industrialisation on the Irish of the Connemara Gaeltacht. He concluded that had timely provision been made, workers would have accepted Irish terms (Mac an Iomaire 1983, 18). Ó Dónaill, author of the most recent Irish-English dictionary (1978) writing in 1951, argued that the ability of Gaeltacht people to create their own terms had declined dramatically in the space of a few generations (Ó Domhnaill 1951, 17). This statement seems to be corroborated by Ó Siadhail's finding that, in Inis Meáin, far more traditional or historical terms were to be found in the construction domain than in that of clothing, which is much more changeable (Ó Siadhail 1978, x).

There is, therefore, little spontaneous term creation in Gaeltacht areas. As a result of this situation, it is felt that there is a strong need for *in vitro* term creation and dissemination.

Dá mba rud é go raibh an teanga sách láidir agus í á labhairt go forleathan ar fud na tíre ar ndóigh ní bheadh aon ghá le coiste téarmaíochta. Bheadh gá le daoine a dhéanfadh cúram de na liostaí téarmaí, de na cnuasaigh, faoi mar a bhíonn i dteangacha eile, ach ní bhíonn gá le coiste téarmaíochta i dteangacha móra, cé go mbíonn coistí de chineál éigin ann. Ach i dteangacha beaga nuair nach bhfuil an pobal féin, go háirithe pobal na Gaeltachta, nuair nach bhfuil siad ag smaoineamh gurbh fhiú dóibh féin a bheith ag cumadh rudaí, b'fhéarr leo an focal Béarla a úsáid, tá fadhb ansin... Ach mar a deir mé go dtí go mbeidh an pobal sách muiníneach agus mórtasach

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<sup>2</sup> 'Really it would be hard to say that there's an Irish language community out there who recognise themselves as an Irish language community. The small Gaeltacht communities are left, they're very small and a lot of English-speakers are taking up residence among them, the Irish communities or community outside the Gaeltacht are very very scattered and I don't think they recognise themselves as a community even, which they used to. There were the trappings of a community... But I feel that maybe that self-awareness is gone.'

agus tógtha faoi chúrsaí teanga, is dóigh liom go bhfuil gá le coiste de chineál éigin.<sup>3</sup>  
(Ní Ghallchobhair 2007<sup>4</sup>)

As well as term creation, there is a recognised problem with term acceptance in Gaeltacht areas; this is discussed further in the section beginning on page 108. On the other hand, the Irish of non-Gaeltacht speakers has always been perceived as open to new terms. In 1951 Ó Dónaill saw it as changing ‘faster than American slang’ (Ó Domhnaill 1951, 18), and in 1992 Ní Dheirg noted how rapidly Irish had been adapted to city life. Many Irish speakers are interested in the language and in its development. Just as, during the early revival period, readers sent lists of terms to newspapers and journals, there are now dictionaries published by enthusiasts. Recent examples include *Ó Ghliomáil go Giniúint: Foclóir na Collaíochta (From Foreplay to Conception: A Dictionary of Sex)* by Dáithí Ó Luineacháin (1997) and others published online like a dictionary of bird names (Ó Caomhánaigh 2004), and an encyclopaedia of astronomy (Höglund 2005). The danger was and remains loss of contact with the Irish of the Gaeltacht.

Until recently, the development of Irish language resources and of the lexicon itself was driven largely by the needs of the education system, and to a lesser extent by legal translation. Comprehensive corpus planning was needed from the time of the foundation of the State to provide a standard for grammar, spelling and print, as well as lexicographic and terminological resources. The non-strategic and non-continuous method by which this work was done has been the object of widespread criticism. There was little language strategy, and revival efforts were poorly coordinated. Until the establishment of Bord na Gaeilge (The Irish Language Board, now subsumed into Foras na Gaeilge) in 1975, there was no State body solely responsible for language planning.

In the last decade, this situation has changed in several significant ways. The establishment of Foras na Gaeilge in 1999 has already been mentioned. The Official Languages Act was enacted in 2003 and gradually took effect from 2005. It requires the stationery, signage, advertisements and publications (including policy documents, annual reports, audited

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<sup>3</sup> ‘If the language were strong enough and being spoken widely all over the country of course there would be no need for a terminology committee. There would be a need for people who would oversee term lists and collections, like in other languages, but there’s no need for a terminology committee in big languages, although there are committees of some sort. But in small languages when the community itself, especially the Gaeltacht community, when they aren’t thinking that it would be worthwhile for them to make things up themselves, they’d rather use the English word, there’s a problem there... But as I say until the community is confident and proud enough and enthused enough about language matters, I think there’s a need for some kind of committee.’

<sup>4</sup> Two interviews were carried out with Fidelma Ní Ghallchobhair, in 2007 and 2010. These are referred to throughout as ‘Ní Ghallchobhair 2007’ and ‘Ní Ghallchobhair 2010’.

accounts and financial statements) of some 650 public bodies to be made available in Irish or in English and Irish.

The Irish language was granted official language status in the European Union in 2005 after a public campaign; this status came into effect on January 1, 2007. Legislation approved by *both* the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament is now translated into Irish, and interpreting from Irish is available at European Parliament plenary sessions and at some meetings of the Council of Ministers. This change created a new need for translators and for terminology, and an administrative challenge.

The Government agreed with our European partners a very ambitious date in terms of implementation which was the first of January 2007, and the Irish language... was not ready, there weren't sufficient translators; there weren't and still aren't sufficient lawyer-linguists and there were substantial gaps in terminology... There's a huge amount of work to be done... The problem relates to the reputation of the State and the reputation of the Government and the risk of serious reputational damage if the EU institutions are not able to translate legislation into Irish because they don't have sufficient people or because we can't produce the terminology that everybody is prepared to use. (Ó Briain)

[Comment to this: An impression has been created recently that there is a problem in regard to official terminology and grammar in Irish that is of such magnitude that it represents a risk to the reputation of the State. This is not the case. If there are impediments to translating EU legislation and documentation, they are certainly not associated with terminology and grammar. National legislation is available in both languages since the foundation of the State and, as far as I'm aware, at no time has a legal issue been raised based on unclear terminology or grammar in either language. The same point applies to the translation of EU Treaties. (Uíbh Eachach email, 21.09.10)]

EU status is important for the status of the language and the self-image of language supporters, and there is pressure to develop structures (including terminology resources) to maintain it.

These recent changes have had several results for terminology work. A large percentage of terminology users are now translators, usually of official documents; this has led to significant alteration in the kind of *ad hoc* terminology work being done by the Terminology Committee (particularly an increase in requests for the Irish versions of titles, signs, advertisements and phrases used by public bodies) and has also been an incentive for the funding of initiatives such as Fiontar's production of terms for IATE and research into legal term resources. It also means that a large number of professional language users rely heavily on resources such as Focal. There has, at the same time, been a sharp decline in research into older, traditional terms and language use, such as Ó Siadhail's *Téarmaí Tógála agus Tís as Inis Meáin*



[Construction and Domestic Terms from Inis Meáin] (1978), or Ó Máille's *Liosta Focal as Ros Muc* [Wordlist from Ros Muc] (1974).

Translation is now one of the major language-related industries; the bulk of translation work is commissioned to comply with legislative requirements and much of it is seldom consulted in the Irish version. English versions are much more readily available, and they are often considered more readable and authoritative. This is particularly the case in legislation.

Tá an reachtaíocht á haistriú go Gaeilge sa Dáil ó bunaíodh an Stát. Ach níor tharla aon chonspóid de bharr aistriúcháin a rinneadh nó níor tugadh le tuiscint riamh go raibh na cáipéisí dlí sin á léamh ag éinne<sup>5</sup> (Ó Ruairc, M. 2007, 14).

[comment to this: I have seen the odd suggestion that perhaps the reason there have been no problems with the Irish language text of the Acts is that nobody reads them. If that is the case, then it would appear that there is nobody reading the English language versions either! (Uíbh Eachach email, 21.09.10)]

One of the main uses of Irish-language terminology is in Irish-medium education. There are over 40,000 pupils attending Irish-medium schools in 2010 (Gaelscoileanna.ie). However, post-primary teachers usually, because their training is invariably through English, have no experience of Irish-language terminology in their subject area before entering the classroom. Primary school teachers normally (almost invariably) receive their training through English, even those who will be teaching through Irish. Up-to-date textbooks in Irish are scarce, and therefore English-language textbooks are often used. As a consequence, Irish-language terminology is sometimes perceived as 'difficult' or 'strange'.

Most higher education through Irish is conducted by university Irish departments and largely concerns the language itself and its literature. There are two main exceptions: National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI, Galway) and Fiontar, DCU, Dublin. NUI, Galway has, by law, a particular responsibility for the language and some of its Arts, Science and Commerce modules are offered through Irish. It also has some degree programmes through Irish, including a BA in Communications and a postgraduate diploma in education, as well as the Gaeltacht-based Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge which offers programmes in subjects such as business administration and radio and television broadcasting. Fiontar, established in Dublin City University in 1993, is the first inter-disciplinary school to work through the medium of Irish. The school conducts its teaching and research in a range of disciplines: business, management, communications, information technology and sociolinguistics. This has created

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<sup>5</sup> 'Legislation has been translated to Irish in the Dáil [houses of parliament] since the foundation of the State. But there has never been any controversy as a result of a translation, nor is there any reason to believe that those documents were ever read by anyone.'

demand for term resources – indeed, Fiontar has required a terminologist on its staff since 1993.

A limited number of print and broadcast media use Irish exclusively or occasionally; broadcasting is one of the few booming Irish-medium industries. The establishment of a national Irish language radio station (Raidió na Gaeltachta) in 1972, and, particularly, the Irish-language television station TnaG (later TG4) in 1996 led to greatly increased demand for term resources. It opened up new domains in technology (studio work and broadcasting) and provided a live service through Irish to end-users. It also led to the creation of many small media production companies. From 1996 onwards many people were working in Irish-language broadcasting; their work changed rapidly, moving, for example, from analogue to digital technology. Term use in the media workplace has not been measured, but anecdotal evidence suggests that English terms are used more often. Many journalists are not native speakers, and may not have a detailed knowledge of the structure of the language, much less a training in translation.

### 1.3.Lexicography

There has been very little lexicography work for Irish in recent years. The fact that the *English-Irish Dictionary* (1959) remains the principal English-Irish dictionary has been a cause of complaint for decades. As is often the case with general-language dictionaries, it first started to show its age because of the vocabulary that was missing from it, particularly terminology. The only major dictionary to be published since was an Irish-English dictionary, *Foclóir Gaeilge Béarla* (1978). The dictionary was well received, but, like in the case of the *English-Irish Dictionary*, no new editions were funded or published. A pocket dictionary and a series of childrens' dictionaries were produced.

A project for a new English-Irish dictionary (NEID) was finally announced in 2002. This will have an effect on the normalisation of new terms. Its impact in creating new terminology, however, is likely to be extremely limited as it will contain only c.40,000 headwords ([www.focloir.ie](http://www.focloir.ie)).

This lack of lexicographic renewal has had an adverse effect on the language in general, but particularly on terminology. The non-specialist user, who would probably turn to a general dictionary for all language reference work, is likely either not to find the term needed, or to find an outdated version of it. This could easily lead to the assumption that Irish is not capable of technical or specialised communication, a common assumption about minority languages. (It also causes an over-reliance on terminology resources for general-language needs.) The fact that no monolingual historical dictionary of Irish has been completed also leads, perhaps, to the perception that Irish is a language for translation. (There is a long-term project at the Royal

Irish Academy to produce a historical dictionary of Modern Irish for the period 1600-2000. It is the sequel to the Academy's Dictionary of the Irish Language published between 1913 and 1976, which was made available online in 2007: [www.dil.ie](http://www.dil.ie)).

An English dictionary to most people means a monolingual one... However, an Irish dictionary invariably means a bilingual dictionary, usually English-Irish as translation is predominantly into, rather than out of, Irish. This perception arises because we have never had an historical dictionary of modern Irish, and we are now unlikely to see one. (Nic Pháidín 2008, 96)

## 2. Questions

### 2.1. Policy and planning: Irish networks

#### **Which entities share responsibility for standardisation, evaluation and modernisation of terminology in Irish?**

Although most terminology work is supported by Foras na Gaeilge through the Terminology Committee, and by Foras na Gaeilge and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs through contracts with Fiontar, DCU, there are other organisations which also have a responsibility for terminology. Chief among these is Rannóg an Aistriúcháin (the Translation Division) of the Houses of the Oireachtas. There is also an Irish Legal Terms Advisory Committee (established by act of the Oireachtas in 1945).

The Terminology Committee which is part of Foras na Gaeilge has responsibility in terms of approving terms that are submitted both from the general public and coming from various projects like for example the IATE project that Fiontar are involved in. Rannóg an Aistriúcháin certainly have a role also, they're in the legal sphere, they have generated a lot of material since the establishment of the State and done a lot of work there, so we're very much indebted to them for that. And there's also the advisory committee on legal terms established by an act in 1945 and there's a particular relationship they have with the Department of Justice and they have a particular responsibility in terms of legal terminology. (Ó Ruairc)

In one way this is quite clear-cut, it's the Terminology Committee, under Foras na Gaeilge. Foras na Gaeilge is statutorily the body with responsibility for developing lexicography and terminology in Irish... But there is another strand to this. The houses of the Irish parliament have their own translation section who have been always responsible for the use of the Irish language in statutory contexts and for the development and periodic revision of the official standard for Irish, that's the orthography or the *Caighdeán Oifigiúil* as it's known. Obviously the demarcation in terminology then is somewhat blurred because terminology is used in legislation. Rannóg an Aistriúcháin is represented on the Terminology Committee and really that should be the forum where these things are thrashed out and decided, but obviously there is a different history, different agendas in both organisations. If you move up a step then the government minister and the government department with responsibility for Irish language affairs is the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and that is also the sponsoring department of Foras na Gaeilge. So ultimately the responsibility for coordinating these things and resolving any blurred lines or any crossover is... the responsibility of that department and of the minister. (Nic Pháidín)

Committee-based terminology work started as early as 1927; the Terminology Committee was established in 1968 as a part of the Department of Education, and was transferred to Foras na Gaeilge in 1999.

A terminological committee was set up by the Department of Education in 1927. Interrupted by World War II, it functioned again on an *ad hoc* basis until 1968... The Terminology Committee was then established by the government on a permanent basis. (Nic Phóidín 2008, 104)

The work of the Terminology Committee has included terminology related to school subjects, and more general work in response to enquiries from the public. Some of its work has involved dealing with LGP requests.

The Terminology Committee itself, when funded by the Department of Education, traditionally worked on terminology related to school syllabi and dealt with requests from publishers of textbooks and others working in the educational sector. With the onset of the information revolution, however, more broadbased enquiries began to flow in from the general public. The nature of the enquiries ranged from terminology proper to more general-language queries, which gave rise to regular debate about whether or not to deal with LGP material. Since many enquiries involved both LSP and LGP material, it was usually simpler and less time-consuming to deal with all the enquiries rather than to sift them for LSP material, or to explain the distinction to those making the enquiries. Although the Terminology Committee, on occasions, considered refusing to answer LGP requests [for example, C/T2 VI 6 July 1998], it was generally felt that dealing with them was, in fact, supporting the language and the language community, many of whom as stated above, are not native speakers of Irish. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The Terminology Committee and Fiontar work together in the creation and upkeep of term resources. Fiontar has, for example, been contracted to create a new dictionary of sport. Fiontar is responsible for the technical development and hosting of Focal, and also carries out editorial tasks. The Terminology Committee remains the authority for validation of all terminology, however.

Fiontar works with the Terminology Committee in developing term resources for the EU IATE database. Terms sent to Fiontar are researched and as new terms are created, they are submitted to the Terminology Committee for approval. Terms are then returned for input in IATE and are also input in Focal. During 2009, Fiontar developed 16,500 IATE entries in this way. This work is funded by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

Foras na Gaeilge has, according to one interviewee (Ó Briain), responsibility for dissemination of and training in terminology. According to another (Ní Ghallchobhair), the responsibility is for provision of authoritative terminology and its dissemination, and training on terminology matters is an additional service provided on a voluntary basis.

ÚB: Going back to the Terminology Committee, what part of terminology planning are they responsible for, are they responsible for just the creation of terminology or dissemination and the marketing of terminology work...

DÓB: They are primarily responsible for creating terminology, in terms of the Coiste itself, it creates terminology. In terms of Foras na Gaeilge it also has responsibility for dissemination and for provision of training. But it has focused on translators, and training for translators rather than the wider public or rather than trying to embed new terminology in the spoken language.

ÚB: Would that be a policy decision or just the way it happened?

DÓB: No, it's just the way it happened. (Ó Briain)

Yes, our remit basically is to serve the public, serve the language community, and because of the state of the language our approach is necessarily very different than it would be in a language with a very high speaker density. So we're constantly filling gaps or clarifying material that already exists. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Rannóg an Aistriúcháin was established in 1922 by order of Dáil Éireann as the section of the Oireachtas (Irish parliament) responsible for the official translation into Irish (or, rarely, into English) of primary legislation (the Acts of the Oireachtas), the order paper (the order of business for the day), standing orders for business, the text of proposed amendments to the Constitution, and other documents such as annual reports. It also provides an interpreting service in the Dáil, the Seanad (senate) and the Joint Committee for Irish, though this service is rarely needed. It is specifically responsible for official legal terms in Irish.

There is a divergence between the language used by the Rannóg and that used by other agencies, because of the Rannóg's obligation to ensure continuity in the terms used in legislation and because of its tradition of using native roots; as one Rannóg translator says:

Braithim féin go bhfuil traidisiún sa Rannóg ag síneadh siar go dtí an tréimhse ar bunaíodh í, is dócha, leaganacha a bhunú oiread agus is féidir ar fhréamhacha dúchais. Mar shampla, is "faireachán" a úsáidtear sa Rannóg ar "monitoring", cé gur dócha gur "monatóireacht" an leagan is coitianta in áiteanna eile.<sup>6</sup> (Breathnach 2007, 9).

The Rannóg's role is not to provide a service to the public: 'is é an chéad rud atá le rá faoi Rannóg an Aistriúcháin ná nach seirbhís don phobal atá ann' (Ó Casaide 1997, 45). It specialises in a very limited area of legal terminology, and is obliged to ensure consistency with existing documents.

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<sup>6</sup> 'I myself feel that there is a tradition in the Rannóg stretching back, probably, to the period when it was established, of basing terms as much as possible on native roots. For example, "faireachán" is used in the Rannóg for "monitoring", although it is likely that "monatóireacht" is the most common version in other places.'

It is felt that Rannóg an Aistriúcháin does not have responsibility to the public for terminology work.

Déarfainn gurb é an Coiste Téarmaíochta, is ar an Choiste atá an cúram sin, cé go bhfuil eagraíochtaí eile ann a bhíonn ag ceapadh téarmaíochta agus lánchead acu agus lánúdarás acu é sin a dhéanamh, ach fiú amháin Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, agus déarfainn gurb é sin an foras eile is mó a bhíonn ag ceapadh téarmaí, is lena riachtanais féin a chomhlíonadh a dhéanann siad sin agus ní dóigh liom go maífeadh siad féin [gur] cuid ar bith dá gcúram an téarmaíocht a chur i láthair nó a mhíniú – is ar mhaithe lena gcuid oibre féin a bhíonn siad ag plé leis an téarmaíocht. Fágann sin gurb é dáiríre an Coiste an dream a bhíos freagrach as sin.<sup>7</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

The Legal Terms Committee has a very specific role, to approve terms for use in law or in the courts. Its last publication was in 1958.

VUE: Tá feidhm oifigiúil ag an gcoiste, is coiste reachtúil atá ann ach tá an coiste ann, ní chun pleanáil teanga a dhéanamh ach chun faomhadh oifigiúil a thabhairt do théarmaí agus doiciméid. Mar shampla bhí cruinnithe ann le déanaí agus cuireadh rialacha na Cúirte Cuarda, na foirmeacha a bhain leis na rialacha sin faoi bhráid an Choiste agus bhí duine as an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt tar éis iad a aistriú... agus pléadh iad agus deineadh iad a cheadú. Mar gur cáipéisí iad sin a bheadh in úsáid ag na cúirteanna.

ÚB: Nuair atá sé sin ceadaithe ag an gcoiste sin, cén bhrí atá aige sin, ag an gceadú sin?

VUE: Bhuel an bhrí atá aige sin ná gur doiciméad dlíthiúil é, is é sin le rá go bhfuil na foirmeacha, abraimis ó taobh na Cúirte Cuarda dó, gur féidir iad sin a úsáid in sna cúirteanna mar cháipéisí oifigiúla cúirte, seachas go rachadh cléireach na cúirte agus go n-iarrfadh sé ar shaoraistritheoir in áit éigin iad a aistriú agus go n-úsáidfadh seisean nó sise iad agus go rachadh cléireach cúirte eile go dtí duine éigin eile.

ÚB: Mar sin stádas oifigiúil.

VUE: Tá an rud faofa ag an gcoiste agus is doiciméad dlíthiúil é ansin. (Uíbh Eachach)<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 'I'd say it's the Terminology Committee, that responsibility is the Committee's, although there are other organisations creating terminology and they have every right and every authority to do so, but even Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, and I'd say that's the other main term-creation entity, they do that to fulfil their own needs and I don't think they'd claim that presenting or explaining terms is any part of their work. They're dealing with terminology for the purposes of their own work. That leaves the Committee as the group responsible for that.'

<sup>8</sup> 'VUE: The committee has an official role, it's a statutory committee but it exists, not to carry out language planning but to give official approval to terms and documents. For example we had meetings recently and the forms to do with the Circuit Court Rules were submitted to the committee, and someone from the Department of Justice had translated them... and they were discussed and approved. Because they are documents that would be in use by the courts.'

ÚB: When it's approved by that committee, what meaning does that approval have?

VUE: Well that means that it's a legal document, that is the forms, say for the circuit court, can be used in court as official court documents, rather than having the court clerk go to some freelance translator to get them translated and that the next court clerk would go to someone else.

ÚB: So official status.

VUE: The thing is approved by the committee and it's then a legal document.'

There is a certain amount of disagreement about terminology responsibility in the legal sphere, but there are plans to resolve that.

The Department's perspective is that there is one entity with responsibility, which is Foras na Gaeilge, operating through the Coiste Téarmaíochta. And that's the end of the answer, in a sense. But there is a number of other entities who have responsibility or who have a role in terms of producing legal documents in Irish and therefore have a direct interest in terminology, and they include the new unit<sup>9</sup> which is being established here, they include the publication arm of Foras na Gaeilge, an Gúm, they include, obviously, Rannóg an Aistriúcháin with responsibility for translating the legislation, and they would also include universities and any other body that is responsible for producing new work, new textbooks, new publications in Irish. Particularly people working in specialist areas and that would include Fiontar for example and other groups like that. But in terms of statutory responsibility it's quite clear that it's Foras na Gaeilge, at a level of theory. In practice there are unresolved issues particularly in relation to Rannóg an Aistriúcháin which we're trying to bring about a resolution of, but it's quite difficult and quite slow work. (Ó Briain)

ÚB: There's a question about responsibility for terminology in legislation.

DÓB: Well, there is an issue as distinct from a question. There isn't a question. The legislation says that Foras na Gaeilge is responsible for terminology. There is a separate body which is unaccountable to the government which translates legislation and which regards itself as having responsibility for keeping the standards of the language and for the official standard and so on. The Government has decided that that is not the case, and in the case of the official standard they have decided that this department should take the lead role in reviewing the official standard and that it be led by the new unit. (Ó Briain)

In terms of terminological planning, as far as the department is concerned, the Coiste Téarmaíochta is the authority on terminology, definitely. And they would have to have a key role in any move forward. (Ó Ruairc)

There is a question about ownership of legal terminology work. Some interviewees felt that this, like all terminology work, is the remit of the Terminology Committee; the Rannóg an Aistriúcháin interviewee felt that responsibility lies with that Section.

Tá an Coiste Téarmaíochta ag plé le réimsí áirithe téarmaíochta agus táimidne ag plé go praiticiúil le réimse an dlí agus na hoifigiúlachta, mar a déarfá, ach níl sé sin greanta i gcloch... Dá gcuirfeadh duine glaoch orainne chun téarma eolaíochtúil a lorg nó ainm ar lus nó ar bhláth, d'fhéachfaimis ar na hAchtanna, agus ar na cáipéisí eile atá againn

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<sup>9</sup> A unit currently (March 2010) being established within the Department of Community Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs to translate Statutory Instruments.



agus thabharfaimis dóibh é. Mura mbeadh sé againn, déarfaimis leo gaoch ar an gCoiste Téarmaíochta, sin iad na saineolaithe, agus tabharfaidh siad siúd an téarma daoibh. Ba mhaith liom a cheapadh go mbeadh an cur chuige sin ag an gCoiste Téarmaíochta. Sé sin go ndéarfaidís, bhuel, más teideal comhlachta atá uaibh nó téarma a bhaineann le cúrsaí leasa shóisialaigh, b'fhéarr dáiríre go rachadh sibh go dtí Rannóg an Aistriúcháin – agus nach ndéanfadh an Coiste Téarmaíochta glacadh le gach aon iarratas mar iarratas atá cuí dóibh féin... Níl mé ag rá nach bhfuil an dearcadh sin ag an gCoiste Téarmaíochta... Ach mura mbeadh an dearcadh sin ag daoine, is ag cothú fadhbanna a bheidís, mar bheidís ag, chun é a chur go garbh, bheidís ag cur a ladair isteach i réimse eile agus sé an toradh a bheadh air sin ná go mbeadh téarma amháin tugtha acusan do dhuine agus ansin go comhthreomhar leis sin go mbeimisne ag ceapadh an téarma mar chuid den obair againne nó b'fhéidir go mbeadh an téarma ceaptha agus in úsáid againn cheana féin.<sup>10</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Is ar Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, dar liom atá an fhreagracht as doiciméid dhlíthiúla agus oifigiúla a bhaineann le dlí a sholáthar, tiontaithe oifigiúla a sholáthar dóibh sin... Mar chuid den ról sin, táimid mar chaomhnóirí na téarmaíochta dlíthiúla agus úsáidimidne an téarmaíocht sin, is sinn a cheap an téarmaíocht, is sinn a úsáideann an téarmaíocht sin in aghaidh an lae, agus go praiticiúil seachas go teoriciúil, agus nílimid ag leagan síos téarmaí dlíthiúla le haghaidh daoine eile chun a rá féach, seo an rud ba chóir a bheith ann; táimidne ag leagan síos téarmaí dlíthiúla agus téarmaí oifigiúla a bheidh le húsáid againn féin inár gcuid cáipéisí agus inár gcuid oibre laethiúla agus chomh maith leis sin mar a deirim, táimid ag iarraidh iad sin a chur ar fáil do dhaoine eile, dá mbeadh gá acu leo.<sup>11</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

New terminology is rarely required for the legal field, however, because of the importance of following precedent. Rannóg an Aistriúcháin specialises in a very limited area of legal

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<sup>10</sup> 'The Terminology Committee is dealing with particular areas of terminology and we're dealing with the legal and official domain in a practical way, but that's not set in stone... If someone called us to get a scientific term or the name of a plant or flower, we'd look at the acts and at the documents we have, and we'd give it to them. If we didn't have it, we'd say to them, call the Terminology Committee, they're the specialists and they'll give you the term. I'd like to think that the Terminology Committee would have that approach. That they'd say, well, if you need a company title or a term that's to do with social welfare matters, you really should go to Rannóg an Aistriúcháin. And that the Terminology Committee wouldn't accept every request as a request that's suitable for themselves. .. I'm not saying that the Terminology Committee doesn't have that approach... But if people didn't have that approach, they'd be creating problems, because to put it bluntly they'd be putting their oar into another domain and the result would be that they'd have given one term to a person and that at the same time we'd be creating the term as part of our work or maybe the term would already be in use here.'

<sup>11</sup> 'The responsibility for supplying official conversions of legal and official documents rests with Rannóg an Aistriúcháin in my opinion... As part of that role we are the custodians of legal terminology and we use that terminology, we created the terminology ourselves, we use the terminology ourselves on a daily basis, practically rather than theoretically, and we're not laying down legal terminology for other people to say what should be used; we're setting down legal terms and official terms which we'll use ourselves in our documents and in our daily work and as well as that, as I say, we're trying to make them available to other people, in case they need them.'

terminology, and feels obliged to follow precedent and thus ensure consistency with existing documents.

Maidir leis an Rannóg, tá an chuid is mó de na buntéarmaí a bhíonn á n-úsáid againn ceaptha againn le fada an lá, agus sé an phríomhsprioc a bhíonn againne ó thaobh na téarmaíochta de, agus is rud an-tábhachtach é seo ó thaobh an aistriúcháin dhlíthiúil, a chinntiú go bpléifimis leis na téarmaí atá ceaptha agus in úsáid againn cheana féin, sé sin na fasaigh. Tá na fasaigh an-tábhachtach dúinn anseo, agus is é an gnó atá againn ó thaobh na téarmaíochta de i gcoitinne ná a chinntiú go bhfuilimid ag cloí leis na fasaigh atá leagtha síos againn féin sna hAchtanna agus sna cáipéisí dlíthiúla eile atá curtha ar fáil againn go dtí seo.<sup>12</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Compound terms are created by Rannóg an Aistriúcháin using existing terminology stock, further reducing the number of new terms.

Ó thaobh cheapadh téarmaí, is minic mar shampla sna hAchtanna Leasa Shóisialaigh go gceaptar liúntas nua nó íocaíocht nua nó a leithéid sin agus mar sin dhéanfaimis é sin a aistriú agus an téarma áirithe a shocrú de réir na bhfasach atá againn. Bíonn leagan amach comhordaithe ar theidil sochar agus liúntas agus a leithéid sin, agus cloímid leis sin. Agus, ar ndóigh, beidh na buntéarmaí socraithe. Beidh 'sochar' ar 'benefit' agus beidh 'liúntas' ar 'allowance' agus ní imeofar riamh uathu sin. Ach an chuid eile ansin bheadh ort é sin a chomhdhéanamh, ach bhraithfeá go hiomlán le linn na hoibre sin ar na fasaigh atá againn.<sup>13</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

As well as Foras na Gaeilge and Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs also has a responsibility for terminology work. Its responsibility is for coordination of terminology and general language planning work.

In terms of general language planning, insofar as there is, it's the Department insofar as there has been coordination of terminology issues. If there is any central coordination in relation to terminology it's the Department and this unit here. In terms of a wider central point of coordination in relation to language planning, that, once the twenty year strategy<sup>14</sup> has been adopted, that will be the department as well. (Ó Briain)

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<sup>12</sup> 'For the Rannóg, most of the basic terms we use have been created for a long time, and our main aim from a terminology point of view, and this is very important for legal translation, is to ensure that we use the terms we've already created and used, that is, the precedents. Precedents are very important to us here, and it's our business in terminology in general to ensure that we're keeping to the precedents that we set down ourselves in the Acts and in other legal documents that we've supplied up till now.'

<sup>13</sup> 'For term creation for example in the social welfare acts new allowances or payments are often introduced and so we'd translate that according to the precedents we have, There's a set layout for titles of benefits and allowance and the like and we stick to that. And of course the basic terms are decided. 'Sochar' will always be used for 'benefit' and 'liúntas' will always be used for 'allowance' and we'll never depart from that. But for the rest you'd have to put it together, but you'd depend completely on precedent in your work.'

<sup>14</sup> Rialtas na hÉireann 2010

The term planning situation is confused because it evolved over the years, and not in a planned way. The Terminology Committee grew out of the needs of the Department of Education and Rannóg an Aistriúcháin grew out of the need for parliamentary translation.

Agus sé sin... an obair atá againne anois, d'fhás sí as riachtanas a bhí sa Roinn Oideachais. An obair a dhéanann Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, d'fhás sí as na riachtanais a leagadh orthu i 1922, nuair a dúradh leo 'téigh amach agus aistrigh na hachtanna'.<sup>15</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Although the members of different organisations met regularly, such as at Terminology Committee meetings, personal disagreements in the past sometimes meant that cooperation was not always achieved.

Bhíodh na daoine seo ar fad ag bualadh le chéile ag na coistí téarmaíochta, is é sin príomhaistritheoirí na Rannóige agus eagarthóir nó príomheagarthóir na bhfoclóirí agus na daoine a bhí ag plé le téarmaíocht. Ba ionad teacht le chéile an Coiste Téarmaíochta do na heagrais seo ach, ag an am céanna, bhí a gcuid hataí féin á gcaitheamh ag na daoine éagsúla. Mar sin, ní hionann príomhaistritheoir Rannóg an Aistriúcháin a bheith ag an gcruinniú agus é a bheith i gcomhpháirt le príomheagarthóir an fhoclóra maidir le cúrsaí caighdeáin. Rinneadh comhphlé agus déarfainn go ndearnadh comhaontú ó am go chéile faoi phointí éagsúla ach, de réir mar a fheicim, bhraith sé ar phearsantachtaí. Uaireanta bhídís ag réiteach go maith le chéile agus uaireanta eile bhídís ag rá 'ní hea, baineann sé sin linne, baineann sé sin libhse' agus mar sin de.<sup>16</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

#### **How is coherence and consistency between different groups working in terminology and in general corpus planning (and language planning) achieved?**

Fiontar and the Terminology Committee work closely together in maintaining coherence in their work. Fiontar's terminologist is a member of the Terminology Committee, and all editorial decisions are discussed and agreed between the parties. Research and suggestions for the sports dictionary, for example, are considered by a Terminology Committee subcommittee.

There is no clear division of responsibilities between the Terminology Committee and Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, as discussed in the section beginning on page 12. Rannóg an Aistriúcháin

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<sup>15</sup> 'And that's... the work we have now; it grew out of the Department of Education's need. Rannóg an Aistriúcháin's work grew out of the responsibilities placed on them in 1922, when they were told 'go out and translate the acts'.'

<sup>16</sup> 'All these people were meeting at the terminology committees, that is the heads of translation in the Rannóg and the editors or chief editors of the dictionaries and the people dealing with terminology. The Terminology Committee was a place for these organisations to meet but at the same time the different people were wearing their own hats so the head of translation of Rannóg an Aistriúcháin being at the meeting did not mean that he was in agreement with the chief editor of the dictionary about questions of standard. There was discussion and I'd say there was agreement sometimes about various points but as far as I can see it depended on personalities. Sometimes they got on well and sometimes they'd be saying, 'no, that belongs to us, that belongs to you', and so on.'

specialises in a very limited area of legal terminology, and is obliged to ensure consistency with existing documents. In the case of more general non-legal terminology it generally adheres to the Terminology Committee's recommendations.

Má tá an t-am ann chun dul i dteagmháil leis an gCoiste Téarmaíochta sa Roinn Oideachais déanaimid sin. Ó tharla go mbíonn an oifig s'againne oscailte go déanach san oíche chun freastal ar Thithe an Oireachtais nuair a shuíonn siad déanach ní féidir, uaireanta, teagmháil a dhéanamh leis an gCoiste. Dá bhrí sin tá feidhm ceaptha téarmaíochta ag an Rannóg i gcónaí. Ach, tríd is tríd, úsáidtear na foclóirí go léir atá foilsithe ag an nGúm.<sup>17</sup> (Ó Casaide 1997, 47)

Dá mba rud é gur tháinig, agus tagann, téarma nua eolaíochtúil mar shampla ar aghaidh... mura mbeadh sé againne sna fasaigh d'fhéachaimis ar obair an Choiste Téarmaíochta, ar focal.ie agus ar a leithéidí sin, nó sna sainfhoclóirí atá curtha amach. Dá bhfaighimis ansin é, bheimis breá sásta nó b'fhéidir go n-iarrfaimis ar an gCoiste Téarmaíochta téarma a sholáthar dúinn más téarma eolaíochta é nó a leithéid sin.<sup>18</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Coherence and consistency between the Terminology Committee and Rannóg an Aistriúcháin is, at least in theory, achieved through representation on the Terminology Committee.

We also have a member of Rannóg an Aistriúcháin on our own committee as well as the representative from the new translation section in the Department. So having representatives from these bodies on both these committees is positive and is helpful. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

I'm not directly involved in terminology work. I understand that at least at an aspirational level the Coiste Téarmaíochta develops links and has representatives from a whole range of bodies and that is the mechanism by which coherence should be achieved. It isn't; specifically in relation to legislation where there is the stand-off between essentially Rannóg an Aistriúcháin and everybody else. (Ó Briain)

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<sup>17</sup> 'If there is time to contact the Terminology Committee in the Department of Education we do that. Since our office is open late at night to facilitate the Houses of the Oireachtas when they sit late, it is sometimes impossible to contact the Committee. For that reason the Rannóg always has a term creation function. But, for the most part, all the dictionaries published by An Gúm are used.'

<sup>18</sup> 'If, as sometimes happens, a new scientific term came up for example, if we didn't have it in the precedents we'd look at the Terminology Committee's work, at focal.ie and so on, or in the specialised dictionaries which have been published, if we found it there we'd be satisfied or we might ask the Terminology Committee to supply us with a term if it's a scientific term or the like.'

Tá ionadaíocht againn ar an gCoiste Téarmaíochta, cuirimse ionadaí chuig an gCoiste Téarmaíochta agus tá caidreamh maith againn leis an gCoiste agus seanaithe againn ar na daoine atá i gceist gan dabht.<sup>19</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Cooperation between the Irish Legal Terms Advisory Committee and the Terminology Committee and Rannóg an Aistriúcháin is facilitated by representation on the Terminology Committee and on the Irish Legal Terms Advisory Committee and by discussion between the parties.

Well, legal concepts, we would first approach Rannóg an Aistriúcháin to see if they already have it and if they have a recommendation. In some events where they don't have it, we would contact legal experts... particularly if it's an Irish legal concept then you're not probably going to get a definition in an online resource. So, in that case, we would make telephone or email contact with experts to clarify the meaning. And then we would make a recommendation, either based on whatever Rannóg an Aistriúcháin said or, if they don't have a recommendation, we make one ourselves. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The practical structure at the moment is the advisory committee on legal terms. It's the one forum – well I suppose the Rannóg sit on the Terminology Committee, and have done so for quite some time so there is that forum where there's supposed to be involvement of all the stakeholders but I suppose in terms of my unit being newly created, and it is a new element in the mix and I suppose it's only about four or five months in any way operating so I suppose it'll be two to three years before the dynamic between the various stakeholders becomes very clear. (Ó Ruairc)

We collaborate with Rannóg an Aistriúcháin as much as possible and it may be that we will be able to send some enquiries to this new committee and also that they would be able to send some enquiries to us. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

There is a question, however, about what a legal term is.

Of course there is a core question here: what is a legal term? Essentially I think there are two main types of terminology that arise in the translations of the legislature, you have what I suppose I would call pure legal terms where we're talking about concepts embedded in legislation, but then in the acts obviously there are references to all sorts of general concepts, general language, and as somebody said to me once, if the word 'cow' turns up in an act, does that make it a legal term? Of course it doesn't but, in that event, of course there is overlap... (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

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<sup>19</sup> 'We have representation on the Terminology Committee, I send a representative to the Terminology Committee and we have a good relationship with the Committee and know them all well of course.'

There have been some problems, which affect terminology, in the divide between the 1978 dictionary (Ó Dónaill 1977) and the official grammar and spelling standard (Rannóg an Aistriúcháin 1958), which is at odds with usage and contains gaps. For example, there is a divergence between the official standard and published dictionaries in the use of aspiration, an issue which is problematic for terminology work.

Several minor but significant differences have emerged in practice, particularly in the use of aspiration, or *séimhiú*, and modern dictionaries as far back as Ó Dónaill (1978) are not entirely in line with *An Caighdeán Oifigiúil* [the Official Standard]. This emerging divergence has been extensively discussed by several researchers... Criticism has been coupled with calls for a revision of the written standard to also take account of changes and simplification of forms used in contemporary native speech... Although these concerns impact only marginally on the general public or the education system, this anomaly needs to be strategically addressed as a matter of urgency, because of its obvious implications for all corpus resources produced. (Nic Pháidín 2008, 103)

Until 2009, responsibility for the standard lay with Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, an institution emphatically not aimed at general language development and not associated with dictionary or terminology publication.

The difficulty I suppose coming forward from that to terminology, the difficulties arise over the lack of coordination... commencing really in the late 1970s when a divergence emerged between the official standard as used in the Irish-English dictionary and the official standard as published by Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, and since 1979 that issue has been there. It only affects high-level specialised users of the language. It does not affect the general user or teaching the language. (Nic Pháidín)

It's an administrative, territorial issue basically. That one government body owns or is responsible for the official standard and another government agency is responsible for development of lexicography. And it's unfortunate that the situation is only now beginning to be addressed. And it impacts particularly on the development of terminology. And I suppose it has come to the fore, come to public attention since Irish has become an official working language in the European Union. (Nic Pháidín)

This issue causes frustration and it is also a waste of resources and goodwill.

The other weakness at the moment or threat at the moment is that the conflicting roles of Rannóg an Aistriúcháin and the Coiste Téarmaíochta, vis-à-vis the official standard and how the official standard is used in terms and that kind of thing – it deflects effort from where it should be spent, and that does need to be resolved. (Nic Pháidín)

...It has certainly caused difficulties and I suppose there's a certain sense of incomprehension as to why we have not been able to iron these difficulties out thus

far over what is, even in comparison to other issues in the same sphere, not a huge issue. (Ó Ruairc)

These issues have come to the fore as more complex terminology is developed, such as for the EU.

I think talking about an overlap in coordination between the groups, I think that the issues have come to the surface with the IATE and the EU terminology which may act as some kind of a catalyst and have already done so I think with the setting up of the translation unit for the statutory instruments, but the whole question of the official standard has been sort of moved to the top of the agenda and progress is expected on that this year. So I think there are signs that there is a genuine move towards resolving some of these issues maybe, finally. So I'd be quite optimistic about that. (Nic Pháidín)

It impacts for example on the European level and that's a key concern for this department in terms of the fact that the status of the Irish language is only very recently achieved at that level. And even though... the absolute number of terms on which there is disagreement are relatively speaking quite small yet thus far it has not proved possible to achieve agreement on them... And I suppose it's understandable that different stakeholders have different perceptions of the issues but also there's history and there's histories perceived in this discourse. And I suppose to pay *ómós* or due respect to the work that has been done under very difficult circumstances during the past but at the same time acknowledge that where we are now in some respects is not fully satisfactory for anybody. And how can we, as I said, agree a structure or a way forward? It's about a process, it's not about getting a definitive answer and saying 'this is the ultimate authority'... And I think any discourse that is fuelled by that kind of discussion is not going to lead us where we want to go. (Ó Ruairc)

It is hoped that dialogue will lead to the resolution of some of the issues.

But for now the advisory committee on legal terms is the one forum where my unit, the Terminology Committee and the Rannóg all meet together and some of the discussion thus far have gone on those lines and said at least we're all in the one forum, we're all there, we're all talking to each other. Lines of communication are at the very least being kept open. But I think we need to try and *dlús*, ramp it up I suppose for want of a better word. (Ó Ruairc)

An updated official standard for the written language is currently being prepared by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, with the intention that 'specific issues that are of particular relevance to the development of modern terminology in Irish will be addressed as a priority at the start of this process' (Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs 2010). The members of the committee include academics, broadcasters, translators and representatives from the fields of lexicography and terminology.

There have also been some efforts to harmonise the sources.

Chuir tú ceist orm ó chianaibh ansin mar gheall ar a chinntiú go raibh na téarmaí de réir a chéile agus de réir na bhfoinsí agus eile... An dá shampla a ritheann liom agus bhí cinn eile ann, Rinneamar an uimhir iolra de 'uiríoll', bhíodh 'uirille' againn agus d'athraiomar go 'uirill' é chun go mbeadh sé ag teacht le Foclóir Uí Dhónaill. Dheineamar an inscne a bhaineann leis an bhfocal 'eascaire' a athrú freisin chun go mbeadh sé de réir Fhoclóir Uí Dhónaill. Mar sin, déanaimid coigeartaithe beaga mar sin ar mhaithe le aonfhoirmeacht a bhaint amach i gcúrsaí téarmaíochta.<sup>20</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

In general corpus planning, Foras na Gaeilge, to which the Terminology Committee is attached, is responsible for developing dictionaries for the language, and a new dictionary is currently being drafted. The editor of this dictionary is a member of the Terminology Committee, and Focal is in use as a source for terms in the new dictionary.

Well the dictionary editor is of course a member of the Terminology Committee and has been for a number of years. We have meetings with some regularity to do with the style guide for the dictionary... But obviously that's not mainstream terminology work. There will be material... that will have implications for us in the sense that more disambiguation needs to be done – well they will have to do a lot of disambiguation themselves because that's lexicographical work but because there's a lot of material in the Focal database that emerged from different terminological resources, there will have to be some work done to coordinate between our work and the dictionary work, which on the one hand it will benefit all of us, and on the other hand it will require time and resources. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Two corpus-based dictionaries are currently being planned, a historical monolingual dictionary by the Royal Irish Academy, and the English-Irish dictionary of contemporary use by Foras na Gaeilge. There is however no comprehensive corpus of modern Irish which adequately reflects written Irish produced by native speakers.

Most of the material... was clearly produced by learners of Irish, non-native speakers. Since even the imaginative books section is restricted to works available electronically from publishers, including a few recent texts by Gaeltacht authors, the bulk of native-speaker materials created by the giants of twentieth century literature is not represented and not yet available in any corpus as a resource for lexicography. This is regrettable and will need to be rectified particularly before any new Irish-English dictionary is undertaken. It highlights once again the need for a national strategy for corpus planning for the language. (Nic Pháidín 2008, 101-102)

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<sup>20</sup> 'You asked me before about making sure that terms are consistent and consistent with the sources and so on... The two examples that occur to me, and there were other ones, we changed the plural of 'uiríoll', we used to have 'uirille' and we changed to 'uirill' so as to be consistent with the Ó Dónaill dictionary. We changed the gender of the word 'eascaire' so that it would be consistent with the Ó Dónaill dictionary. So we make little adjustments like that in order to achieve uniformity in terminology matters.'



It is envisaged that the twenty year strategy will ensure that there is one central point of coordination for language planning issues, the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

ÚB: Is there any central contact point between these groups, a central (if you like) point of departure or authority?

DÓB: In terms of terminology?

ÚB: Well, in terminology and general language planning.

DÓB: In terms of general language planning, insofar as there is, it's the Department and insofar as there has been coordination of terminology issues... If there is any central coordination in relation to terminology it's the Department and this unit here. In terms of a wider central point of coordination in relation to language planning, that, once the twenty year strategy has been adopted, that will be the Department as well. (Ó Briain)

The landscape for language planning in general is fragmented.

In terms of planning the language, there isn't, there is a range of different responsibilities. Foras na Gaeilge has a set of discrete responsibilities, it's not a body which is answerable directly to this State or just to this State, because it's an international body, and then Údarás na Gaeltachta has a set responsibility in the Gaeltacht and the Department has a set responsibility. (Ó Briain)

Even within Foras na Gaeilge I'm not sure that the terminology area and the dictionary area communicate all that well. (Ó Briain)

There is a recognition that if the work were being started again, a different structure such as a language academy might be more satisfactory.

Cheapfainn féin gurbh é an rud a bhí ag teastáil an uair sin [1922] ná acadamh agus tá a leithéid d'acadamh, sílim, sa tSlóivéin áit a bhfuil na réimsí gaolmhara ar fad taobh istigh den aon eagraíocht amháin, is é sin go mbeadh dream amháin ag plé le foclóireacht, dream eile ag plé le téarmaíocht, dream eile ag plé le canúineolaíocht, dream eile ag plé le foghraíocht, agus go mbeadh siad ar fad ag obair as lámha a chéile agus go mbeadh mórfhlean ann, mórfhlean straitéiseach faoi thaighde faoi staid na teanga, agus taighde chomparáideach maidir le teangacha eile a bhfuil cosúlachtaí áirithe acu le chéile, dea-chleachtas a bhunú bunaithe ar na cinn is rathúla, agus ansin san áit a mbeadh sé ag teastáil, na daoine a chur á n-oiliúint, áit a mbeadh oiliúint ar fáil. Agus plean straitéiseach a leagan amach ansin ó thaobh tosaíochtaí, cad iad na réimsí is tábhachtaí, mar ar ndóigh más cigire scoile tú, is é an réimse is tábhachtaí duitse ná an Ardteist. Mar sin, sin an fáth ar bhealach gur fhorbair rudaí mar a d'fhorbair siad anseo. Ach dá mba rud é gur acadamh stáit a bunaíodh, áit a mbeadh

go leor glórtha éagsúla, ní gá gur mar sin a d'fhorbrófaí. Ach níl muid i 1922 agus ní thig linn an méid a rinneadh a dhíothú.<sup>21</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Leagadh síos struchtúr i 1968 de chineál áirithe ach, mar a deir mé, dá mbeadh níos mó acmhainní agus maoiniú agus machnaimh agus a leithéid ann, dhéanfaí ar bhealach eile é, b'fhéidir.<sup>22</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

**What are the relationships and partnerships between the Irish term planning organisation, academia, government agencies, the main language planning body and others? Who does what? Is the Irish term planning organisation linked to academic research in the terminology field?**

The Terminology Committee is part of a government agency, Foras na Gaeilge. Rannóg an Aistriúcháin is an institution of the Houses of the Oireachtas. The main links between them are through representation on the Terminology Committee, where translators from the European institutions are also represented.

Bhuel is dóigh liom an dream is mó atá ag bualadh ar an doras anois ná na hinstiúidí Eorpacha agus tá ionadaíocht acu sin. Tá ionadaíocht ag an Rannóg chomh maith agus trí bhrú oibre ar feadh i bhfad ní i gcónaí a bhíodh ionadaí ón Rannóg ag freastal ar na cruinnithe. Anois tá sé sin curtha ina cheart... tá lúcháir orainn go bhfuil siad chomh gníomhach is atá.<sup>23</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Links to academia have been maintained since the early years of the Terminology Committee through representatives from various universities, notable University College Galway (now NUIG) which has a tradition of third-level teaching through the medium of Irish. Many members of the Terminology Committee have academic backgrounds.

Na nascanna atá acu is dóigh liom tá siad ag brath ar ionadaithe an Choiste Stiúrtha agus ar ndóigh tá roinnt mhaith daoine atá ag plé leis an acadúlacht, leis an

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<sup>21</sup> 'I'd say that what was needed back then [1922] was an academy, and I think there's an academy like that in Slovenia where all the different areas are inside one organisation, with one group dealing with lexicography, one group with terminology, another with dialectology, another with phonetics, and all of them working together. And that there would be a general plan, a general strategic plan about research on the state of the language, and comparative research about other related languages, to establish good practice based on the most successful, and then where it's needed, to have people trained, where training is available. And to lay out a strategic plan for priorities, what are the most important domains. Because of course if you're a school inspector, the Leaving Certificate is the most important area for you. So that's why things developed as they did here, in a way. But if a state academy had been established, where there would be a lot of different voices, that wouldn't necessarily have happened. But we're not in 1922 and we can't go back on what's been done.'

<sup>22</sup> 'Certain structures were laid out in 1968 but, as I say, if there had been more resources and funding and thought and so on, it might have been done differently.'

<sup>23</sup> 'Well I think that the main group knocking on the door now is the European institutions and they have representation. The Rannóg [Rannóg an Aistriúcháin] have representation too and for a long time due to work pressures they didn't always have a representative at the meetings. But that's been set right... We're delighted that they are as active as they are.'

ollscolaíocht tríú leibhéal. Daoine eile atá ag plé leis an acadúlacht sa chiall is leithne den fhocal, mar shampla duine den Choiste Stiúrtha faoi láthair ná Pádraig Ó Mianáin atá ina eagarthóir ar an fhoclóir nua Béarla Gaeilge agus cé nach acadúlacht sa chiall is cruinne é sin is dóigh liom go mbaineann sé le hábhar. Agus ar ndóigh tá daoine as Ollscoil na Gaillimhe agus tá an-tábhacht leis sin sílim mar go bhfuil seirbhís aistriúcháin acu agus cúrsaí aistriúcháin acu agus a leithéid sin. So is dóigh liom gurb iad, gur sin an nasc a bhíonn ag an gCoiste leis an saol acadúil. Agus ar ndóigh baill den Choiste Stiúrtha tá ábhar foilsithe acu sa réimse seo.<sup>24</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

ÚB: Na nascanna seo idir an Choiste agus an acadúlacht agus an rialtas agus eile, na nascanna trí dhaoine a bheith ag suí ar an gcoiste, an oibríonn sé sin?

AML: Is dóigh liom é. Dá gcuirfí ar bhonn níos foirmeálta é ní léir dom cén difear a bheadh ann.<sup>25</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

In recent times, an important link has been created with Fiontar at Dublin City University. The main connection is the creation by Fiontar since 2004, and subsequent maintenance and development of the Focal database. This work has expanded to include term research and creation work for the IATE database, as well as other projects, in collaboration with the Terminology Committee. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs directly funds the IATE project in Fiontar and its research on the extraction of legal terms from statutory instruments.

I suppose Fiontar's current role in terminology planning has changed even in recent years since setting up the Focal database; we run the terminology management system as well which is a very important output of this project. We have moved also into the field of new term development with the sports dictionary in particular and the door would be open to doing more domains in the future and I think it's work we might be interested in. And particularly since we're working with the EU terminology, the Irish language terminology for the IATE database, which is a very interesting project with international partners. (Nic Pháidín)

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<sup>24</sup> 'The links that exist, I think they depend on the members of the Steering Committee and of course there's a lot of people dealing with academia, with third level education. Others are dealing with academia in the broadest sense of the word, for example someone on the Steering Committee at the moment is Pádraig Ó Mianáin who is editor of the new English-Irish dictionary and even though it's not academia in the strictest sense of the word I think it's relevant. And of course there's people from the University of Galway and that's very important I think because they have a translation service and translation courses and so on. So I think that's the link the Committee has with academia. And of course members of the Committee have published in this area.'

<sup>25</sup> 'ÚB: These links between the Committee and academia and government and so on, by having people on the Committee, does that work?

AML: I think so. If it was placed on a more formal footing I don't think it would make any difference.'

Until Focal was launched publicly just over three years ago, it was very closely aligned with the Coiste Téarmaíochta and the needs of the Coiste Téarmaíochta to set up a management system and to publish, to disseminate the terminology. I think since then a great deal of the creativity and the development in Fiontar's work has not actually been inspired or requested by the Coiste Téarmaíochta in particular. I think the horizon has broadened in two ways, one by working with the European Union, and although an Coiste Téarmaíochta is involved at a certain stage of that process, we do not do that work for the Coiste Téarmaíochta and they're not even involved in the management side of it day-to-day. And obviously then with the whole legal side, again we did not develop that at the request of anybody else, we decided that this was worth doing and we were looking for funding for it, originally from the Department of Justice, and it just happened that we were in the right place at the right time and that the need for translating statutory instruments again was moved up a peg in the ladder. (Nic Pháidín)

Academic research and publication is central to Fiontar's research projects. One PhD student is sponsored to research domain structures and ontologies and there was also provision for PhD research work in the development of the sports dictionary, although this did not materialise. MA students in DCU have also done academic research on terminology (one student in 2009 carried out research on usage samples in the Irish language corpus, and another in 2008 carried out research on the Terminology Committee's country naming policy). Work by Fiontar staff is regularly presented at conferences, and the TKE (Terminology and Knowledge Engineering) conference is to be hosted in DCU in 2010.

Academic research in other universities is also supported by the Terminology Committee and Foras na Gaeilge by answering questions and by doing interviews.

We are frequently approached by students engaged in research projects in the field of terminology, and we assist them in whatever way we can. During my years in this post, I have worked with students from the universities at Coleraine, Limerick, Maynooth, Galway (including Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge), the Marino Institute of Education, University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, as well as from Dublin City University. Many of the projects focus on background information about specific terminology collections. For instance, I'm currently in communication with a student at Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge who is researching music terms. Another student from the Acadamh who is studying language planning has been in contact recently about the background to our work. We assist such students mainly by answering specific questions or questionnaires, and by doing interviews with them. Some students are directed to individual members of the Terminology Committee in relation to specific areas of research. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The Terminology Committee is open to involvement in research projects, if they are approached.

For instance something may come along that we haven't planned for but that we feel is very important; this very often comes from an outside body who want to prepare a manual or glossary of some kind in their area of interest and, while we wouldn't have been planning for this, we would at least have the expertise and the basic terminology and principles to help them out. So we've often done that, we've worked with An Garda Síochána - the Irish police force - and with the Irish Army, we've worked with bodies such as the telephone company, the television station, and with bodies to do with environmental literature such as Sherkin Island marine station and the Irish Rare Birds Committee. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

One interviewee felt, however, that the potential for creative dialogue could be further developed in the relationship with the Terminology Committee.

I suppose the only other thing to say is that our relationship with the Terminology Committee is a very formal, very structured relationship, which works very well for validating the terms etc, but there is very little opportunity in that type of relationship for dialogue that might be more creative or more reflective and I think that's maybe something that could be looked at in the future. But I think it works very well on an operational level. (Nic Phóidín)

There is a feeling that there has not been very much academic interest in terminology planning questions, but that this might be changing.

I think the academic involvement for understandable reasons in the whole area of terminological planning and particularly the grammatical standard has not been what you might have expected it to be. And I think, my understanding informally is that that realisation is beginning to dawn in the academic sphere and that there is a desire, a very keen desire to get more actively involved particularly when the time is very opportune from the point of view of the review of the official standard. (Ó Ruairc)

The Terminology Committee has, since its transfer to Foras na Gaeilge in 1999, facilitated internships for students in its offices. Students from UCC, NUI, Galway and DCU have completed internships in terminology work with Fiontar.

**What part of the overall language planning work for Irish is the Irish term planning organisation responsible for (examples: advising on policy; establishing and evaluating norms; providing an information service; coordinating and supporting projects; and acting as a clearinghouse for private or outsourced terminology work)? Are areas of term planning not covered by the Irish term planning organisation covered by others? Is there an overlap between any of these groups, or are there any gaps? Are there any areas which are not really covered at all?**

The Terminology Committee carries out all of these tasks – advising on policy; establishing and evaluating norms; providing an information service; coordinating and supporting projects; and acting as a clearinghouse for private or outsourced terminology work – to varying degrees.

The Terminology Committee advises on the nature and background to terminology work in Irish, and on principles and methods of term formation. A handbook describing

these processes was developed in 2007 and disseminated to those working in the field, and made available online. An updated version was recently (2010) disseminated, and a final version is in preparation. As well as laying out the context of terminology work in Irish, an important feature of this handbook is the publication of the transliteration rules for loanwords, initially developed by Professor Tomás de Bhaldraithe for his English-Irish Dictionary (1959), and subsequently revised and developed by Prof. de Bhaldraithe, Dr Niall Ó Dónaill (editor of *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla* (1977) and Dr Éamonn Ó hÓgáin (who worked on the 1977 dictionary and subsequently on the Royal Irish Academy dictionary project). Research carried out by Fidelma Ní Ghallchobhair on the patterns and development of loanwords from the Old-Irish period onwards is included as a background to the development of the transliteration rules. Principles and methods of terminology work developed by the Terminology Committee over the years and some of those published in ISO 704: 2009, Terminology work – Principles and methods (for which Ní Ghallchobhair acted as editor) have also been included. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

As mentioned in the section beginning on page 19, the Terminology Committee takes on a lot of general language advice and lexicographical work. In establishing and evaluating norms, the Terminology Committee has carried out work in proposing new grammar rules, as published in 2004 (Uí Bhraonáin 2004).

The Terminology Committee provides an information service to the public free of charge by email, by phone and through the Focal website. Its services are particularly in demand because of the lexicographic deficit and because there is no comparable well-known, well-advertised general language information or advice service. Confusion could also be caused by the name Focal, which means 'word'.

Its services are particularly in demand because of the lexicographic deficit, and because of confusion in the mind of the public about the function of the Focal website. It is becoming increasingly obvious that many users assume the website is a dictionary, partly because the word 'focal' means 'word' and the Irish word for dictionary is 'foclóir'. To bear this out, many correspondents write in to report that such and such a word is available in the main general-language dictionaries but does not appear in the Focal database. There is a general-language advice service called Freagra, accessible by phone or e-mail, which was established a few years ago and to which most LGP and proofing requests to the Terminology Committee are now redirected. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Support is given to terminology projects such as those carried out under contract by Fiontar, and others carried out by other agencies. Private and outsourced terminology is submitted to the Terminology Committee for approval. For example, collections have been created by the police force and the army, and researchers on rare birds.

For instance something may come along that we haven't planned for but that we feel is very important; this very often comes from an outside body who want to prepare a

manual or glossary of some kind in their area of interest and, while we wouldn't have been planning for this, we would at least have the expertise and the basic terminology and principles to help them out. So we've often done that, we've worked with An Garda Síochána - the Irish police force - and with the Irish Army, we've worked with bodies such as the telephone company, the television station, and with bodies to do with environmental literature such as Sherkin Island marine station and the Irish Rare Birds Committee. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The Terminology Committee's work in grammar (proposing elaboration of grammatical rules arising out of challenges in term formation work due to lack of clarity or coordination in existing publications) and in general language (acting as a *de facto* language helpline) creates additional pressures and may be symptomatic of absences elsewhere in the language planning area.

### **How is the Irish term planning organisation involved in policy formation for Irish language planning?**

The Terminology Committee is involved in policy formation on term formation methods.

The Terminology Committee advises on the nature and background to terminology work in Irish, and on principles and methods of term formation. A handbook describing these processes was developed in 2007 and disseminated to those working in the field, and made available online. An updated version was recently (2010) disseminated, and a final version is in preparation. As well as laying out the context of terminology work in Irish, an important feature of this handbook is the publication of the transliteration rules for loanwords, initially developed by Professor Tomás de Bhaldraithe for his English-Irish Dictionary (1959), and subsequently revised and developed by Prof. de Bhaldraithe, Dr Niall Ó Dónaill (editor of *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla* (1977)) and Dr Éamonn Ó hÓgáin (who worked on the 1977 dictionary and subsequently on the Royal Irish Academy dictionary project). Research carried out by Fidelma Ní Ghallchobhair on the patterns and development of loanwords from the Old-Irish period onwards is included as a background to the development of the transliteration rules. Principles and methods of terminology work developed by the Terminology Committee over the years and some of those published in *ISO 704: 2009, Terminology work – Principles and methods* (for which Ní Ghallchobhair acted as editor) have also been included. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The Terminology Committee has representatives from various current language projects, such as the new English-Irish dictionary and a new grammar standard for the language. It is unclear, however, whether the Committee has an advisory function to these projects.

The forum of the Terminology Committee includes representatives from the lexicography section which is currently developing a new English-Irish dictionary, as well as the Director of the Translation Unit who has responsibility for the development of a new grammar standard for Irish, and there is very close cooperation between these people and their fields of enterprise. Specific terminology projects related to the new English-Irish dictionary are in planning, and a project related to the

implementation of the new grammar standard on our terminology stock is also in planning. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)



## 2.2. Policy and planning: International networks

**Is the Irish term planning organisation involved in ISO/TC 37 policy formation? How? What is the Irish term planning organisation's involvement in ISO/TC 37 and its subcommittees?**

The secretary of the Terminology Committee and a member of the Fiontar editorial staff, as well as representatives from some other interest groups, are members of ISO Technical Committee TC37 ('Terminology and other language and content resources') on behalf of the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI). A representative of the NSAI was also, until 2008, a member of the Permanent Terminology Committee (a top-level advisory level of the Terminology Committee, which was amalgamated with the Terminology Committee proper in 2008). The Terminology Committee secretary takes an active role, illustrated by the fact that the 2010 ISO TC37 meeting is to be hosted by NSAI, with sponsorship from Foras na Gaeilge in Dublin.

The ISO work that I'm involved in is, like you say, of practical benefit in that it's very interesting to discuss language situations in very far-flung language communities, to see how the experiences of the different language communities are incorporated into the standards. Even though we may not be in a position to fully implement the standards, at least becoming familiar with them is helpful and hopefully, in a more ideal staffing situation, would lead to us being able to implement more of them. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

This contact is also important for Fiontar.

Two staff members, at the moment, of Fiontar are on the board of Foras na Gaeilge, we have representation on ISO, on the Terminology Committee, and in working with IATE. From the perspective of Fiontar these relationships seem to work quite well, from our own perspective. And I suppose given our role in terminology, particularly in recent years, we do I suppose have at this stage some kind of an informal moral influence if you like on the course of these things, although the actual policy really is, the actual policy in term formation and all that kind of thing resides strictly within the Terminology Committee, and that is not a shared function. (Nic Phóidín)

**What other international networks are there (for example with EU bodies such as IATE, with ISO, with other Celtic language networks, with UNESCO...)? Are there practical benefits and results, and what are they?**

Foras na Gaeilge is an institutional member of the EAFT (European Association for Terminology), a member of the Fiontar editorial staff holds individual membership and the secretary of the Terminology Committee served on the board for four years (late 2004 - early 2009), two of which as President, which has been helpful in discussing ideas and challenges in an international context.

That has been very beneficial for us... I've been able to raise awareness in that community about our language and our terminology situation, which culminated in us having an international seminar here in 2007 which was an important event, I think. And I suppose further, even though every language situation is different, there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution, but at least discussing your challenges with representatives from other language communities, very often in an informal situation, can be very enlightening because even as you've tried to describe your situation you find things clicking in a different way. And the fact that you're doing it in a language other than Irish makes a difference and brings on fresh perspectives ... because this debate was traditionally only held in Irish among Irish speakers. Non-Irish speakers in Ireland, it seems to me, have very little awareness of terminology work in any language, which also seems to be the case within English-speaking communities further afield. So, basically, it can be very hard to communicate to other Irish people about the nature of this work and the importance of it. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

There is a close connection with IATE because Fiontar is contracted by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to carry out terminology work for the EU institutions. This has meant that Irish-language terminology has an international context, and the methods and database developed by Fiontar to process term creation work have attracted attention and interest in two ways. Firstly the EU institutions involved in developing and managing the IATE database view the Irish project as a potentially useful template for other languages. Secondly, it is viewed with interest and some envy by languages who do not have EU status.

There is no official terminology network between the Celtic languages, but Fiontar has in the past cooperated with Welsh lexicographical work and there are informal links. This resulted in the first contract for the development of the Focal database, funded by INTERREG.

And then other Celtic language networks, more informal than anything else, we certainly would have informal contacts with people in Wales, Scotland and Brittany. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

One article stresses the importance of awareness of and compliance with international standards.

Unlike other aspects of corpus planning in Irish, development of terminology in Irish has derived major benefit from interaction with international bodies formulating best practice. The merits of compliance with ISO requirements and UNESCO guidelines in this field are invaluable, and create an international framework for development of resources. (Nic Pháidín 2008, 103-104)

There is also involvement with groups such as the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD), which hosted a seminar on terminology in Dublin in 2009 and again in 2010. The seminar's main aim was to bring together partners working in this specialised field to share best practice as well as explore new opportunities for future collaboration, and presentations were made about the background of terminology work in Irish and the content of the Focal

database, and about Fiontar's work with terminology for IATE. Possibilities for collaboration and sharing of expertise were discussed.

### 2.3. Policy and Planning: Resource planning

**How are decisions made about which domains (or other priorities) to undertake? Who makes the decision? How are domains selected and prioritised?**

The types of work carried out by the Terminology Committee are divided into different areas: (traditionally) terminology for school curricula; miscellaneous collections of terminology arising out of the terminology advice service to the public; projects dealing with domain gain and, to a lesser extent, with domain loss; and the harmonisation of existing terminology.

Traditionally, the focus was on school curricula (primary and secondary, mainly)

- textbooks, exam papers, educational documents
- not all areas fully covered
- areas outside curricula generally not dealt with
- series of dictionaries focussed on various curriculum subjects developed over the years
- some projects focussed on domain loss (flora and fauna, sailing, trades)
- most projects focussed on domain expansion and domain gain (business, sciences, telecommunications, IT)
- some projects focussed on harmonization of existing terminology (literary criticism, biblical proper names) (Ní Ghallchobhair 2009)

The choice of domain has traditionally been dictated largely by the school subjects for which terminology was needed.

Traditionally this was done on the basis of the school curriculum; which textbooks were now being prepared and which domains were needed and which dictionaries were needed, and subcommittees were set up according to those. So what was called the steering committee would prioritise and say, we need a biology dictionary, or we need a new edition of the biology dictionary. And we'd set up subcommittees. Because there were so many domains to cover and so few resources, what happened was that the major subjects, secondary school subjects were targeted, such as geography, biology, science, etc, and lesser subjects that seemed to involve maybe smaller numbers didn't get prioritised. For instance, one area that I think has been very poorly served is art, because although it is a secondary school subject as well as being a general population subject we have very little in that domain. The other one of course was sport, although some work was done but it was never prioritised because it wasn't a secondary school subject... We're not tied to the school curriculum now but I think, since I've been secretary of this committee, my main aspiration was to catch up with all the unfinished projects. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Na príomhfhoclóirí ar ár liosta, bhain siad go díreach le curaclam na scoile.<sup>26</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Baineann na hábhair léinn agus na hábhair theicniúla a bpléitear leo sa chóras oideachais leis an saol mór, dar ndóigh. Mar aon le téarmaí a chur ar fáil do na réimsí ardteicniúla, mar sin, freastalaíonn an Coiste ar leibhéal an ghnáthshaoil sa mhéid go dtagann saintéarmaí i gceist ansin, chomh maith. Déanann an Coiste freastal ar iarratais ó eagraíochtaí nó ó dhaoine aonair atá ag plé leis an nGaeilge agus a dteastaíonn cabhair nó comhairle uathu maidir le téarmaí nó le liostaí de théarmaí a bhaineann le réimse ar leith den saol.<sup>27</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Initiatives sometimes come from external bodies and are accepted.

For instance something may come along that we haven't planned for but that we feel is very important; this very often comes from an outside body who want to prepare a manual or glossary of some kind in their area of interest and, while we wouldn't have been planning for this, we would at least have the expertise the basic terminology and principles to help them out. So we've often done that, we've worked with An Garda Síochána - the Irish police force - and with the Irish Army, we've worked with bodies such as the telephone company, the television station, and with bodies to do with environmental literature such as Sherkin Island marine station and the Irish Rare Birds Committee. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

In other cases projects are selected because they are considered to have a wide appeal or to be important.

But by the same token, or perhaps on a wider level, I was conscious that we didn't have a sport dictionary... and that sport is a subject that excites a lot of enthusiasm and because we have broadcasting on radio and television for a certain amount of sport anyway, that this would be a useful backup to any project in this area ... I was conscious of this so I was happy to be in a position to be able to involve this in our current contract with you. So that would be the criterion there, something that we didn't have and that would have wide appeal, and that would be of practical use. We get feedback regularly from people, that such and such a dictionary is out of date, or that there's no proper dictionary of stonemasonry, etc.. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

One new project that wasn't, if you like, part of the legacy with which I was left was the dictionary of literary criticism. That was an initiative which was taken by a member

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<sup>26</sup> 'The main dictionaries on our list, they were directly related to the school curriculum.'

<sup>27</sup> 'The areas of study and the technical areas discussed in the education system belong to life in general, of course. As well as providing terms for highly technical areas, then, the Committee provides for general life since specialised terms come up there, too. The Committee responds to requests from organisations or individuals who are working with Irish and want help or advice about terms or lists of terms to do with a particular domain.'

of the committee who is a specialist in that field, and who proposed that we needed such a dictionary. This was accepted by the committee and a subcommittee was set up. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Another significant outside body that we've worked with and continue to work with is Microsoft. And again because we felt that this was important, that it was important to have an Irish language working environment and that it was important for the implantation of computing terms and, even though as usual we had a hundred and one other things to be doing, we felt that it was very important that we collaborate in that rather than have, perhaps, people who hadn't already been working in computing terminology maybe just translating the words. So the first Microsoft edition was issued, I think, in 2005 and I think it was reasonably successful. It's not perfect, but feedback was fairly positive. And we've worked with them on two subsequent versions. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Decisions on selection of work are made by the Terminology Committee.

ÚB: And if somebody, if a proposal landed on your desk tomorrow for a new dictionary, what would be the factors that you would look at?

FNG: Well, I personally don't make a decision on my own about that; I would think about it and so on but I would present it to the committee and I would outline whatever factors I could identify about it... (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

ÚB: So in making a decision like that about a new dictionary for example, a dictionary of literature or whatever, how do you decide that yes you're going to go ahead with it or – the resources are limited, how do you decide how to prioritise?

FNG: Well it was proposed to the Steering committee and they agreed that this was a good idea and a subcommittee was set up. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Domain choice is also dictated by the interests of Terminology Committee members: for example, one member had a particular interest in geology, and the creation of the large Geology dictionary (eventually published on CD-ROM) was because of this. Although resources could have been better deployed, perhaps, to more frequently-used domains, the voluntary nature of the Terminology Committee's work means that such choices or compromises have been made.

Ní hé nach mbíodh pleannanna agus straitéisí agus a leithéidí ann ... ach is dóigh liom go mbaineann sé seo cuid mhaith le hearnáil dheonach ar bith. Nuair atá tú ag brath ar dhaoine freastal nó seirbhís a chur ar fáil go deonach níl siad ag fáil íocaíocht ar bith... Agus ní féidir dáiríre orduithe a thabhairt dóibh. Agus chomh maith leis sin, is gnách go

gcuireann siad a gcroí is a n-anam ann agus tá sé an-deacair casadh thart agus a rá, éist, níl muid ag iarraidh foclóra sa réimse seo.<sup>28</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Some areas of terminology work have not really been covered at all.

ÚB: An bhfuil réimsí eile den phleanáil téarmaíochta nach bhfuil á gclúdach acusan agus nach bhfuil á gclúdach ag dreamanna eile, meas tú?

TÓhl: Saintearmaí, is dóigh liom, trí chéile ansin, mar bhí mé ag caint ar chúrsaí teangeolaíochta agus ar chúrsaí sochtheangeolaíochta ansin. Níl foclóir ceart teangeolaíochta againn sa Ghaeilge ach b'fhéidir nach bhfuil an oiread sin daoine ag plé le cúrsaí teangeolaíochta.<sup>29</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

For instance one area that I think has been very poorly served is art, because although it is a secondary school subject as well as being a general population subject, we have very little in that domain. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

One interviewee raised a question about how and at what level strategic planning is carried out by the Terminology Committee.

We're not involved in policy planning with an Coiste Téarmaíochta, it's an area that – we're represented in the Coiste but again I'm not that representative so I'm not quite sure what the workings of the Coiste really are and how much time – I don't know how much time they set aside for working on specific terms, and how much time they keep for discussion of policy issues looking forward, and how they identify the strategic priorities. I'm not quite sure whether that's the function of the secretary or the function of the Cathaoirleach or whether it's a board discussion, because certainly I can say from my own experience in Foras na Gaeilge, it's not something that comes up there at board level for input. So I don't quite know where these things are, where the domains are selected, how they're selected. (Nic Pháidín)

In the case of priorities agreed with Fiontar and contracted to them, these are agreed between Fiontar and the funding organisation.

I suppose our work or the areas we'd work on are largely responding to demands and requests from the funding agencies with whom we work. Obviously a dialogue goes on there as to what we do. We have a large amount of discretion about how we do it. Professionally we organise our own work. The main areas that we have responded to

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<sup>28</sup> 'It's not that there weren't plans and strategies and so on... But I think that this has a lot to do with any voluntary sector. If you're depending on people to attend or provide a service voluntarily, they're not getting any payment... And you can't really give them orders. And as well as that they usually put their heart and soul into it and it's very hard to turn around and say, listen, we don't want a dictionary in this domain.'

<sup>29</sup> 'ÚB: Are there other areas of terminology planning that aren't being covered by them and aren't being covered by other groups, do you think?

TÓhl: Specialised terms, in general, I think. I was talking about linguistics and sociolinguistics there. There's no proper dictionary of linguistics in Irish but maybe there aren't that many people dealing with linguistics.'

in the recent past would have been or are the work on IATE, the work on LEX, the legal terms for the statutory instruments; and the sports dictionary I suppose arose in our contract with Foras na Gaeilge, by discussion, by identifying a domain that we would be interested in working on and they would be interested in developing. So it's possible that we will look at term development in other domains as time goes forward. Again, by a process of agreement. (Nic Pháidín)

**Who is consulted when policy decisions are being made about resource allocation (potential users, service providers, academics, institutions...)? Is planning carried out in conjunction with potential users, service providers, academics, institutions, etc?**

Resource allocation decisions for Foras na Gaeilge are taken by the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs (in the south) and the Department of Culture and Leisure (in the north) in response to submissions from Foras na Gaeilge management (Ní Ghallchobhair addition).

Service users can make suggestions, and these have been taken into account in planning development work; some examples in Fiontar's current contract are technical developments to the Focal user interface, such as copying and pasting terms in plain text format, or maintaining a search history log.

One interviewee felt that media representatives should have more involvement in decisions.

B'fhéidir gur cheart go mbeadh páirt níos mó againn i gcumadh téarmaí. Tá na meáin Ghaeilge chomh tábhachtach sin maidir le craobhscaoileadh gur cheart go mbeadh dóigh éigin agus *input* éigin againn i gcumadh na dtéarmaí ach b'fhéidir gur ceist ama é sin fosta agus nach mbíonn an t-am ag daoine. Ach níor mhiste go mbeadh iriseoir b'fhéidir nó *input* éigin tar éis don Choiste Téarmaíochta ceann a chumadh b'fhéidir nár mhiste é a fhaomhadh leis na meáin fosta.<sup>30</sup> (Delap)

This perceived lack of involvement is contested by the Terminology Committee interviewee.

The Terminology Committee includes one representative from the media and various Subcommittees have also included members representing the media. Collaboration with the media also arises in the context of terminological enquiries, and this is usually a two-way process. Terminology used in the media is also gleaned through consulting the New Corpus for Irish which is weighted with a significant amount of content from the print media, and from individuals in the media or on the Terminology Committee reporting certain usages. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

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<sup>30</sup> 'Maybe we should have a greater part in term creation. The Irish language media are so important in broadcasting that there should be some way for us to have some input in term creation, but maybe it's a time question too and people don't have time. But it might do no harm to have a journalist maybe or some input after the Terminology Committee's created one, it wouldn't hurt to run it past the media too.'



### **Who pays for the Irish term planning organisation's work? What financial support does it receive?**

The Terminology Committee is a part of Foras na Gaeilge, which is a North-South Implementation body operating on an all-island basis, co-funded by the Oireachtas (Irish parliament) and the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Terminology Committee is generally well-funded by Foras na Gaeilge, its parent organisation.

Ar a laghad ar bith níl an fhadhb sin againn anois, mar má chuireann tú cás faoi thábhacht na hoibre i láthair an Fhorais, bíonn siad sásta agus is gnách go gcuirtear an t-airgead ar fáil. Mar sin arís, is dóigh, cuid de ná an t-ádh a bheith orainn ar an lá ceart go bhfuil airgead ar fáil ach tar éis aistriú go dtí an Foras, bhí airgead ann le dul go dtí comhdháil nó le freastal ar cheardlann nó le slám leabhar tagartha a cheannach, rudaí den chineál sin. Thairis sin, rinne Foras na Gaeilge maoiniú ar chonarthaí le Fiontar le cúig bliana anuas chun tascanna éagsúla a chur i gcrích. Chomh maith leis sin, rinne an Foras maoiniú ar thascanna éagsúla a ndearnadh seachfhoinsiú orthu le seacht mbliana anuas, mar shampla, tascanna a bhain le *Foclóir Litríochta agus Critice*, *Foclóir Seoltóireachta*, *Foclóir Ríomhaireachta is Teicneolaíocht Faisnéise*, *Foclóir Bitheolaíochta*, *Foclóir Staidéir Ghnó*, agus foclóirí eile a bhí á réiteach.<sup>31</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

We're staff of Foras na Gaeilge so we're paid our monthly salary. And then any work we outsource, the main outsourcing has been to your own organisation and that contract is paid by Foras na Gaeilge. And then we have some other work outsourced to a panel and again that is funded by Foras na Gaeilge. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Well I can just tell you what was spent last year and it was something like, I would have to do some more sums on that but something like €35,000 apart from whatever was paid to Fiontar, which is a separate contract. But the actual outgoings, it's not that we are allocated a definite amount which of course we should be, but, and again this is probably a legacy of how we were treated under the Department of Education, it was just seen as one or two staff are paid and everybody else is voluntary, and we didn't have a budget. So in Foras na Gaeilge we don't have a set in stone budget, we submit the bills that are incurred and then we plead for resources to do something else and sometimes we're successful and sometimes we aren't so last year I think we managed to extract more funding than perhaps in previous years. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

This is a positive change from the years when the Terminology Committee was under the auspices of the Dept. of Education. One reason for this may be the fact that Foras na Gaeilge is

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<sup>31</sup> 'At least we don't have that problem now, because if you make a case to the Foras about the importance of the work, they're satisfied and the money is usually made available. So again part of it is luck in money being available on the day, but since moving to the Foras, there's been money to go to a conference or to attend a workshop or to buy reference books, things like that.'

an Irish-language organisation, and that there is an understanding of the importance of terminology work.

Ar a laghad bhí muid ag caint le Gaeilgeoirí agus murar thuig siad thú ar an gcéad amharc bhí tú in ann cás a chur agus a rá féach, tá sé seo tábhachtach, tá an pobal buartha faoi seo... Agus tuigeann an Foras go bhfuil an téarmaíocht tábhachtach. Rud nár thuig an Roinn.<sup>32</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Terminology Committee members are not paid, apart from their expenses, so much of the work is done on a voluntary basis.

Well the committee members aren't paid, they just get their travel expenses if they travel and they get a free lunch. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Initial funding for the development of Focal was obtained under INTERREG IIIA Ireland/Wales (Priority One, Measure Four: Communications and Transport Technology) with matching funding from Foras na Gaeilge (a total of €744,600: €499,300 from INTERREG, €189,750 from Foras na Gaeilge and €55,550 through the Strategic Initiative Fund of the Higher Education Authority).

[Focal] was funded by the European Union on the basis that it would bring the ordinary citizen in contact with ICT technologies, it wasn't funded as a language initiative at all. (Nic Pháidín)

Since 2007, Fiontar's work has been funded through contracts with Foras na Gaeilge for Focal; work on IATE terminology is supported by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

Foras na Gaeilge's annual budget for terminology in 2010 was €472,816.17.

Ag seo thíos an figiúr a caitheadh ar an Choiste Téarmaíochta le linn 2010: €472,816.17. Cuimsíonn seo tuarastal agus mar sin chomh maith le focal.ie ach mar eolas: (1) níl iniúchadh neamhspleach déanta orthu; (2) tá siad bunaithe ar mhodheolaíocht ar leith.<sup>33</sup> (email from Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh, 12.01.11)

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<sup>32</sup> 'FNG: And we were dealing with Irish-speakers, we were able to – when we were in the Department [of Education] we were dealing with English-speakers.

ÚB: So they had a better understanding.

FNG: At least we were dealing with Irish-speakers and if they didn't understand you at first you could make a case and say look, this is important, the public is worried about this... And the Foras understands that terminology is important. Which the Department didn't.'

<sup>33</sup> 'Here is the sum spent on the Terminology Committee during 2010: €472,816.17. This covers salaries and so on as well as Focal.ie but for your information: (1) it has not been independently audited; (2) the figures are based on a particular methodology.'

### **Is outsourcing of research work for term creation used? How does this work?**

Some term creation work is outsourced by Foras na Gaeilge to Fiontar. This includes research for a new sports dictionary. Term creation work for the IATE database of the EU institutions is also outsourced to Fiontar by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Terms newly created by Fiontar for IATE are submitted to the Terminology Committee for approval; other terms created by compounding existing elements are presumed approved. The Terminology Committee is always the validating authority.

The work of terminology needs substantial resources, more resources than exist. It's not clear how we will get those at present although... the resources that we've managed to make available to DCU managed to do things that wouldn't otherwise have been done, and under pressure of the alternative being significant damage to the reputation of the State. So that's what made that possible. (Ó Briain)

[Comment to this: An impression has been created recently that there is a problem in regard to official terminology and grammar in Irish that is of such magnitude that it represents a risk to the reputation of the State. This is not the case. If there are impediments to translating EU legislation and documentation, they are certainly not associated with terminology and grammar. National legislation is available in both languages since the foundation of the State and, as far as I'm aware, at no time has a legal issue been raised based on unclear terminology or grammar in either language. The same point applies to the translation of EU Treaties. (Uíbh Eachach email, 21.09.10)]

Well the original outsourcing with Fiontar obviously was around the development of the database and then that gave rise to other possibilities and to certain research topics, such as for instance the hierarchy of subjects fields. Which was work that we didn't have time for but which will be very valuable for the database, for ourselves, for users. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The Terminology Committee also maintains a panel of people to carry out occasional tasks.

We set up a panel of outside suitably qualified people to carry out various tasks that we don't have time to do. So for instance one of the members of the panel is Pádraic de Bhaldraithe and because we knew that the biology dictionary is out of date and that a new edition is needed and this is Pádraic's area of expertise and he's very eminent in his field, we discussed with him the possibility of revising the dictionary and providing advice ... Some of them are domain experts, such as Pádraic, whereas others would be people who would be qualified in terms of clean correct Irish but they might not be a subject field specialist, but they could carry out a basic task such as updating a list or perhaps checking the grammar on a list or something like that. So we have some tasks like that coming in. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The work of the panel is useful but involves considerable management time.

The material that's come in to us is very useful; however the setting up of the panel, the identifying and describing of tasks involves a certain amount of management and

time; and then the returned material requires more time... So it seems like a good idea but we could benefit from having more staff to help us to work with the material. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

**Who are the Irish term planning organisation's 'customers' or term users, and how is this determined?**

Users of Terminology Committee terminology, through Focal, are translators, writers, educators, people in the media and others who use the written language. There is also a recognition that terminology is used by the general public.

Baineann acmhainní na téarmaíochta, baineann siad le réimsí éagsúla ach baineann siad go háirithe le daoine a bhíonn i mbun scríobh; mar sin, más aistritheoir nó scríbhneoir nó duine a bhíonn ag scríobh fotheideal do chlár tú nó má tá tú ag obair sna meáin nó má tá tú ag plé le réimsí áirithe san oideachas, nó eagarthóirí téacsleabhair, sin iad na chéad daoine a bhíonn ag lorg téarmaíochta. Ina dhiaidh sin, bíonn gnáthbhaill den phobail a mbeidh sainspéis acu i seo nó siúd agus, anuas air sin, tá na héilimh a bhaineann leis an Acht Teanga faoin gcomharthaíocht dhátheangach agus le reachtaíocht an AE. Is iad na cáipéisí scríofa is mó a éilíonn go mbeidh an téarmaíocht chruinn ar fáil.<sup>34</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Sin gné eile den athrú fócais, más maith leat, ó earnáil an oideachais go dtí earnáil an phobail i gcoitinne.<sup>35</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Our remit basically is to serve the public, serve the language community, and because of the state of the language our approach is necessarily very different than it would be in a language with a very high speaker density. So we're constantly filling gaps or clarifying material that already exists. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The change of focus from the education sector to the general public as customers occurred gradually, particularly with the information revolution in the 1990s and increased publicity for the Terminology Committee through the publication of term lists.

FNG: Is dóigh liom féin gur thosaigh sé le réabhlóid na faisnéise agus bhraith muidne réabhlóid na faisnéise sna '90í, i lár na '90í, leis an ríomhphost, agus de bharr gur chuir

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<sup>34</sup> 'Terminology resources, they're relevant to different areas but particularly for people who are writing so if you're a translator or a writer or a subtitler for programmes or are working in the media or with certain educational domains, or textbook editors, those are the main people looking for terminology. After that there are members of the public with a special interest in this or that, and then there are the demands relating to the Language Act about bilingual signage, and relating to EU legislation. Precise terminology is required, in the main, for written documents.'

<sup>35</sup> 'That's another aspect of the change in focus, if you like, from the education sector to the public in general.'

muid liostaí beaga amach sna nuachtáin thosaigh baill éigin den phobal nár chuala fúinn cheana ag dul i dteagmháil linn. So thosaigh níos mó daoine...

ÚB: Na meáin, mar shampla?

FNG: Na meáin agus gnáthdhaoine go minic.<sup>36</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Changes in the status of Irish (discussed in the section beginning on page 5) prompted the biggest change.

This field has developed because historically terminology in Irish, the development of terminology in Irish was driven more by the needs of education. Now since the language act has come in here in 2003 and with the EU status in 2007, the focus or the driver has very much become supporting the status, and with the setting up of the new translation section as well for working on the statutory instruments there is huge potential to develop domains in terminology and to develop aids or applications in terminology that would hopefully make efficiencies in the way translators work. For instance it would be difficult to see that the language act of 2003 could successfully continue to be implemented if translators did not have access to, say, the online database. And taking that a step forward, development of translation memories for specific purposes, say translating statutory instruments and all of that. So I would see, in a way you kind of make it up as you go along, but the opportunities are there. And because of the situation with the status, these are now strategic priorities. Before we had the status, Irish language terminology was interesting and necessary but it was not such a strategic priority. (Nic Pháidín)

Most of those who contact the Terminology Committee now are translators.

ÚB: Ó thaobh an Choiste Téarmaíochta, meas tú cé hiad na custaiméirí?

AML: Bhuel bhí lá den tsaol agus ba é muintir scoile agus is dóigh liom iriseoirí... Ach ó tháinig Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla i bhfeidhm gan aon amhras, aistritheoirí, earnáil an aistriúcháin. Na hinstiúidí Eorpacha, saoraistritheoirí, gníomhaireachtaí aistriúcháin.

ÚB: Siadsan an chuid is mó?

AML: Siad an chuid is mó.<sup>37</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

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<sup>36</sup> 'FNG: I think it started with the information revolution, and we felt the information revolution in the '90s, in the mid '90s, with email, and because we published small lists in the newspapers, members of the public who hadn't heard of us started getting in touch. So more people started...

ÚB: The media, for example?

FNG: The media and ordinary people, often.'

<sup>37</sup> 'ÚB: For the Terminology Committee, who do you think the customers are?

AML: Well it used to be school people and I think journalists... But since the Official Languages Act came out undoubtedly it's translators, the translation sector. European institutions, freelance translators, translation agencies.

ÚB: It's mainly them?

AML: It's mainly them.'

The perspective I have is that the bulk of the demand and the bulk of the requests come from professional translators who are translating things for public bodies or who are translating textbooks and not an awful lot comes from people who are translating pure literature or more popular works. There is an issue there in terms of what is all this doing to ensure the language survives as a living language as distinct from a piece of academic or official work. (Ó Briain)

There is also a large amount of new terminology for the EU institutions.

As you know we're involved in a project, supporting a project that DCU is involved in to produce new terminology, but if you look at what might ultimately be involved which is that there is I think 1.5 [million] entries on the English version of the EU database, a lot of duplication and so on, and we're up to about 30,000 or 34,000 validated Irish terms. (Ó Briain)

Many of the queries from the public consist of or include LGP enquiries.

Amanna, ní raibh ann ach rudaí ginearálta – comhairle á lorg faoi ainmneacha ar thithe, nó faoi fhoclaíocht ar leac thuama, nó faoi theachtaireachtaí ar chártaí nó ar chuirí, agus sin fáth a mbíonn an-chuid rudaí ar na liostaí nach téarmaí iad ar chor ar bith ach gur iarratais iad ar shoiléiriú foclaíochta nó litrithe nó gramadaí.<sup>38</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

The users of Rannóg an Aistriúcháin terminology are almost exclusively translators and users of legislation although they are also contacted by journalists.

Siad na custaiméirí atá againn ná na comhaltaí sna Tithe, sé sin na Teachtaí Dála agus na Seanadóirí; na haonaid eile de sheirbhís an Oireachtais; na ranna agus comhlachtaí stáit; agus an pobal i gcoitinne, go háirithe daoine a d'úsáidfeadh na hAchtanna agus na cáipéisí a dhéanfaimidne a sholáthar agus a mbeadh éileamh acu ar na téarmaí a bhíonn in úsáid sna cáipéisí sin. Agus táimid ag caint anseo faoi iriseoirí. Faighimse glaoch ó iriseoirí go minic agus iad ag fiosrú cad é an téarma atá air seo, cad é an teideal cruinn atá ar an gcomhlacht áirithe seo. Ó oideachasóirí a bhíonn ag glaoch orainn maidir le ceisteanna gramadaí, ceisteanna téarmaíochta, agus foilsitheoirí a dhéanann an rud céanna. A leithéid sin. Sin iad na custaiméirí atá againn.<sup>39</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

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<sup>38</sup> 'At times, the enquiries concerned just general things – advice about names for houses, or about wording for a tombstone, or about messages for cards or invitations, and that's why there are many entries on our lists that aren't terms at all but requests for clarification of wording, spelling or grammar.'

<sup>39</sup> 'Our customers are members of the Houses, that is TDs and senators; other units of Oireachtas services; state departments and bodies; and the public in general, particularly people using the acts and documents we supply and who would have a need for the terms used in them. And we're talking here about journalists. I often get calls from journalists enquiring about what the term for this is, what the exact title of this body is. From educationalists who call us about grammar questions, terminology questions, and publishers doing the same thing. That kind of thing. They're our customers.'

## 2.4. Research: theoretical approaches

### **Where does terminology work stop – how strict a distinction is made between general language and specialised language?**

The Terminology Committee often receives (and responds to) requests for LGP words and phrases, such as for house names, gravestones and even tattoos.

Amanna, ní raibh ann ach rudaí ginearálta – comhairle á lorg faoi ainmneacha ar thithe, nó faoi fhoclaíocht ar leac thuama, nó faoi theachtaireachtaí ar chártaí nó ar chuirí, agus sin fáth a mbíonn an-chuid rudaí ar na liostaí nach téarmaí iad ar chor ar bith ach gur iarratais iad ar shoiléiriú foclaíochta nó litrithe nó gramadaí.<sup>40</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Different commentators had different explanations for this; one put it down to educating the public and another linked it to the lexicographical deficit.

There is a sense in which the growth and development has been so organic and I think, for example to what extent do people out there (in terms of how they approach the system), to what extent do they confuse terminology and translation and send in requests to the Terminology Committee and say ‘can you please confirm...’. I've seen examples of signs for centres; the terminology is not new but they're simply looking for a proofreading exercise... So there is that sense in terms of clarifying understandings and perceptions of what terminology is, what the work of the Terminology Committee is in terms of the public out there, make sure that they're crystal clear in their understanding. Because I think a lot of the pressure that the system is under at the moment arises from misperceptions or misconceptions like that. (Ó Ruairc)

A weakness not inherent in the terminology itself but in the general language planning, corpus planning situation, is the lack of development of the bilingual lexicography and I think terminology is very much suffering. When I say suffering I think the demand, the level of demand coming in for general language terms is bearing down on thin resources which means that people cannot maybe specialise in the work that is their proper remit. (Nic Pháidín)

Even if adequate lexicographic resources were available, however, this might not resolve the situation.

Is iomaí fiosrú, mar shampla, a mbíonn a réiteach le fáil sna foclóirí cheana féin ach nár cheadaigh daoine iad. Dá mba rud é gur foilsíodh foclóirí nua Béarla-Gaeilge go tráthrialta, ní dócha go bhfágfadh sé sin go dtiocfadh deireadh leis na fiosruithe.

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<sup>40</sup> <sup>40</sup> ‘At times, the enquiries concerned just general things – advice about names for houses, or about wording for a tombstone, or about messages for cards or invitations, and that’s why there are many entries on our lists that aren’t terms at all but requests for clarification of wording, spelling or grammar.’

Bheadh maolú áirithe ann ar bhealach amháin ach ghinfí fiosruithe nua as leaganacha éagsúla nó litriú éagsúil nó gramadach éagsúil i bhfoclóirí éagsúla nó sa teanga bheo.<sup>41</sup>  
(Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

There are other reasons as well that explain why little distinction is made between terminology and general language. These include lack of language training, lack of language confidence, confusion about whether Focal is a dictionary or a terminology collection, and failure to consult general-language dictionaries.

Many users who are not native speakers and who have not had training in any of these fields, tend to see terminology work and lexicography work as translation, and contact the Terminology Committee for ‘translations’. Those who are native speakers are often unconfident about their own recommendations for LSP material and approach the Committee for advice. A subset of these seek advice relating to dialectic, grammatical or orthographic matters. Other enquiries from Irish-language officers in public bodies, many of whom have had little training – if any – and some of whom may not be sufficiently fluent in the language often take the form of editorial or proofing requests. Such LGP and editorial requests are redirected to the helpline Freagra. Other requests take the form of recommendations that such and such an LGP word which is found in general language dictionaries should be added to the Focal database. This phenomenon arises from the fact that many people think the database is a dictionary, because the word ‘focal’ means ‘word’ and the Irish word for dictionary is ‘foclóir’, whereas the term for ‘term’ is ‘téarma’ and the term for ‘terminology’ is ‘téarmaíocht’. Yet other requests come from people who clearly have not consulted the general-language dictionaries at all given that the word, term or phrase is already available there. The last major general-language dictionary, *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla* (1977), is available in electronic format on CD, is searchable in Irish or English and includes complete grammar elaboration for all Irish headwords, including conjugation of verbs. The publication of this dictionary was followed by an abridged edition, an English-Irish/Irish-English dictionary with phonetic notation for each headword, and a series of monolingual Irish dictionaries for children and students. A new English-Irish dictionary, planned by the lexicography unit since the late 1970’s, was stalled repeatedly by the Department of Education who refused to approve staff recruitment for the project. With the transfer to Foras na Gaeilge in 1999, the project was finally approved and got off the ground about five years ago. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

This is due to the lack of lexicographic resources, the low level of *in vivo* term creation and language renewal, and the high proportion of language learners. One measure suggested is the provision of a language helpline.

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<sup>41</sup> ‘Many enquiries, for example, already have a solution in the dictionaries but that people didn’t check them. If new English-Irish dictionaries were regularly published, that probably wouldn’t mean an end to the enquiries. There would be a certain reduction in one way but new enquiries would emerge from different versions or different grammar in different dictionaries or in the living language.’



The other area that could be developed and should be developed is a helpline, a language helpline for general language queries, because this does not exist really in any meaningful form and even the media, even TG4 has to go off and make an arrangement with a private company. So people in the media working twenty-four seven or anybody else, there is no place to go, and several of the general language queries wind up, become, or come in the door as terminology queries, which is unfortunate for everybody because they are not, obviously, that so I think work needs to be done in more structured interaction with users, more representation of users maybe in the Coiste Téarmaíochta where I think traditionally it would, they would tend more to be representative of academic institutions. (Nic Pháidín)

**Is a semasiological or an onomasiological approach to research taken, or is this distinction considered relevant? Is the work based on translation of existing terms in other languages, or is the research done from the Irish side (on concepts)?**

Because almost all term requests and source lists of terms come from English, and because all Irish speakers are also fluent English speakers, existing terms in English are usually translated. Concept research for Irish is not done, except in the case of domains in which indigenous terms exist, such as GAA sports, which is being researched in Fiontar, or sailing, which was researched by a Terminology Committee subcommittee. In the case of subject-field collections, an onomasiological approach is taken in setting out the work.

Since the greater part of our work is in just-in-time term formation, the initial approach is semasiological in that we are presented with a term or terms in one or more languages and asked to provide an equivalent term in Irish. Thus, the foreign term is the starting point from which we research the underlying concept. Once the concept has been identified we employ an onomasiological approach to see if there are existing Irish terms which designate the concept. Our ultimate recommendations give preference to concept-based designations over calques.

On the other hand, research in subject-field collections involves a more onomasiological approach at the outset and also includes a semasiological approach as terms from another language come up for discussion. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010, with addition)

**Is terminology research reflective of real use, including for instance terms other than nominative ones (such as verbs or adjectives)?**

Verbs and adjectives are researched and included in Focal, as well as other material which is not strictly terminological, such as road signs and the names of public bodies. As mentioned above (in the section beginning on page 47), the Terminology Committee often receives (and responds to) requests for LGP words and phrases, such as for house names, gravestones and even tattoos.

The Terminology Committee's series of some twenty terminology dictionaries, which are available in the Focal database, all include verbs, adjectives and adverbs. In fact, this feature has given rise to a significant harmonization headache, due to the fact that

the same 'word' appears in several disparate collections, often conveying different concepts or contexts but merged into the same entry in the relational database. In hindsight, it would have been preferable to postpone the input of such entries until such time as disambiguation, definitions or usage examples had been added. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

**Where do most new terms come from? Who ultimately decides on their use or meaning?**

New terms are generally recommended by the Terminology Committee, or by Fiontar, or by members of the public who suggest terms in communication with the Terminology Committee or through the Focal enquiry form (there is a box for a 'suggested Irish term'), or by communication with or gleaning from the media.

Research begins with existing resources (dictionaries, reference material, Irish-language corpus, etc.) and often involves consultation with linguistic and subject-field specialists. Evidence of current term usage is also researched. The ensuing research is presented to our Committee or subject-field subcommittee for their consideration and they then make their recommendations for a preferred term. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

The Terminology Committee is the validating authority in all cases.

**What is studied (social use; popularisation and functioning of terms; corpora...)?**

There has been little corpus research done specific to Irish terminology. The New Corpus for Irish contains a weighted amount of technical material, legislation and print media, as well as material from creative literature. Although a live corpus of journals, newspapers and television and radio could be created and kept updated, and then used for researching the emergence of new terms, this has not been done although it was often mooted and discussed.

A technical subcorpus was planned as part of the New Corpus for Ireland and several texts were collected. However, the human resources were never in place to bring this project to completion. On the other hand, the bulk of technical terminology in Irish technical and media sources was actually provided by the Terminology Committee in the first place, which is borne out by the substantial terminological stock accumulated over the years. Rather, terms provided by the Committee on request find their way into publications, and may be emended at a later date if it is found that an alternative term is in popular use by the media. Since the amount of technical material published in Irish is scant, and even the amount of media material, the most obvious body of work for creation of a technical corpus is the body of legislation which has been translated into Irish since 1922. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Despite this difficulty, there is regular contact with the media and the New Corpus for Irish is used for its journalism content. Terms are also sometimes recorded when heard on radio or television.

Ar an gcéad dul síos, bíonn teagmháil rialta again leis na meáin faoi théarmaí éagsúla. Thairis sin, baineann muid leas as Corpas Nua na Gaeilge, a bhfuil roinnt mhaith

nuachtán agus irisí ann. Chomh maith leis sin, is minic a chláraítear téarmaí a chualathas ar RnaG nó ar TG4, nó a leasaítear téarmaí de réir a mbíonn in úsáid ag na meáin.<sup>42</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Because there is no language observatory, it is pointed out, it is difficult to stay abreast of language usage in the community.

Tá mé cinnte má bhíonn daoine ag deisiú gluasteán le chéile ar feadh fiche bliain i gCarna go mbíonn téarmaí faoi leith acu ar chuid den inneall agus baineann siad féin úsáid astu ach ní hionann sin agus a rá go bhfuil údarás ar bith ag baint leis nó a dhath mar sin, ach sin an dóigh a bhfuil sé. Agus bheadh sé an-deacair, gan aon saotharlann<sup>43</sup> a bheith ann, fáil amach cad atá á rá acu siúd agus úsáid cheart a bhaint as nó a mholadh do dhaoine eile... Bíonn na bearnaí á líonadh ag na daoine a déarfainn.<sup>44</sup> (Ó hlfearnáin)

Because it's legacy data it's not corpus based and I think that that's an area for development in the future. (Nic Pháidín)

There are examples of term creation based on usage.

Is cuimhin liom mar shampla an rud ar a dtugtar 'phishing' i gcúrsaí IT, is cuimhin liom an téarma sin a bheith á phlé againn agus bhí rud éigin molta ag foireann an Choiste Téarmaíochta. Ach bhí a fhios agam, tharla sé go raibh a fhios agam go raibh téarma in úsáid cheana féin ag roinnt daoine, is é an téarma a bhí acu ná 'fioscaireacht', meascán deas de bheith ag fiosrú rudaí agus ag iascaireacht. So ó tharla sin a bheith ann, glacadh leis agus bhí roinnt cur is cúiteamh ann faoi an raibh sé iomlán cruinn ach ar bhealach is cuma muna bhfuil sé iomlán cruinn má tá sé in úsáid.<sup>45</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

It is felt, however, that not enough research into term use is done, compared to other language situations. One of the reasons is lack of staff.

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<sup>42</sup> 'Firstly, we have regular contact with the media about different terms. As well as that, we use the New Corpus for Irish, which has quite a lot of newspapers and journals. As well as that, we often register terms heard on RnaG [the Irish-language radio station] or on TG4 [the Irish-language television station], or amend terms according to what is in use in the media.'

<sup>43</sup> Additional commentary: 'Saotharlann / Laboratory: B'fhéidir nach raibh an focal ceart in úsáid agam. '(Linguistic) Observatory' a bhí i gceist agama, ach ní bhaintear úsáid as an bhfocal sin sa chomhthéacs sin sa Bhéarla, agus tá an Ghaeilge dall air dá bharr' (Ó hlfearnáin)

<sup>44</sup> 'For car engineering or something like that, I'd say there are particular words that people are using among themselves...I'm sure that if people are fixing cars for twenty years in Carna that they have a specialised term for parts of the engine and they use them themselves. But that doesn't mean that it has any authority or anything, but that's the way it is. And it would be very difficult, without having any laboratory, to find out what they're saying and to use it properly or to recommend it to other people... People are filling the gaps I'd say.'

<sup>45</sup> 'I remember for example what's called 'phishing' in IT matters, I remember us discussing that term and the Terminology Committee staff had recommended something. But I knew, I happened to know that some people were already using a term, 'fioscaireacht', a nice mixture of 'enquiring about something' and 'fishing'. So since that was there, it was accepted and there was some debate about whether it was totally precise but in a way it doesn't matter if its not totally precise if it's in use.'

ÚB: Meastú an bhféadfaí níos taighde a dhéanamh le fháil amach céard atá sa chaint nó an ndéantar ar bhealach ar bith córasach iarracht a fháil amach?

AML: Bhuel déantar, cuirim i gcás bhí an sampla sin ann, 'joint', 'cannabis joint', agus rinneadh taighde air sin agus fuarthas amach go raibh leithéidí 'dúidín' ann, bhí 'toirtín draíochta' ann, bhí go leor leor rudaí nach mbeifeá ag súil leo. Tá roinnt rudaí i gceist ansin, an chéad rud ná acmhainní agus tá tú tuirseach ag éisteacht leis seo ach níl aon bhealach thart air seo; agus ball foirne buan lánaimseartha amháin a bheith ann, tá sé áiféiseach, agus duine eile ar conradh agus gan an conradh sin a bheith seasta. Tá sé áiféiseach.<sup>46</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

As well as that, the resources available, such as literature and the media, rarely contain many *in vivo* term creation efforts, and are not always very relevant, particularly in the case of specialised terminology.

Níl aon neart air sin sa chomhthéacs sochtheangeolaíoch a bhfuil muid ag obair ann. Tá a fhios agam, institiúidí téarmaíochta eile, muintir na Fraince b'fhéidir go mbeadh acu le rogha a dhéanamh idir leaganacha atá in úsáid... Ach ní hamhlaidh dúinne faraor. Tá a fhios agam, níl sé mar ba mhaith leat é a bheith ach níl a fhios agam cén leigheas atá air.<sup>47</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Members of the public do sometimes contact the Terminology Committee about terms that they have heard, however.

Is minic a thagann baill den phobal i dteagmháil linn i dtaobh téarmaí atá in úsáid nó cloiste acu agus go ndéantar na moltaí sin a chlárú. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

There is also a question of the usefulness of literature, for example, as a source for new terminology.

Is beag leabhar Gaeilge a thagann amach nach ndéanaim iarracht treabhadh tríd agus dar leat b'fhéidir gur foinse mhaith téarmaíochta *in vivo* é ach mo thaithí féin air – *no*. Bíonn téarmaí ann ceart go leor, cuid acu – bhuel bíonn fadhb réime ann go minic. Pádraig Stándún, bhí úrscéal aige agus bhí duine, stop na gardaí é agus é 'breathalysed' agus bhí mé ag rá liom féin, aha, 'breathalysed', ba deas an téarma Gaeltachta seo a fháil. Ach is é an rud a bhí aige ná 'cuireadh an mála orm', agus tá amhrán le John Beag Ó Flatharta, téann sé céim níos faide agus deir sé, 'cuireadh an baigín orm' [laughter]. Arís tá sé sin an-deas agus sílim gur cheart sin a bheith ar Focal ach tá fadhb réime leis

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<sup>46</sup> 'ÚB: Do you think more research could be done to find out what's in spoken use or is there any systematic effort to find out?

AML: Well there is, for example there was that sample, 'joint', 'cannabis joint', and research was done on that and we found out that there are terms like 'dúidín', 'toirtín draíochta', lots of things you mightn't expect. There are a few things involved there, the first thing is resources, and you're sick of hearing this but there's no way around it; with one permanent full-time staff member it's ridiculous, and another person on contract and that contract not permanent. It's ridiculous.'

<sup>47</sup> 'It can't be helped in the sociolinguistic context in which we're working. I know other terminology institutes, the French might have to make a choice between versions that are in use... But unfortunately that's not the case for us. I know it's not what you'd want but I don't know how it can be solved.'

sin, is deacair a shamhlú go ndéarfadh breitheamh le garda, 'agus an fíor gur chuir tú an baigín air?' Tá na deacrachtaí sin ann le cuid mhór. Téarmaí fíorthaicniúla ní dóigh liom go bhfaighidh tú iad ar an dóigh sin. B'fhéidir go bhfaighidh tú téarmaí cineál meafarach agus béarlagair, b'fhéidir go bhfaighidh tú cuid de sin.<sup>48</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Efforts to include the public in term creation in the past have not been successful; for example, a discussion board post inviting new terms had only one response. (It is not known, however, what the traffic on this discussion board is.) On the other hand, sixty per cent of respondents to a survey (Mac Lochlainn 2008, 45) said they would use a discussion board or blog hosted on Focal.

Ach tá rudaí ann cheana, mar shampla tá clár plé ar Beo, agus tá rud ann, 'ceap téarma' nó rud éigin mar sin. Agus tá téarma amháin air ó bunaíodh é, 'nanny state'. 'Stát buime' a mholtar. So níl mé ag iarraidh bheith diúltach faoi agus níl mé ag iarraidh bheith cosantach faoi ach níl a fhios agam cén *take-up* a bheadh ar a leithéid. Sin an eagla a bheadh orm.<sup>49</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

### **Is the use of terms outside their original fields (popularisation and determinologisation) studied?**

As discussed in the section beginning on page 50 above, very little research is carried out into term use.

Popularisation and determinologisation are not specifically studied but are borne in mind as the context arises. As will be obvious, we have never had the resources to carry out such studies in a systematic manner. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

### **How much *ad hoc* work is done in response to enquiries etc?**

There are two sides to the Terminology Committee's work; the compilation of dictionaries on particular subject areas, and *ad hoc* work in response to term requests. Most of the Terminology Committee's work is currently in response to enquiries. These enquiries come to the Terminology Committee through Focal, by email and by phone.

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<sup>48</sup> 'Nearly every Irish book that comes out I try and get through it and you'd think that it would be a good source of *in vivo* terminology but in my own experience – no. There's terms all right, but there's often a problem with the register. Pádraig Stándún had a novel, and a man was stopped by the guards and 'breathalysed', and I was saying to myself, aha, 'breathalysed', it'd be nice to get the Gaeltacht term for this. But what he had was 'the bag was put on me', and there's a song by John Beag Ó Flatharta, it goes a step further and he says, 'the little bag was put on me' [laughter]. And that's really nice and I think it should be in Focal but there's a problem with register, you can't imagine that a judge would say to a garda 'and is it true that you put the little bag on him?'. There are those problems with a lot of them. I don't think you'll find very technical terms like that. You might get metaphorical and slang terms, you might get some of that.'

<sup>49</sup> 'But there are things already, for example there's a discussion board on Beo, and there's a thing, 'make up a term' or something like that. And there's been one term since it was set up, 'nanny state'. 'Stát buime' is suggested. So I'm not trying to be negative about it and I'm not trying to be defensive but I don't know what take-up there'd be for the like. That's what I'd be afraid of.'

Increasingly, I would have to say that the majority of our work is now *ad hoc*, for the simple reason that it takes – as you know there are two of us working here at the moment - all our time to respond to the enquiries, to prepare, to do the research and to record the decisions and get back to the people. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The bulk of our work falls into this category. We currently receive some 700 enquiries per month although this can vary. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

The amount of *ad hoc* terminology work has grown, and stood at 5,000 or more enquiries per year in 2009. Some of this arises from EU translation work and other translation for official purposes. In other cases, the requests are for signage for businesses.

Numbers of enquiries processed increased from c. 1,000 per year in the 1980s to 2,000 in late 1990s to 5,000+ in 2009, bearing out the factors already mentioned: the information revolution in the 1990s, the transfer to a North-South public body in 1999, the introduction of the Official Languages Act in 2003 and the enhanced EU status from January 2007. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2009 with addition)

The provision of an advice service to the public was not part of the Terminology Committee's original remit (which was to serve the educational sector). However, it grew organically in the context of the information revolution, of increased interest by the public and some businesses in having terms or LGP phrases or advice about them in Irish. One of the catalysts was a scheme introduced by Bord na Gaeilge encouraging businesses to use bilingual signage and advertising. A company based in Galway, Gaillimh le Gaeilge, has been working in this area since the 1990s and has been in regular contact with the Terminology Committee office for advice on wording for such businesses. Many came, at one time, from *The Body Shop*, others had to do with bilingual menus for restaurants. On the one hand, the Committee pointed out that this was not terminology work and that we shouldn't engage in it, while on the other hand it was felt that such signage was far more likely to have visibility and impact among everyday users than technical documents which few would ever read. It can, of course, be argued that someone else should have been providing the advice service but, at the time, no-one else was doing it. There is now a helpline called 'Freagra' to which such enquiries are rerouted. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

**Who is consulted during the research process (linguists, terminologists, domain experts...)? When and how are they consulted?**

In the Terminology Committee's work, domain experts and others are regularly consulted.

Research begins with existing resources (dictionaries, reference material, Irish-language corpus, etc.) and often involves consultation with linguistic and subject-field specialists. Evidence of current term usage is also researched. The ensuing research is presented to our Committee or subject-field subcommittee for their consideration and they then make their recommendations for a preferred term. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

Q: Who do you work with in research (linguists, terminologists, domain experts...)?  
When and how do you consult them?

FNG: We consult all of the above on a regular basis by e-mail or by phone, as well as in formal committee or subcommittee meetings. In some cases we also consult terminologists abroad in relation to term usage in languages other than English. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

With legal concepts, we would first approach Rannóg an Aistriúcháin to see if they already have it and if they have a recommendation. In some events where they don't have it we would contact legal experts, people who at least are highly qualified in the law and then the next question is whether they would be fluent Irish speakers, but to identify the concept – particularly if it's an Irish legal term which is being researched, then you're not probably going to get a definition in an online or printed resource. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Many members of the Terminology Committee have a linguistic background, although the media, educational, literary and translation sectors are also represented, while Subcommittee members, who work on specific domain collections, are exclusively domain experts.

In Fiontar's work on the sports dictionary, there are several levels of checking with domain experts. In compiling the English source lists, experts from each sport contributed advice. Once Irish terms are researched and compiled, these lists of proposed terms are sent to a panel of sports journalists for feedback. The material is then discussed by a Terminology Committee subcommittee.

There is a recognised problem in working with a minority language such as Irish in finding domain experts working within the language. In some cases (such as sports journalism and within the education system – on which many collections are based) it is possible; in others, such as medicine and other technical areas where no training is given through Irish, it is not.

Although it has sometimes proved difficult to identify Irish-speaking domain experts in some domains such as art and the medical sciences, subcommittees established over the years by the Terminology Committee who developed some twenty terminological domain collections, consisted exclusively of domain experts who were native or fluent Irish speakers. Most of these domain experts worked professionally through the medium of Irish, while some were native or fluent speaker of Irish who worked through the medium of English. The Terminology Committee also consults individual domain experts who are normally fluent speakers. Domain experts who are not Irish speakers are sometimes consulted in order to clarify the meaning or context of a specific concept. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Na foinsí eolais atá ann, an litríocht agus b'fhéidir na fóraim ríomhphoist agus rudaí mar sin a d'fhéadfá taighde a dhéanamh orthu, is beag cabhair dúinn iad i gcuid mhór den obair atá ar siúl againn. Mar is ar éigean a bhíonn na rudaí seo á bplé i nGaeilge. Ceann de na liostaí deireanacha ó IATE bhí cuid mhór téarmaíochta a bhaineann le cúrsaí iarnróid agus ní fiú amháin iarnróid na tíre seo ach iarnróid na mór-roinne, na traenáil ardluais sin cosúil leis an TGV. So muna dtagann muid ar oibrí iarnróid sa Fhrainc a labhraíonn Gaeilge, ní cabhair ar bith – is ceapadh i bhfolús a bheidh ann. Agus níl neart air. Agus is líonadh bearnaí atá ann, rud nach bhfuil iomlán sásúil ach arís má tá an cúram seo orainn ní féidir linn diúltú do chustaiméirí agus a rá bhuel, ní phléitear cúrsaí iarnróid i nGaeilge. Sin an dualgas atá orainn agus caithfidh muid leanstan dó.<sup>50</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Other factors also have to be taken into account.

While we defer to the expert advice of subject-field specialists, other factors need to be considered, such as precedents, usage, ambiguity or other possible causes of confusion, orthographical and grammatical conventions, terminological principles, evidence from other languages. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

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<sup>50</sup> 'The information sources that exist, the literature and maybe the email forums and things like that that you could research, they're of little help in a lot of the work we're doing. Because these things are hardly being discussed in Irish. One of the most recent lists from IATE had a lot of terminology relating to railways, and not even the railways of this country but continental railways, high-speed trains like the TGV. So if we can't find an Irish-speaking French railway worker, there's no help – it's term creation in a vacuum. And it can't be helped. And its filling gaps, which isn't very satisfactory but again if we have this responsibility we can't refuse customers and say, well, railways aren't discussed in Irish. That's our duty and we have to carry on with it.'



## 2.5. Research: Methods

### **How is terminology research carried out? What are the process and the research methods?**

Research work done by the Terminology Committee is carried out by looking at existing resources, consulting domain experts, and researching current usage. The results of the research are then presented to and discussed by the committee. In practice, not all term proposals are discussed for lack of time.

Research begins with existing resources (dictionaries, reference material, Irish-language corpus, etc.) and often involves consultation with linguistic and subject-field specialists. Evidence of current term usage is also researched. The ensuing research is presented to our Committee or subject-field subcommittee for their consideration and they then make their recommendations for a preferred term. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

We consult all of the above [linguists, terminologists, domain experts] on a regular basis by e-mail or by phone, as well as in formal committee or subcommittee meetings. In some cases we also consult terminologists abroad in relation to term usage in languages other than English. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

Concepts and terms are researched in online dictionaries and databases, in paper dictionaries and reference books, through consulting subject-field experts, for definitions; context and usage samples are collected from the Internet and/or printed reference material, and from those making terminological enquiries. The research is recorded and stored for future reference. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

After consulting the focal.ie database, we often refer to the original source material input into the database for clarification of context. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

On foot of the research, candidate terms are proposed which may have been suggested by the member of the public making the request or by staff in the Terminology Office. The simplest of these are uploaded onto the Terminology Committee's extranet a week prior to the monthly meeting. Comments made by Committee members are analysed and incorporated and only those which give rise to some doubt – usually a handful - are discussed at the meeting. The meeting proper focuses on questions of principle arising out of the enquiries or out of editorial work for the database. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

An extranet was established in 2008 in order to cut down on the extent of the lists to be discussed at Committee meetings. From then on, the simplest enquiries along with research and candidate terms are uploaded a week before the monthly meetings, comments made by Committee members are incorporated, and only those giving rise to doubt or another question – usually a handful - are discussed at the meetings. Discussion of terms agreed at the previous meeting is not allowed and must be directed to the Secretary who, if necessary, refers them back to the next meeting in the form of a new query. In this way, only questions of principle arising from enquiries or from editorial work for the database are discussed at the meetings. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Lists of terms submitted by publishers or members of the public are presented at monthly meetings. They do not represent a structured section of a particular domain, and the concepts and definitions may not have been adequately researched for want of time. Terms which have been decided form part of the minutes at subsequent meetings of the Terminology Committee, and often become the subject of debate and are changed. This *ad hoc* approach means that, although existing terms are consulted, inconsistencies are inevitable.

Ní bhíonn dóthain daoine ag teacht. Agus uaireanta bheadh daoine a bhí as láthair an mhí seo caite, ní hiad na daoine céanna a bheidh as láthair an mhí seo agus tharlódh sé go mbeadh malairt tuairime ag an duine. Tarlaíonn sé sin.<sup>51</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

An extranet was established in 2008 in order to cut down on the extent of the lists to be discussed at Committee meetings. From then on, the simplest enquiries along with research and candidate terms are uploaded a week before the monthly meetings, comments made by Committee members are incorporated, and only those giving rise to doubt or another question – usually a handful - are discussed at the meetings. Discussion of terms agreed at the previous meeting is not allowed and must be directed to the Secretary who, if necessary, refers them back to the next meeting in the form of a new query. In this way, only questions of principle arising from enquiries or from editorial work for the database are discussed at the meetings. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Because most of the terminology work is translation-oriented, and also because of lack of time, definitions are not always included.

Breathnaímid orthu siúd ar bhealach mar dheismireachtaí idéalacha. I saol idéalach bheadh siad curtha le chuile shórt. Agus de réir mar a thuigim ní i gcónaí a éiríonn le daoine iad a chur le téarmaí i dteangacha eile ach an oiread, ach go mbeidís b'fhéidir le cur le téarmaí nó le coincheapa atá casta nó deacair nó doiléir, nó a bhfuil imdhealú de

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<sup>51</sup> 'Not enough people come. And sometimes you'd have people who were absent last month, it wouldn't be the same as the people who will be absent this month and people could have different opinions. That happens.'

chineál le léiriú iontu. Ach is dóigh liom nach bhféadfá slata tomhais teangacha móra a úsáid agus tú ag plé le mionteanga...<sup>52</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Subcommittee research (on subject-specific collections) is carried out by a group of domain experts. The scope of the collection is first identified, along with relevant resources. Core concepts are identified. Research is then carried out on the Irish terms, and the term lists are discussed.

The approach to subcommittee work is somewhat different. The first step is to identify, on the advice of the members, the scope of the collection i.e. the fields and subfields to be covered, and the number of concepts envisaged. The members also advise on relevant resource material. Core concepts and related concepts are then identified, and tabled in field or subfield lists. The next step is to collect available and relevant Irish terms, and match them with the concept lists. The order in which the lists are to be discussed is then agreed. Then the Subcommittee sets to work on the lists, reviews the existing terms, identifies patterns, discusses the missing terms and recommends appropriate new Irish terms. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The subcommittee method can be very slow. For example, a business-terminology subcommittee was established by the Terminology Committee in autumn 2003 to undertake an updated version of the original 1989 dictionary (Uí Bhraonáin 2004, 9). In 2010, this work was not yet finished.

In order to develop a new edition of the business dictionary, it was decided to compile two published dictionaries and one unpublished list into one complete alphabetic list. This involved many repeats, and quite a few synonyms or competing terms. The subcommittee worked on the list for four years, and then a terminology assistant set about editing the list. He left the organisation before this task was completed, however. When it became obvious he was not going to be replaced, the task of inputting the revisions into the database was assigned to a contract worker. While this task has been completed, it is not clear when or if the final editing of the collection will be carried out. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

A Home Economics subcommittee was also set up in 2003 to develop a revised edition of the original Home Economics dictionary. The project was abandoned after just a few meetings, however, as key subcommittee members were forced to withdraw due to professional or personal reasons. The project was not revisited due to the increasing workload of office staff. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

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<sup>52</sup> 'We look at them as kind of ideal embellishments. In an ideal world they'd be added to everything. And as far as I understand people don't always manage to add them to terms in other languages either, but that they're added to complicated or difficult or obscure terms or concepts, or ones that need to be distinguished in some way. But I don't think you could use the yardstick of the big languages in dealing with small languages.'

There would always be one of the office staff on a subcommittee... Well apart from just setting up the meetings and keeping a record etc, and that period of discussion of terms, it usually lasts a couple of years depending on the size of the collection and on the availability of the committee members and so on and so forth. So it lasts about four years, that work, but then what generally happens is that when the subcommittee has finished their work and the editorial work begins, then a whole new set of questions arises, because as things are compared in depth it turns out that this term doesn't exactly match that concept, or it half-matches that concept or the concept is slightly different in English; there's a partial equivalency. So that period of editorial work is quite time-consuming. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Fiontar's research work is mainly concerned with the sports dictionary project and with the creation of terms for the IATE database. The sports dictionary research is carried out in a database which has the same structure as Focal. A list of domains to be researched, and a maximum number of concepts to be researched in each domain, was initially agreed with Foras na Gaeilge. Lists of English terms are found in published and online resources, and sports experts are asked to select the most important concepts in each sport. Existing Irish terms are then researched in resources such as a small corpus of newspaper sports pages, subject-specific books, and publications by sporting organisations. Terms are created or compounded where gaps exist. Lists of English and suggested Irish terms, with definitions and commentary if necessary, are made available to a panel of Irish-language sports journalists, and they are asked to comment or make suggestions. Fiontar's recommendations are finally discussed by a Terminology Committee subcommittee. Fiontar is processing about 600 terms monthly in this way.

Research for the IATE database is also carried out in a dedicated system. Lists sent from the European institutions are entered into the database. The terms are then researched using Focal, IATE, and a set of aligned treaties, as well as other sources. After several levels of editorial checking, proposed terms are made available to EU translators on a dedicated extranet. Their comments are studied and incorporated before the more complex or difficult terms are sent to the Terminology Committee for approval. Simpler terms are considered approved without this step. Lists are returned to IATE on a monthly basis. Fiontar processes about 1,300 terms monthly in this way.

**What internal research systems are used (e.g. in-house or commercial software, particular methods)?**

The Focal database, created in-house by Fiontar using Microsoft SQL, is used for term research. On an interface not visible to the public, the database is an editorial tool for the Terminology

Committee and for Fiontar. Terms, once proposed or approved, can be directly entered into the database by editors and made available to the public.

Fiontar's work on sports terms, legal term extraction and EU terminology is done in databases created in-house and modelled on Focal. Other research tools, such as Trados MultiTerm, are also used as needed.

**How is the research work documented (e.g. training manual, history of database changes)?**

Fiontar uses a set of manuals for training new staff, which describe in detail how terms should be recorded in the database, and how research work is done.

The Terminology Committee's work is documented in minutes of meetings and in internal files.

The research work is documented in internal files which are prepared in advance of our committee meetings. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

Fiontar's work is reported to Foras na Gaeilge in quarterly reports.

The database maintains a complete history of changes made by each user. It has also been archived in the AHDS (Arts and Humanities Data Service, University of Oxford) archive (2007).

**How is the research work structured – are concept systems used to lay out the work?**

Concept systems are not used for the Terminology Committee's work.

Since the bulk of our time is taken up with just-in-time terminology work, concept system work is not feasible. Research is carried out on the new concept and includes listing any related concepts already extant in our sources. Further related concepts which turn up in definitions are also included.

Concept systems were developed for some of our smaller subject-field collections, but most collections to date have been of a scope far greater than could be readily handled in this manner. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

In the case of Fiontar's work on the sports dictionary, concepts are structured by domain with sub-domains. For example, in the case of team games, one subdomain is rugby, and this is further divided into facilities and equipment; international competitions; national competitions; governing bodies; events; rules and refereeing; and technique and tactics.

**How much of the research work carried out by the Irish term planning organisation is based directly on current theory about how research should be done? How pragmatic is the Irish term planning organisation when theory and the reality of research vary? [Could you give me some examples?]**

An approach described as being based on the principles of ISO 704 was used in researching some term collections, such as television terms and sailing terms.

Rinneadh cuid de na prionsabail, baineadh leas as cuid de na prionsabail chéanna nuair a bhí an bunfhoclóir téarmaí teilifíse á chur le chéile, baineadh leas astu agus an bunleagan amach á dhéanamh ar an bhfoclóir seoltóireachta, ag an bhfochoiste seoltóireachta.<sup>53</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

It was felt that some aspects of term research theory – such as those embodied in ISO 704 – are not suited to a language situation such as that of Irish. This is because these standards assume that work is being done on a very small number of terms, and this is not realistic, given the pressures felt and the scant resources available.

FNG: ...Ceann de na bunmholtaí atá i gcaighdeán ISO 704 ar aon nós, maidir le gnóthaí a leagan amach de réir chóras na gcoincheap maidir le múnlaí coincheapúla agus a leithéid, ná liosta beag gearr, b'fhearr leo a bheith ag plé le fiche coincheap, nó chloisfeá scéalta faoi ghrúpaí a chaith dhá lá ag plé an choincheapa chéanna.

ÚB: Mar sin dáiríre níl sé feiliúnach don chás seo.

FNG: Bhuel, níl sé praiticiúil nuair a chuimhníonn tú ar an méid stuif atá le cur san áireamh. Is dóigh liom go molann siad gan a bheith ag plé le níos mó ná 200 coincheap ag an aon am amháin... Tá 10,000 coincheap in *Foclóir Ríomhaireachta is Teicneolaíocht Faisnéise*. Dá mbeifeá leis sin a dhéanamh de réir mar a mholann na caighdeáin, cé mhéid 200 atá i 10,000 – go leor. Is ar an gcúis sin go bhfeictear dom go mbeadh sé an-deacair é a chur i bhfeidhm go hiomlán.<sup>54</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Despite this, working methods were found to converge in many ways with theory.

Ach ag an am céanna tá gnéithe, nuair a bhreathnaíonn tú ar na prionsabail a luaitear sna caighdeáin sin ó thaobh chur chuige na téarmaíochta agus slata tomhais maidir le téarmaí nua a chumadh, agus slata tomhais maidir le téarmaí atá in úsáid nuair a bhíonn dhá théarma ann, an chuid is mó de na rudaí sin tá siad mórán mar a bhí le fírinne ag an gCoiste, nár chuir aon chaighdeán [i bhfeidhm]. Agus is dóigh go léiríonn sé sin go bhfuil siad loighciúil is cuma cén teanga lena bhfuil tú ag plé.<sup>55</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

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<sup>53</sup> 'Some of the principles, some of the same principles were used when the original television terminology dictionary was being compiled, they were used when the basic layout of the sailing dictionary was being done by the sailing subcommittee.'

<sup>54</sup> 'FNG: One of the main recommendations in the ISO 704 standard in any event, about laying out the work according to the concept system with concept models and so on, is to have short lists, they'd rather be dealing with twenty terms, or you'd hear stories about groups that spent two days discussing the one term.'

ÚB: So it's not really suitable in this case.

FNG: Well it's not practical when you think about the amount of stuff that has to be considered. I think they recommend that you not deal with more than 200 concepts at a time... There are 10,000 computing terms. If you were to do that as the standard recommends, how many 200s are there in 10,000 – lots. That's why it seems to me that it would be very difficult to implement completely.'

<sup>55</sup> 'But at the same time there are aspects, when you look at the principles mentioned in those standards for approaches to terminology and criteria for terms that are in use when there are two terms, most of those things are much as the Committee had them, that never implemented any standard. And I suppose that shows that they're logical no matter what language you're dealing with.'

A dictionary in which the entries were laid out in a concept structure was unpopular with readers.

Ceann de na foclóirí is lú atá againn, is é sin *Téarmaí Gramadaí na Sean-Ghaeilge*, rinneadh é sin go córasach de réir eiseamláir 704 (bhuel, níor cuireadh sainmhínithe agus samplaí úsáide ann, is é sin, breathnaímid orthu siúd ar bhealach mar dheismireachtaí idéalacha)... Ach ar deireadh thiar thall, nuair a foilsíodh é ní raibh daoine róshásta leis an leagan amach. B'fhearr leo is dóigh an rud a raibh taithí acu air, b'fhearr leo liosta aibítreach; agus tú ag léamh leabhair bíonn sé níos éasca teacht ar rud nuair a thuigeann tú cén chaoi lena lorg, ní hionann ar ndóigh agus foirm leictreonach, rud nach raibh ann ag an am.<sup>56</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

In the case of Fiontar's work on the dictionary of sport, some aspects of the research, such as the use of ISO-standard definitions (where needed) and corpus research, are directly based in theory and in what the editors learned at the Termnet Terminology Summer School.

It is accepted that there is a compromise involved in the application of theory, but that it is important to be aware of developments.

I think in most countries working with terminology it's a question of coming to some kind of accommodation. You know what best practice seems to be, or would be in certain areas, and you work towards that, but not necessarily achieving that always. (Nic Pháidín)

The ISO work that I'm involved in is, like you say – it is a practical benefit in that it's very interesting to discuss language situations in very far-flung language communities, to see how the experiences of the different language communities are incorporated into the standards. Even though we may not be in a position to fully implement the standards, at least becoming familiar with them is helpful and hopefully in a more ideal staffing situation would lead to us being able to implement more of them. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

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<sup>56</sup> 'One of the smallest dictionaries we have, *Grammar Terms of Old Irish*, that was done systematically according to the 704 example (well, definitions and usage samples were not added, we regard them really as ideal embellishments)... But in the end when it was published people weren't too happy with the layout. I suppose they preferred what they were used to, they preferred an alphabetical list; if you're reading a book it's easier to find something when you understand how to look for it, unlike an electronic form of course, which didn't exist at the time.'

## 2.6. Standardisation

### What does 'standardisation' mean for the Irish term planning organisation?

There was a general consensus among interviewees about what standardisation means in the Irish context, and that it means having an agreed set of terminology for particular legal and administrative spheres, where precision matters. The main points made about standardisation in the Irish context are the importance of provision of terms for new contexts; the acceptance of terminology conventions and principles (such as in country names); the use of a standard term in translation regardless of the agency for whom the translation is being done; having a common written standard; and the use of a single authoritative and transparent term.

Mar a deir tú, tá tuairimí éagsúla ann faoi cad is caighdeánú ann, cad ba chóir a bheith i gceist le caighdeánú, nó ar chóir caighdeánú a bheith ann. Agus is dóigh liom go luíonn sé le ciall má táthar ag iarraidh a chinntiú gur teanga nua-aimseartha fhorásach í an Ghaeilge go mbeadh na téarmaí go léir ar fáil sa teanga atá ar fáil i dteangacha eile agus go mbeadh an teanga ábalta freagairt do choincheapanna nua atá tagtha ar aghaidh... Tá caighdeánú tábhachtach, ceapaim. An méid sin ráite, ní féidir brú a chur ar dhaoine glacadh le rudaí mura bhfuil fonn orthu é sin a dhéanamh.<sup>57</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Is dóigh liom go bhfeadfá a rá gur caighdeánú nó normalú a bhí sa socrú a rinneadh mar gheall ar na hil-leaganacha le haghaidh 'internet'... Is dóigh liom go bhfeadfá a rá, de réir mar a thuigimse an scéal gur caighdeánú atá ann 'an t-idirlíon' a bheith ann in áit 'an gréasán domhanda'. Ach chomh maith leis sin is dóigh liom nósmaireachtaí agus prionsabail téarmaíochta chomh maith. Cuir i gcás déarfainn gur den chaighdeánú socrú éigin a dhéanamh maidir le logainmneacha iasachta, cad iad na logainmneacha iasachta a aistrítear go Gaeilge agus cad iad na logainmneacha a fhágtar gan aistriú agus tá socrú déanta faoi sin, na príomhchathracha, ainmneacha tíortha, iad sin a aistriú go Gaeilge. So measaim gur cuid den chaighdeánú é sin chomh maith, prionsabail a leagan síos d'obair na téarmaíochta sa chaoi is nach mbeidh rudaí á ndéanamh go han-scaoilte ar fad.<sup>58</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

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<sup>57</sup> 'As you say there are different opinions about what standardisation is, what it should mean, or whether there should be standardisation. And I think it makes sense if we want to ensure that Irish is a modern, progressive language that all the terms available in other languages should be available and that the language be able to respond to new concepts that have emerged... Standardisation is important, I think. That said you can't push people to accept things if they don't want to.'

<sup>58</sup> 'I think you could say that the arrangement about the multiple versions for 'internet' was standardisation or normalisation... I think you could say, as far as I understand it, that it's standardisation to have 'the internet' instead of 'the world wide web'. But also I think terminology customs and principles. For example I think it's part of standardisation to make some arrangement about foreign placenames, which foreign placenames are translated to Irish and which are left untranslated and there's a decision made about that, principal cities, country names, to translate those to Irish. So I think that's of standardisation as well, to set out principles for terminology work so that things aren't being done very loosely.'



I suppose in the immediate context... the standardisation is about making sure that in those areas where there are alternative Irish language terms being used by different agencies... – in a very particular context of the legal sphere, the acts, secondary legislation and European Union level work; that's where it's pertinent – making sure that as far as possible there is one term, not one authority necessarily, but one term and one term only, and you don't want a situation where when translators sit down and produce a document, if they're doing the work for one agency they use this term and for another agency another term, or they'll pick their grammatical rules for one agency and a different one for another agency. That is not sustainable. (Ó Ruairc)

I suppose in terms of Irish it means that there is a common written standard which is used for official purposes regardless of what canúint is used by the writer. And it also means that for, to my mind, for highly technical and precise terminology there should be one term and one term only in Irish that's agreed for official purposes and other terms that have been composed by people working in isolation down through the years or even down through the centuries, it should be deprecated, it shouldn't be used. On the basis that if we are translating legislation and if we are trying to make things as easy as possible for translators and for people reading legislation there should be certainty about what the Irish is for very, very precise technical language. I'm not talking about ordinary language. 'Absenteeism', 'subsidiarity', and so on. Because of the nature of the language and its history and because we've had experts working in isolation, there can be different versions, different words composed. There should be one picked for official purposes. (Ó Briain)

Well I suppose the core meaning is to try and stick to the principle of presenting one authoritative term for each concept. But it's not always possible, sometimes it's not even pleasant because if you pick, let's say the word for trespass, it's not pleasant, 'treaspás' and I'm not even sure what's in the database for trespass, or even if that's the best example, but it's certainly an example of a difficulty in communicating something that's very widely understood in English. So the aspiration of standardisation is to present one authoritative transparent term. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

There is no legal obligation on the Irish administration or others to use terms provided by the Terminology Committee. This is partly to do with Irish administrative culture.

ÚB: Agus an bhfuil gné reachtúil leis an gcaighdeánú, gné d'iallach a chur ar dhaoine?

AML: Bheadh faitíos orm sin a rá, 'bhfuil a fhios agat. Sílim go bhfuil oscailteacht agus cineál solúbthacht áirithe ann agus is maith liom an rud atá in úsáid anois ar Focal, an nod sin 'in úsáid' agus na rudaí a thugann sin le fios: feiceann tú seo, cloiseann tú seo, is féidir é a scríobh, ach b'fhéidir nach n-oireann sé do chomhthéacsanna áirithe. An deacracht atá ann, ní féidir tráchtas a scríobh le [hais] gach téarma agus a rá 'úsáid é seo i gcomhthéacs dlí' agus mar sin de. Ach sílim go bhfuil na noda, gur... cabhair éigin

do dhaoine iad. Sílim go bhfuil glacadh leis nach féidir téarmaí a bhrú ar dhaoine ach díreach an treoir a thabhairt agus sílim go nglactar leis an treoir bunús mór an ama.

ÚB: Agus sin é ról an Choiste Téarmaíochta.

AML: Sea, is dóigh liom é.<sup>59</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

ÚB: And is there an obligation on people working with official documents, is there any sort of obligation to use particular terms?

DÓB: There isn't. In other languages there tends to be legislation that imposes such obligations, but not in Irish; it's not directly related to the language, it's not part of our administrative culture to do things like that. What we do is recommend to public bodies when they're engaging translators to translate documents that they make it a condition of the contract that the translator uses the official standard as recommended by Foras na Gaeilge and uses terminology as recommended by Foras na Gaeilge. After that it's a matter for each public body and there's a limit to which non-linguists such as ourselves in the Department can issue directives, binding directives. While we would wish to have standard terminology, where a particular public body has used particular terms or has translated particular terms in a particular way in its area of expertise or area of operation, the subject matter, and those terms have become embedded in the official language, we wouldn't wish to change that. The same way in English different organisations will use different words for 'chief executive' or different words for 'principal' or whatever. (Ó Briain)

In the case of Rannóg an Aistriúcháin and the translation of legislation, there is an obligation to respect precedent. Thus the terms which are already in use represent the standard even if they are archaic or no longer in common usage – or contradict the advice of the Terminology Committee.

Tá na fasaigh an-thábhachtach dúinn anseo, agus is é an gnó atá againn ó thaobh na téarmaíochta de i gcoitinne ná a chinntiú go bhfuilimid ag cloí leis na fasaigh atá leagtha síos againn féin sna hAchtanna agus sna cáipéisí dlíthiúla eile atá curtha ar fáil againn go dtí seo.<sup>60</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

It is felt that term standardisation has not been discussed much in the case of Irish.

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<sup>59</sup> ÚB: And is there a legislative side to standardisation, an aspect of forcing people?

AML: I'd be afraid to say that, you know. I think there's an openness and a certain flexibility and I like what's being used now on Focal, that note 'in use' and what that implies: you see this, you hear this, you can write it, but it may not be suitable for some contexts. The problem is that you can't write a thesis beside every term and say 'use this in a legal context' and so on. But I think the notes are... of some help to people. I think it's accepted that you can't force terms on people but just give them the guidance and I think that guidance is accepted most of the time.

ÚB: And that's the role of the Terminology Committee.

AML: Yes, I think so.'

<sup>60</sup> 'Precedents are very important to us here, and it's our business in terminology in general to ensure that we're keeping to the precedents that we set down ourselves in the Acts and in other legal documents that we've supplied up till now.'

The first thought that would come to me in an Irish language context would be the grammar, not terminology at all... I'm not aware of any discourse, written or otherwise in the past that would have talked in any way about [terminology standardisation]. You have standardisation of terminology in a particular area but in terms of macro planning... not to that extent. (Ó Ruairc)

The methods of creating and validating terms are the function of the Coiste Téarmaíochta, and apart from sort of the official mechanisms for representation there, there hasn't been to my knowledge much or any opportunity for the general citizen or other interested parties to get involved in this in any way. So seeing as it is the function of a specific body and they do it, other people tend to keep out of it. (Nic Pháidín)

From the media point of view, standardisation is about intelligibility, clarity and the avoidance of obscure regionalisms.

An rud is tábhachtaí ná go mbeadh cruinneas ann agus tá spás ann do chanúnachas, ní gá go mbeadh na canúintí ag teacht lena chéile, ach ó thaobh chaighdeánú, tá sé tábhachtach go mbainfí úsáid as an fhocal céanna, sílimse, is cuma cén chaighdeán atá agat. Mar arís bíonn mé ag caint faoi go bhfuil sé tábhachtach go dtuigfeadh an gnáthdhuine cad atá tú ag rá agus má tá bealach níos simplí le rud a rá agus níos sothuigthe don ghnáthdhuine taobh amuigh den cheantar Gaeltachta nó cibé áit atá i gceist, ba cheart an focal nó an téarma sin a úsáid, ar mhaithe le soiléireacht. Iriseoir ar bith a bhíonn doiléir ní thuigfidh daoine iad. B'fhéidir go bhfuil scoth na Gaeilge acu ach ní fóram é an iriseoireacht agus an iriseoireacht chraolta go háirithe le bheith *showboating* agus ag taispeáint cé chomh saibhir is atá do chuid Gaeilge nó do chanúint. An rud is tábhachtaí ná an scéal a insint go simplí agus dá bharr sin má tá téarma a mbaintear úsáid as trasna na gcanúintí ba cheart an téarma sin a úsáid in áit téarma beag áitiúil atá *quaint* agus saibhir ach nach dtuigfeadh daoine.<sup>61</sup> (Delap)

#### **When is standardisation considered needed?**

Standardisation is needed in legislation and in the administrative sphere.

You cannot have a situation, I think, where there's three or four terms a person can pick from. Particularly when people go to the courts as is their right under the law and seek to have their case conducted in Irish, they'll be using the translations for that

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<sup>61</sup> 'The main thing is to be precise and there's space for regionalisms, dialects don't have to be the same, but for standardisation, it's important that the same word be used, I think, no matter what dialect you have. Because, again, I often say that it's important that the ordinary person can understand what you're saying and if there's a simpler way of saying something that's more understandable to the person outside the particular Gaeltacht area or whatever, that word or term should be used, for the sake of clarity. Any journalist that's unclear won't be understood. They might have great Irish but journalism and particularly broadcast journalism is not the place for showboating and showing how rich your Irish or your dialect is. The most important thing is to tell the story simply and because of that if a term is used in all dialects that term should be used instead of some little local term that's quaint and rich but that won't be understood.'

purpose... In those areas standardisation is about making sure that in particular spheres, particular domains of activity, that you have a single standard list of terms for a corresponding list in English. (Ó Ruairc)

ÚB: And would standardisation, do you think it has sort of an administrative meaning or a legislative meaning – if the Terminology Committee for example publishes the term does that bear a certain obligation to use it? Depending on who you are?

CNP: It depends who you are, yes. Obviously in legislation, yes, there's no room for manoeuvre there, as we know. If it's used by precedent that is a requirement really to continue with it. I think there's standardisation issues apart from legislation, apart from the specific use of the language in very tight constraints of legislation. In all the other official uses, there should be standardisation. In principle there is but in practice maybe it's not quite as clear-cut as that. And the line between what you call legislative terminology and the rest is not clear and I think there are a small number of frequently used terms like 'iompórtáil', 'easpórtáil': as to the State in its dealings and for official purposes and in education and the media, one term should be decided on and one term should be used. The man in the street or the woman on the street can say what they like and that's the way it should be. (Nic Pháidín)

In administration, it is felt that it is nonsensical to have different agencies with different approaches to terminology, or grammar rules.

You don't want a situation where when translators sit down and produce a document, if they're doing the work for one agency they use this term and for another agency another term, or they'll pick their grammatical rules for one agency and a different one for another agency. That is not sustainable. (Ó Ruairc)

There is a feeling, however, expressed by one academic commentator, that there may be an excess of standardisation in all areas of the language, not just terminology.

Le caoga bliain anuas sna scoileanna níl ach an Caighdeán ann. Le fiche, tríocha bliain anuas na mic léinn a thagann isteach anseo, ní fhaca siad riamh aon rud nach raibh scríofa sa Chaighdeán. Ní fheiceann siad aon rud gramadúil nach bhfuil ag teacht leis an Chaighdeán. Agus ó thaobh téarmaíochta agus foclóireachta de agus mar sin dó ar an dóigh chéanna faigheann siad cibé a bhfuil sna téacsleabhair agus cibé rud a bhíonn sa litríocht ansin, tá leagan caighdeánach ag teacht chun cinn de na seantéacsanna canúnacha a bhíodh ann. Cuid acu tá sé greannmhar bheith ag féachaint orthu. Myles na gCopaleen mar shampla, *An Béal Bocht*, tá leagan caighdeánach de sin ar fáil ach níl aon ghreann ann a thuilleadh nuair a bhíonn sé sa chaighdeán. Ach b'fhéidir go ndeachaigh sé thar fóir beagáinín.<sup>62</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

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<sup>62</sup> 'For the last fifty years in the schools there's only been the Standard. For the last twenty, thirty years the students coming in here, they've never seen anything that wasn't written in the Standard. And as regards terminology and lexicography and so on they get whatever is in the textbooks and whatever is in the literature, there's new standard versions of the old dialectal texts. Myles na gCopaleen, for

The need for standardisation varies depending on the subject area.

I think it depends a little bit on the subject field; for instance, if you take flora and fauna, in that case a lot of terms and synonyms and so on were collected for common animals and plants and fish. And in the event that you had six terms for an otter, it was felt, bearing in mind that this was developed under the Department of Education and would have been published in textbooks, I suppose it was felt that it would be better to give precedence to probably the most common term for use in text books and exam papers. So what they did was when they found several synonyms, they presented the commonest one at the top and they put the other ones in brackets and the idea was 'these terms also exist or have been found' and obviously it was felt that there was a valuable heritage here and that it wasn't that they were saying there was anything wrong with these other terms, but that for official purposes we'd better stick to the commonest one. So that's one approach. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

In plant and animal names, however, one commentator suggested that the desire for standardisation is a reflection of a (mistaken) perception that English only has one term, and that having one form is therefore more correct.

An cheist eile seo faoi na plandaí agus ainmhithe agus mar sin de, tuigim ar an taobh amháin go bhfuil rud éigin de dhíth má bhíonn tú ag cur téacsleabhar beag nó leabhar beag ar fáil do pháistí scoile... Is minic nach bhfuil ach focal amháin Béarla againn ar na rudaí sin ach má théann tú chuig tír an Bhéarla, má théann tú go Sasana nó áit ar bith mar sin, seans go stairiúil go mbeadh focail éagsúla acu sin ar na rudaí sin chomh maith. Ach go príomha foghlaimíodh an Béarla sa tír seo cúpla céad bliain ó shin, is Béarla caighdeánach dáiríre atá sa tír seo agus in intinn na ndaoine tá téarma amháin ann i mBéarla agus b'fhéidir go bhfuil cúig nó sé nó seacht gcinn ann sa Ghaeilge agus cuireann sé sin as dóibh... Ní fheictear domsa go bhfuil sé tábhachtach ná tairbheach bheith ag cur téarma amháin ar fáil do rud éigin dúchasach ina bhfuil seacht nó ocht dtéarma ann nuair nach bhfuil cúis agat leis. Má bhíonn tú ag iarraidh caint faoi chúrsaí zó-eolaíochta nó bitheolaíochta nó rud éigin mar sin bíonn sé de dhíth ach cé mhéid duine sa tír atá ag plé leis sin? Agus cé mhéid atá ag plé leis na plandaí nó a fheiceann na plandaí ar thaobh an bhóthair agus mar sin de?<sup>63</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

Standardisation is needed in journalism.

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example, there's a standardised version of *An Béal Bocht* but there's no humour in it any more when it's standardised. But maybe they went a bit too far.'

<sup>63</sup> 'This question about plants and animals and so on, I understand on the one hand that you need something if you're writing a little textbook or a little book for schoolchildren... We often only have one English term for those things but if you go to the home of the English language, if you go to England or somewhere, they might historically have different words for those things too. But English was primarily learned in this country a few hundred years ago, the English in this country is standardised really and in people's minds there's one term in English and there might be five or six or seven in Irish and that bothers them... I don't think it's important or useful to supply one term for something native which has seven or eight terms if you don't have any reason to. If you want to talk about zoology or biology or something like that, you need it but how many people in the country are? And how many are dealing with or see the plants on the side of the road and so on?'

An rud is tábhachtaí ná an scéal a insint go simplí agus dá bharr sin má tá téarma a mbaintear úsáid as trasna na gcanúintí ba cheart an téarma sin a úsáid in áit téarma beag áitiúil atá *quaint* agus saibhir ach nach dtuigfeadh daoine.<sup>64</sup> (Delap)

### **Who is responsible for term standardisation?**

The Terminology Committee is responsible for term standardisation.

ÚB: Cé atá freagrach as an gcineál seo caighdeánú?

AML: Bhuel is dóigh liom arís an Coiste mar níl aon dream eile – ní cuid ar bith dá gcúram a leithéid.<sup>65</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

The actual policy in term formation and all that kind of thing resides strictly within the Terminology Committee, and that is not a shared function. (Nic Pháidín)

There is a question about responsibility for the standardisation of legal terms, however – this is discussed in the section beginning on page 12 above – and about what legal terms are.

In other subject fields, even if it's a general language term that turns up in legislation, we would still feel that we have more claim to be working in that area. A case in point is traffic signs. We got a query about this and it turns out that the term used in the legislation is 'síneacha tráchta'... And we thought this wasn't acceptable or understandable, and this is one term at least that you hear every day. We know they're called 'soilse tráchta'... So in that case we would feel that we are serving the language and the public better by presenting the term that's in common use. We would consider that that's not a legal term. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Another point made is that the (LGP) dictionary, practically rather than theoretically, is the ultimate standardising authority. The problem is that many common terms are not found there.

I ndeireadh an lae is iad na foclóirí móra dáiríre a bhfuil an t-údarás acu agus aon rud atá istigh i bhfoclóir Uí Dhónaill nó a bheidh san fhoclóir nua seo atá ag teacht is dóigh gurb é sin an áit a bhfuil an t-údarás do rudaí. Seo an rud nach bhfuil in sna foclóirí, focail choitianta nach bhfuil i bhfoclóir Uí Dhónaill, mar shampla bhí mé ag féachaint an lá cheana agus thug mé faoi deara nach bhfuil an focal 'togra' ann. Níl sé sin san fhoclóir agus tá an t-uafás rudaí den chineál sin ann, mar sin bíonn foinsí eile de dhíth.<sup>66</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

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<sup>64</sup> 'The most important thing is to tell the story simply and because of that if a term is used in all dialects that term should be used instead of some little local term that's quaint and rich but that won't be understood.'

<sup>65</sup> 'ÚB: Who is responsible for this kind of standardisation?

AML: Well I think again the Committee because there's no-one else – it's not any part of their responsibilities.'

<sup>66</sup> 'At the end of the day it's the big dictionaries that have authority really and anything that's in the Ó Dónaill dictionary or that will be in the new dictionary, that's probably where the authority for things is.'

The authority of the Terminology Committee to carry out term standardisation is questioned by one commentator, because the work is not based on any corpus studies.

Ach nuair nach bhfuil siad ag faire ar an teanga ansin tá sé deacair a rá go bhfuil údarás ar bith acu. Ta údarás acu i ngeall go bhfuil saineolas acu agus go bhfuil siad á dhéanamh le tamall agus mar sin de agus tá meas ag daoine orthu ach ní fhéadfaí a rá go bhfuil siad bunaithe ar aon chorpas nó go bhfuil sé bunaithe ar úsáid. Caithfidh tú a fháil amach cén úsáid atá ann agus ansin caithfidh tú a rá, bhuel tá an úsáid ann ach níl sé go maith, mar sin níl muid ag dul a ghlacadh leis. Tá an úsáid chomh coitianta sin nach maith linn é ach go bhfuil muid ag dul á bhreacadh síos mar sin féin agus caithfidh muid a rá ní mholann muid é ach.. Agus ansin d'fhéadfaí a rá, tá na daoine á rá sin agus tá sé contráilte ar fad, nó tá míthuiscint ag an phobal ar an rud ansin. Ach níl an t-údarás acu chuige sin.<sup>67</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

### **How is standardisation carried out for Irish?**

Standardisation work is done by the Terminology Committee and its subcommittees. In some cases the function of the Terminology Committee is to carry out in-depth discussion; in others the role is merely to approve work done by others and to raise occasional questions. Most of the Committee's work currently relates to *ad hoc* enquiries and lists submitted by Fiontar through its work for IATE (up to several hundred monthly). Staff at the Terminology Committee office (or Fiontar, for the IATE lists) carry out initial research and make proposals; the Terminology Committee meets monthly to consider these.

The function of the Terminology Committee is to provide authoritative standardised terminology to the educational sector and wider public. This also involves developing principles and methods for terminology work in Irish. The methodology for terminology approval currently consists of uploading monthly lists of simple terminology on the members' extranet, where they can comment on terms. In this way, only those terms about which queries arise and need resolution will be discussed at meetings, generally only a handful. The rest of the simple lists are deemed approved. The remainder of the meetings are devoted to questions of principle arising from enquiries or from editorial work on the database. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Because of time pressures, methods such as the creation of parallel subgroups of the meeting are used to speed up the work. This currently takes the form of a IATE subgroup meeting in

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These are the things that aren't in the dictionaries, common words that aren't in Ó Dónaill, for example I was looking the other day and I noticed that the word 'togra' [project] isn't in it. It's not in the dictionary and there's an awful lot of things like that, so other sources are needed.'

<sup>67</sup> 'But when they're not observing the language it's hard to say that they have any authority. They have authority because they have expertise and because they've been doing it for a while and so on, and people respect them, but it couldn't be said that they're based on any corpus or based on usage. You have to find out what usage is and then you have to say, well the usage is there but it's not good, so we won't accept it. Or the usage is so common that we don't like it but we're going to put it down anyway though we don't recommend it.. And they could say, people say this and it's entirely wrong, or there's a popular misunderstanding about this. But they don't have the authority for that.'

parallel with the main meeting to discuss the more difficult terms on the IATE lists of the month in question. This means that some expertise is lost as people leave the main meeting room.

AML: Ach an obair a bhaineann le IATE, cé gur fiú go mór é agus níl doicheall ar bith roimhe ach tá sé ag cur brú orainn agus b'éigean dúinn cleasa a cheapadh le dul i ngleic leis, mar shampla le linn na gcrúinnithe anois bíonn fochoiste den Choiste Stiúrtha ann agus fágann siad an seomra agus pléann siad na liostaí casta a bhaineann le IATE.

ÚB: An bhfuil sé sin sásúil, meas tú?

AML: Bhuel níl mé féin iomlán sásta leis. Níl neart air, níl dlí ar an riachtanas ach an míbhuntáiste is mó ná, le linn do na daoine sin a bheith ar shiúl ón tseomra, tá cuid mhór de na daoine is eolaí ar an chúram seo as láthair... agus is mór an cailteanas é sin. Chomh maith leis sin ag leibhéal daonna is obair an-tur atá ann, is obair an-tirim atá ann agus bíonn cineál faitíos orm, bíonn orm... duine a roghnú le dul isteach sa tseomra agus bheith ag plé leis seo.<sup>68</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Standardisation work is carried out at the meetings, and lists for discussion are disseminated to the members a week before each meeting. Terms that are considered simple, or that are based on accepted components, are also circulated before the meeting by e-mail and by post as well as on the extranet, and considered approved unless a question is raised.

Ní raibh ag éirí linn an ceathrú cuid de na téarmaí a bhí le plé againn a phlé le linn cruinnithe so cleas eile a rinne muid, chuir muid suíomh gréasáin inmheánach ar bun agus cuirtear an chuid is simplí de na téarmaí ansin, téarmaí nach samhlófá go mbeadh mórán plé orthu... tá siad bunaithe ar mhíreanna a bhí ann cheana féin agus rudaí mar sin sa dóigh is nach mbeidh sé sin le plé le linn na gcrúinnithe, agus sé an chaoi a bhfuil sé, muna bhfuil ceist ag duine faoi na téarmaí sin atá ar an liosta sin, ansin glactar leis go bhfuil siad ceart go leor agus go bhfuil siad faofa.<sup>69</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

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<sup>68</sup> 'AML: But the work relating to IATE, even though it's very worthwhile and there's no resentment towards it it's putting pressure on us and we had to come up with tricks to deal with it, for example during meetings now there's a subcommittee of the Steering Committee that leaves the room and discusses the complicated IATE lists.

ÚB: Is that satisfactory, do you think?

AML: Well I'm not too happy with it. It can't be helped, but the biggest disadvantage is that while those people are out of the room, many of the people who know most about this work are absent... and that's a real loss. As well as that at a human level it's very dull work, it's very dry work and I'm a bit afraid, I have to pick someone to go into the room and deal with this.'

<sup>69</sup> 'We weren't managing to discuss a quarter of the terms that we had to discuss during meetings, so another trick we did, we created an internal website and the simplest terms are put there, terms that you wouldn't imagine there'd be much discussion about, things that are exemplary already, they're based on portions that already existed and so on; so that doesn't need to be discussed during meetings, and then if no-one has a question about those terms on those lists, we assume they're all right and they're approved.'



This is contrasted with the amount of time that could be ideally assigned to term research work.

B'fhéidir gur cuimhin leat go raibh cuairteoir againn ón tSualainn, Henrik, ag caint ar a chuid oibre siúd agus dúirt sé b'fhéidir go mbeadh cúig théarma in aghaidh an lae le ceapadh acu nó rud mar sin, agus nuair a chuala mé é sin tháinig fonn gáire orm mar bíonn liosta chomh fada le maide rámha le déanamh againne ag gach aon chruinniú. (Mac Lochlainn) [Addition: Tháinig mé ar nótaí a scríobh mé le linn léacht Henrik. Dúirt sé gur caitheadh 100-250 uair an chloig ag socrú caoga téarma ar thionscadal amháin.]<sup>70</sup>

The lack of time has an adverse impact on the quality of the terminology work done.

Cuir i gcás, go minic téarmaí meafaracha, abair. Is cuimhin liom muid a bheith ag plé an leagan cainte sin 'the glass ceiling'... Bhí muid á phlé sin agus tá mé cinnte, dá mbeifeá, dá mbeadh deis mhachnaimh agat go dtiocfadh leat leagan maith Gaeilge a chur ar fáil ansin, ach bhí muid ag plé an téarma ar feadh i bhfad agus ní raibh muid ag déanamh dul chun cinn ar bith agus b'éigin, faoi dheireadh bhí orainn glacadh le calque, 'an tsíleáil ghloine'. Agus b'fhéidir nach bhfuil neart air sin, b'fhéidir gurb in an toradh a bheadh ar an phlé ar aon nós... Ach mothaím go mbíonn an brú sin ann agus nach bhfuil deis i ndáiríre mórán machnaimh a dhéanamh ná foinsí a cheadú.<sup>71</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Because Terminology Committee members work on a voluntary basis, it is felt that it is unfair to ask or expect them to do too much work, and that more preliminary research should be done by Terminology Committee staff.

As seo amach b'fhearr liom go mbeadh an chuid is mó den réamhobair déanta ag foireann an Choiste, go mbeadh, nach mbeadh oiread plé ar rudaí áirithe. Thiocfadh linn gearradh siar go mór ar na rudaí a bheadh le plé le linn an chruinniú. Tá sé sin ann.<sup>72</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Because of lack of resources, too, there are gaps in the Terminology Committee's working methods.

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<sup>70</sup> 'You might remember that we had a visitor from Sweden, Henrik, talking about his work and he said that they'd have maybe five terms a day to create or something like that, and when I heard that I wanted to laugh because we have a list as long as your arm to do at every single meeting.' ['I found a note I wrote during Henrik's lecture. He said 100-250 hours were spent deciding fifty terms on one project.']

<sup>71</sup> 'Take metaphorical terms, for example. I remember we were discussing that phrase, 'the glass ceiling'... We were discussing that and I'm sure if you were, if you had time to think you could provide a good Irish term there, but we were discussing the term for a long time and we were making no progress and in the end we had to accept a calque, 'an tsíleáil ghloine'. And maybe that can't be helped, maybe that would have been the result in any event... But I feel that there's that pressure and that there's really no opportunity to do much thinking or to consult sources.'

<sup>72</sup> 'From now on I'd rather most of the preparatory work be done by the Committee's staff, that there not be so much discussion of certain things. We could really cut back on the things that would need to be discussed during the meeting. There's that.'

Tá ceist ann is dóigh liomsa faoin dóigh ina n-oibríonn an Coiste Téarmaíochta. Tá daoine maithe ag obair san áit, tá daoine ag obair go lánaimseartha san áit agus tá daoine sna fochoistí agus tá saineolas acu, maith go leor. Ach ní fheicimse féin gur coiste ceart téarmaíochta é dáiríre. Níl aon saotharlann teanga againn sa tír seo, ní bhíonn duine ar bith ag féachaint ar an teanga agus ag éisteacht agus ag déanamh staidéar ar an teanga go fírinneach ar feadh an ama. Fiú an foclóir nua atá á chur le chéile ansin tá sé bunaithe níos mó ar chorpais ná mar a bhí na seanchinn ach ag an am céanna níl mórán daoine ag féachaint ar dhinimic na teanga. Agus tá sé an-deacair acu is dóigh liom... Níl na hacmhainní acu, níl go leor acu ann agus níl struchtúr ann faoina choinne.<sup>73</sup> (Ó hlfearnáin)

**Are there national committees for term standardisation? If so, what is the structure? Who are the members of national committees for term standardisation, and how are they chosen? How often do they meet? What do national committees for term standardisation discuss? Is standardisation work carried out at meetings or online?**

The Terminology Committee was formally established within the Department of Education in 1968, although it existed in a more informal way since 1927, and was transferred to Foras na Gaeilge in 1999. New members are proposed by the Chairman of the committee and appointed by the board of Foras na Gaeilge (and previously by the Minister of Education).

The Terminology Committee establishes subcommittees from time to time consisting of small groups of experts to collect and select materials for specialised dictionaries. In practice, as well as establishing and approving the work of subcommittees, and discussing points of terminological principle, the Terminology Committee also approves a large amount of miscellaneous terminology, the quantity of which has been steadily increasing over the years.

The Terminology Committee consists of eighteen members, nominated by the Terminology Committee and chosen for their expert knowledge of the spoken language, including dialects, as well as the relevance of their professional backgrounds. The membership of the Terminology Committee is comprised of people from the following backgrounds: representatives from academia, lexicography, terminology, the Department of Education and Science, Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, translation studies, the media, and translators from the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of Ministers (Ní Ghallchobhair addition).

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<sup>73</sup> 'I think there is a question about the way the Terminology Committee works. There are good people working there, there are people working full-time and people on the subcommittees and they have the expertise all right. But I don't see that it's a real terminology committee really. We don't have any language laboratory in this country, no-one is looking at the language and listening and really studying the language continuously. Even the new dictionary that's being put together, it's more based on corpora than the old ones were but at the same time not many people are looking at the dynamics of the language. And it's very hard for them I think. They don't have the resources, there aren't enough of them and there isn't a structure for it.'

ÚB: Agus, sainghrúpaí, luaigh muid, ar ndóigh, aistritheoirí, agus lucht an oideachais agus na meáin. Meas tú, na sainghrúpaí sin faoi leith, na rudaí atá ag teastáil uathusan, an bhfuil freagra á thabhairt orthu sin?

AML: Bhuel arís ní féidir a dhéanamh inár gcás féin ach ionadaíocht a bheith acu, tá na grúpaí sin go léir, tá ionadaíocht acu agus ionadaíocht láidir ag na haistritheoirí.<sup>74</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

We have fairly regular contact with certain members of the media, we have a representative from the media on the committee. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The Terminology Committee meets on a monthly basis, with a summer break. Subcommittees generally meet once a month or less often.

Its members are not paid, apart from their expenses. This can be problematic. Up to a month's worth of work is done by members annually, according to one interviewee – although not all members attend all meetings, with a maximum of eleven days.

I think another issue impacts on this and up to the beginning of the Celtic Tiger, voluntarism or *deonachas* or professionalism, to what extent were we over dependent on the goodwill of a lot of people. It can be [problematic]... We have to try and find ways of maybe tapping goodwill without exploiting it... That's a huge contribution to the State's provision of services to the public at large. And it's not clear to me as I reflect on that that maybe we're acknowledging their contribution, and not necessarily in a monetary way but in a way that meets their requirements as well, so they can go back to their authorities and universities and third level and say, look, UCD, UCC or whatever is contributing to that. So that's a key issue I think to look at. (Ó Ruairc)

AML: I ndeireadh an tsaol is coiste deonach é seo agus – déanaim amach, bíonn cruinniú míosúil ann agus idir an liosta sin a chrochtar ar an idirlíon le nach mbeidh sé le déanamh le linn na gcruinnithe féin, caithim seal leis sin... Idir na liostaí sin agus na liostaí a bhíonn le plé le linn na gcruinnithe, caithimse cúpla lá leis sin agus tá a fhios agam daoine eile go gcaitheann siad tamall fada leis chomh maith. Mar sin, sin oibrithe deonacha atá ag tabhairt b'fhéidir trí lá in aghaidh na míosa saor in aisce... Sin beagnach mí oibre in aghaidh na bliana.

ÚB: Agus meas tú an oibríonn sé sin, an bhfuil sé sásúil mar chóras ó thaobh na mbaill de agus ó thaobh na hoibre de?

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<sup>74</sup> 'ÚB: And special groups, we mentioned translators of course, and those in education and the media. Do you think, those particular groups, are their needs being answered?

AML: Well again all we can do is give them representation, all those groups have representation and the translators have strong representation.'

AML: Faoi mar atá sé, go leor daoine atá ar an Choiste tá siad éirithe as obair agus ní miste leo, is cuma leo, tá siad á dhéanamh ar son na cúise mar a déarfá.<sup>75</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

[Ní Ghallchobhair comment: at present, only two members are retired]

Because members of the Terminology Committee are expected to attend a monthly meeting, many of the more active members are based in Dublin.

Na daoine is mó a thagann chuig na cruinnithe, is lonnaithe timpeall ar Bhaile Átha Cliath atá siad.<sup>76</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

It can be problematic if attendance is low, as it can be, for example, during busy times for universities.

Tá an ceangal fós ann le Gaillimh agus tagann siad go réasúnta rialta ach, ag an am céanna, mar is eol duit bíonn tréimhsí an-ghnóthach ag ollscoileanna agus mar sin de, mar sin, amanna tarlaíonn sé nach mbíonn, ní hamháin nach mbíonn na daoine as Gaillimh ann ach cuid de na daoine thart ar Bhaile Átha Cliath ní bhíonn siad ann ach an oiread, mar sin tá dúshlán an-mhór ag baint leis, go háirithe nuair a bhíonn ceisteanna achrannacha ann, abair cúrsaí gramadaí mar shampla. Ní lia duine ná tuairim... ba ghá go mbeadh comhphlé agus comhaontú agus mar sin ann sa gcaoi is go mbeadh seasamh ag an socrú.<sup>77</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Ní bhíonn dóthain daoine ag teacht. Agus, uaireanta, daoine a bhí as láthair an mhí seo caite, ní hiad na daoine céanna a bheidh as láthair an mhí seo agus tharlódh sé go mbeadh malairt tuairime ag an duine. Tarlaíonn sé sin.<sup>78</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

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<sup>75</sup> 'AML: At the end of the day this is a voluntary committee and – as I reckon it, there's a monthly meeting and between the list that's put online so that it won't have to be done during the meetings themselves, I spend a few days with that and I know others spend a long time with it as well. So that's voluntary workers giving maybe three days a month for free... That's almost a month's work a year.

ÚB: And do you think that works, is that satisfactory as a system from the members' perspective and from the work point of view?

AML: As it is, a lot of people on the Committee are retired and they don't mind, they're doing it for the cause if you like.'

<sup>76</sup> 'The people that come to meetings most often are based around Dublin.'

<sup>77</sup> 'There's still the connection with Galway and they come reasonably often but at the same time as you know there are very busy periods in universities and so on so sometimes it happens that there isn't, not only are the Galway people not there but some of the people around Dublin aren't there either, so there's a very big challenge there, particularly when there are complicated questions, grammar issues for example. Everyone has an opinion... there needs to be discussion and agreement and so on so that the decision has standing.'

<sup>78</sup> 'Not enough people come. And sometimes you'd have people who were absent last month, it wouldn't be the same as the people who will be absent this month and people could have different opinions. That happens.'

### **Are the subject experts alone considered responsible for term creation decisions?**

There is a recognised problem in working with a minority language such as Irish in finding domain experts working within the language. In some cases (such as sports journalism and within the education system – on which many collections are based) it is possible; in others, such as medicine and other technical areas where no training is given through Irish, it is not. Therefore much term creation work is done with little consultation of Irish-speaking experts. This is because many people working with Irish are not domain professionals but language professionals.

Den chuid is mó na daoine a bheadh ag cuardach téarmaí is daoine iad atá ag obair go gairmiúil le Gaeilge, seachas daoine gairmiúla a bhfuil Gaeilge acu, má thuigean tú an difríocht.<sup>79</sup> (Ó hlfearnáin)

Despite this challenge, domain experts are regularly consulted.

It has sometimes been a challenge to identify domain experts who are fluent Irish speakers, especially in domains such as art and the medical sciences. On the other hand, the subcommittees established over the years which developed some twenty terminology dictionaries, comprised exclusively domain experts who were native or fluent speakers of Irish. The Terminology Committee also regularly consults individual domain experts, most of whom are native or fluent speakers. Domain experts who are not Irish speakers are also consulted, in some cases, in order to elaborate the meaning or context of a technical concept and/or English term. Terms arising from miscellaneous enquiries are modelled on the precedents already established in the domain, as far as possible and, in the event of doubt, domain experts are consulted. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Subject experts' views are not the only criteria for term creation.

While we defer to the expert advice of subject-field specialists, other factors need to be considered, such as precedents, usage, ambiguity or other possible causes of confusion, orthographical and grammatical conventions, terminological principles, evidence from other languages. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

### **Are new terms based on the historical language, on the language as it is spoken now, or on new creations?**

Terms are based on the contemporary language, on historical words or particles, and on term formation principles.

New terms are normally based on the contemporary form of the language, written and spoken, and on the principles of term formation developed by the Terminology Committee over the years. Occasionally, terms are based on historical words or

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<sup>79</sup> 'For the most part people who would be looking for terms are people who are working professionally with Irish, rather than professional people who have Irish, if you see the difference.'

particles, in order to avoid ambiguity, for example, ‘tomhaltóir’ (consumer, drawing on a Middle-Irish verbal form, meaning ‘to eat, consume’); ‘rochtain’ (access, drawing on a historical verbal noun of a verb meaning ‘to reach, attain’); ‘ascnamh’ (migration (of atoms, or computer data), drawing on a historical verb meaning ‘to proceed towards’). Technical-scientific and some other terms are formed through transliterating loanwords, according to Irish orthographic principles. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

There is a criticism, however, that Irish language terminology is over-dependant on the English language.

ÚB: Agus an é go bhfuil téarmeolaíocht na Gaeilge spleách ar théarmeolaíocht an Bhéarla más ea?

TÓhl: Sin an locht is mó a fhaighimse uirthi. Go príomha na téarmaí atá ar fáil is aistriúcháin nó cailc iad ar na téarmaí Béarla agus is annamh is dóigh liomsa a bhíonn téarmaí maithe Nua-Ghaeilge ag teacht chun cinn atá neamhspleách ón mBéarla.<sup>80</sup> (Ó hlfearnáin)

De réir an Choiste Téarmaíochta is é an prionsabal atá acu is dóigh liom ná dul leis an rud dúchasach an chéad uair, ach ní fheicim é sa saothar.<sup>81</sup> (Ó hlfearnáin)

If terms were more in keeping with Irish roots, according to one interviewee, they might find wider acceptance.

Déarfainn gur mó glacadh a bheadh le focail a bheadh déanta ar an dóigh sin chomh maith, focail a bhfuil cuma níos nádúrtha orthu dáiríre.<sup>82</sup> (Ó hlfearnáin)

This criticism is contested, however.

The two main criticisms of Irish term formation bear out directly opposing viewpoints. One commonly-held view is that new Irish terms should be based on native words or particles, a view common to many ‘small’ or minority languages – a case in point being Icelandic. Many Irish people complain about ‘Béarlachas’ (‘anglicism’, a term which refers to transferring English syntax into Irish sentences), and mistakenly attribute loanwords to ‘Béarlachas’ when it appears that the Irish term looks like the English term. There seems to be little awareness of the long tradition Irish has of borrowing words and terms from Latin, Old Norse, French, and Middle-English, without disturbing the fabric of the language. In more recent times, however, the fabric of the language is being disturbed increasingly by the introduction of English syntax, or ‘Béarlachas’. There also seems to be little awareness that the majority of such loanwords are not of

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<sup>80</sup> ÚB: And is it that Irish language terminology is dependant on English language terminology?

TÓhl: That’s my biggest criticism of it. Most of the terms available are translations or calques on English terms and I think it’s rare that good contemporary Irish terms emerge that are independent of English.’

<sup>81</sup> ‘According to the Terminology Committee their principle I think is to go with the native thing first, but I don’t see it in their work.’

<sup>82</sup> ‘I think there’d be more acceptance for words made like that as well, words that look more natural really.’

English origin at all, most having Greek, Latin or French roots, and are widespread across many languages. One of the Irish loanwords which has excited repeated opposition is the term 'rampa'. The English term 'ramp' comes from French 'rampe', from the Old French verb 'ramper'. A brief foray via Dictionary.com's translator throws up the following equivalents in various languages using the Roman alphabet: *ramp* (English, Finnish, German, Hungarian, Indonesian, Malay, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Welsh); *rampa* (Filipino, Irish, Italian, Lithuanian, Maltese); *rampła* (Galician); *rampur* (Icelandic).

The other major criticism of Irish term formation is the opposing view that new terms are being formed in Irish when the English terms left unchanged are perfectly fine, simple and understandable. This view is borne out by the research carried out by Helena Ní Ghearáin on IT terms in use in companies in the Irish-speaking area of Connemara. This feature is part of the phenomenon described by Laurén, Myking and Picht as 'domain renouncement'<sup>83</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

One reason offered is a disconnection from traditional term creation resources, such as a knowledge of the natural world and an independence from English-language thought structures.

Nuair a bhíonn buneolas ar chúrsaí nádúir agus cúrsaí coitianta timpeall orainn, nuair nach bhfuil sé sin ag na daoine, ansin tá ceist mhór ann faoi chúrsaí téarmaíochta is dóigh agus an dóigh a ndéanann tú téarmaí. Níl na buntagairtí agat sa saol agus bíonn tú i dtuilleamaí an Bhéarla agus níl tú i dtuilleamaí fiú an Bhéarla cheart, mar atá ag daoine atá i Sasana agus a labhraíonn Béarla le míle bliain nó mar sin. Tá tú i dtuilleamaí rudaí teicniúla atá i bhfoclóirí agus mar sin de, agus tá daoine á gcumadh agus chí muid é ar feadh an ama... Bíonn muid ag rá rudaí i nGaeilge atá cosúil leis an rud i mBéarla agus tá sé le feiceáil<sup>84</sup> go háirithe sna téarmaí is dóigh liom a chuirtear ar fáil. Tá muid ag cur síos ar choincheap atá ag teacht chugainn ó theangacha eile seachas a bheith ag smaoineamh ar an rud agus ag iarraidh rud nua a fháil. Mar a deirim is ceist ollmhór í sin.<sup>85</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

Is dóigh liom gur cheart go mbeadh téarmaí nua ansin bunaithe ar rudaí atá sa saol cheana féin agus tá eagla orm go bhfuil muid ag imeacht cuid mhór ón bhun Ghaeilge

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<sup>83</sup> [http://www.infoterm.info/pdf/activities/Picht\\_DomainDynamics.pdf](http://www.infoterm.info/pdf/activities/Picht_DomainDynamics.pdf)

<sup>84</sup> TÓh: 'Sa mhír seo cainte agamsa mar shampla, atá lán de Bhéarlachas ! 'Óidh vé', mar a deir na Giúdaigh i Nua Eabhrac...' (Ó hIfeárnáin addition)

<sup>85</sup> 'When basic knowledge about nature and common things around us, when people don't have that, then there's a big question about terminology matters I think and how you make terms. You don't have the basic references in life and you're dependant on English and you're not even dependant on proper English, like that of the English who have been speaking English for a thousand years or so. You're dependant on technical terms in dictionaries and so on, and people are making it up and we see it all the time... We say things in Irish that are like the thing in English and it's particularly visible in the terms being made available I think. We're describing a concept that's coming to us from other languages rather than thinking about the thing and trying to find something new. As I say that's a huge question.'

dáiríre agus nach bhfuil sé d'acmhainn ag daoine bheith ag smaoineamh ar an dóigh sin a thuilleadh.<sup>86</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

Another reason for problematic term creation and a lack of emphasis on contemporary usage is the fact that there is no language observatory.

Ach níl aon saotharlann ann, níl duine ar bith ag féachaint ar an teanga. Mar sin de níl de údar acu ach gur chuala siad rud éigin nó gur léigh siad rud éigin áit éigin, agus mar sin bíonn orthu teacht ar théarma ansin agus tá fochoistí acu agus saineolas acu ar roinnt ábhar, réimse measartha leathan ansin, agus tiocfaidh siad ar rud éigin a bhfuil crot air is dócha. Agus sin a ndéanann siad, is dóigh liom. Má amharcann muid ar chuid de na foclóirí móra sna teangacha móra Eorpacha ansin, bheadh siad ag déanamh an dá rud is dóigh liom, ag faire ar an rud atá á rá ag daoine.<sup>87</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

Even with a language observatory, however, there would be problems because of the weakened state of the language.

ÚB: Meastú dá mbeadh an cineál sin saotharlann teanga mar a deir tú ann agus staidéar á dhéanamh ar an teanga atá in úsáid, meastú an mbeadh na torthaí fiúntach?

TÓhl: Bheadh sé dainséarach go leor [!]. Ar an ábhar go bhfuil muid faoi thionchar an Bhéarla... Is rud an-dainséarach é sin do phobal atá faoi léigear teanga ar bhealach, go bhfuil an teanga féin ag titim as a chéile cuid mhór. Agus cuid mhór den obair atá ar siúl ag lucht gairmiúil na Gaeilge dáiríre is obair tarrthála atá ann dáiríre. Ma ghlacann tú le rudaí a deir na daoine bheadh sé chomh maith agat an tuáille a chaitheamh isteach mar a deir siad féin! Caithfidh tú do chuid slatanna tomhais a leagan amach. Ach chuige sin caithfidh an t-eolas a bheith agat.<sup>88</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

**How are term candidates themselves evaluated, and for what? (examples: compliance with terminological standards, formal and methodological consistency, accuracy of information, correct allocations of terms and equivalents to concepts, correct spelling and grammar...).**

The criteria for evaluation are set out as follows.

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<sup>86</sup> 'I think new terms should be based on things that already exist and I'm worried that we're going quite far from the original Irish really and people don't have the capacity to think like that any more.'

<sup>87</sup> 'But there is no laboratory, no-one is looking at the language. So they've no authority except that they heard something or they read something somewhere; and so they have to find a term and they have subcommittees with expertise on some things, quite a broad range, and they'll probably find something likely-looking. And that's what they do, I think. But if we look at some of the big dictionaries in some of the big European languages, they'd be doing both things I'd say, looking at what people are saying.'

<sup>88</sup> 'ÚB: Do you think that if there were a language laboratory as you say and the language in use being studied, do you think the results would be worthwhile?

TÓhl: It'd be quite risky. Because we're under the influence of English... That's a very dangerous thing for a community that's under linguistic siege in a way, whose own language is falling apart in a serious way. And a lot of the work being done by Irish language professionals is really rescue work. If you accepted what people are saying you might as well 'throw in the towel' as they say themselves. You have to lay out your criteria. But to do that you have to have the information.'



Term candidates are evaluated according to accuracy, transparency, consistency, traditional formats, conciseness, derivability, orthographical and grammatical correctness, native elements and syntax, conventions for dealing with loanwords, and estimated usability. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

**Are ISO/TC 37 and its standards used as a model? Are they adhered to? Why and how?**

This question is addressed in the section beginning on page 61 above.

**Are term users consulted about proposed terms (before or after term standardisation work, or both), and how?**

Term users are invited to submit opinions and feedback by email through Focal. Proposed terms are not generally made available for review, and feedback is not actively sought by the Terminology Committee, although it is frequently received. If a term is requested by a member of the public, they are asked to make a recommendation.

In the context of just-in-time terminology work, we invite people to make recommendations which are often accepted subject to the above-mentioned criteria. If, for some reason, the Committee makes a different recommendation we explain the reasoning to the enquirer. Should further communication ensue we refer the matter back to the Committee for further discussion. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

Users regularly contact the office of the Terminology Committee with feedback about terms; sometimes, they question a term for one reason or another, and make suggestions for an alternative or more appropriate term; or they may report the usage of a term in their area which differs from the term or usage published by the Committee. In such cases, the feedback is reported back to the Committee and the Irish term may be reviewed. Complaints about terms that look like the English term (see the reference to 'Béarlachas' above) are less likely to be reviewed, and explanatory notes about loanwords are sent to the user. Equally, when users report an LGP word or phrase which they found in an LGP dictionary but not in the database, it is pointed out to them that the database is not a dictionary and never aimed to be a dictionary. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Different kinds of term user are also represented on the Terminology Committee.

There is a feeling that there might not be a huge amount of feedback from the public even if a more extensive process of consultation were used, although this has not been tested except in a very small way, on one online discussion board. What is more, consultation does not always ensure public satisfaction with the final outcome.

Ach tá rudaí ann cheana, mar shampla tá clár plé ar Beo, agus tá rud ann, 'ceap téarma' nó rud éigin mar sin. Agus tá téarma amháin air ó bunaíodh é, 'nanny state'.

'Stát buime' a mholtar. So níl mé ag iarraidh bheith diúltach faoi agus níl mé ag iarraidh bheith cosantach faoi ach níl a fhios agam cén *take-up* a bheadh ar a leithéid. Sin an eagla a bheadh orm.<sup>89</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

A localization project with Microsoft in 2004 involved public consultation on a Community Glossary, which was open to the public for a period of one month. About ninety per cent of the glossary had been populated by terms from the Terminology Committee's newly-published *Foclóir Ríomhaireachta is Teicneolaíocht Faisnéise*. The consultation was launched by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and widely publicized in the media. There were not many respondents and, of those who did respond, three recommended replacing 'Maith go leor' with 'OK', on the grounds that 'OK' was an internationally-recognized term. The recommendation was accepted and 'OK' was used in the localization but, when it was published, the main complaint of many users was the use of the English term 'OK'. This anecdote illustrates that the consultation process does not necessarily assure universal satisfaction. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

**Does the organisation's terminology work have a descriptive or a prescriptive role? Has this situation changed over the years? Are terms regarded as having socially allocated, negotiated meaning? Who decides on meaning?**

The majority of the Terminology Committee's work is prescriptive, in creating new terms not found in the language (or not known of, since systematic corpus research is not carried out). Some descriptive work is also done, however.

There is some descriptive work in better-developed domains such as sports journalism and sailing.

Foclóir beag a foilsíodh anuraidh, an *Foclóir Seoltóireachta*, sin an chineál – bhí an-dúil agam san fhoclóir sin mar sin réimse saoil a bhfuil foclóir leathan Gaeilge ann agus arís bhí sé tuairisciúil mar a déarfá, bhí sé ag cur síos ar fhoclóir, stór focal atá ann cheana féin sa teanga. Bhí ionadaithe ann as gach ceantar Gaeltachta, ach fiú amháin san obair sin is dóigh liom go mbíonn gné áirithe den treorachas ann, saintreoir, mar roinnt mhaith focal níl siad in úsáid níos mó, bhí siad, lá den tsaol agus tá siad in foinsí eolais ar nós *An Béal Beo* agus cnuasaigh béaloidis. Is tuairisciú a bhí ansin agus is cur síos a bhí ansin, ach ag líonadh bearnaí a bhí muid i ndáiríre i gcaint na ndaoine.<sup>90</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

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<sup>89</sup> 'But there are things already, for example there's a discussion board on Beo, and there's a thing, 'make up a term' or something like that. And there's been one term since it was set up, 'nanny state'. 'Stát buime' is suggested. So I'm not trying to be negative about it and I'm not trying to be defensive but I don't know what take-up there'd be for the like. That's what I'd be afraid of.'

<sup>90</sup> 'A little dictionary that was published last year, the Dictionary of Sailing, that's the kind of – I was very taken with that dictionary because that's a domain in which there's a broad Irish language vocabulary and again it was descriptive, it was describing a vocabulary that was already in the language. There were representatives from every Gaeltacht area, but even that work I think there's a certain element of

In other cases, the descriptive work is because of the differences between term sources.

I think we're somewhere in between or we do a bit of both. For instance the dictionary of business studies set out to be descriptive in that it set out the various terms that they found for concepts in that subject field. But on the other hand the feedback we got, at least from the State Examinations Commission, because this was a school subject, business studies, was that that it was very unsatisfactory because how do you know which one to choose. So it would appear that, for some purposes, it's better to be prescriptive or to just present the one term for the one concept. But on the other hand because a very high percentage of business terms are actually legal terms, this was an area in point where we had one term in the legislation and another that had been developed probably unknown to each other in the teaching of business studies. So I think that's why that dictionary set out to be descriptive. But, as I say, the downside is that it's confusing. So when the business subcommittee set about revising that dictionary there was an effort to cut down on synonyms but in some cases... on the one hand a department inspector was saying this was what was used in exam papers and so on, and on the other hand, this is what's in the Act. So we did have to include both in some cases. But we tried to do as little of that as possible. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Generally one term is recommended, and other terms can be acknowledged. This depends on the domain; with general language enquiries, responses are more likely to be descriptive.

When we get a query, it's usually somebody needs help, they say what's the Irish for X. And if it doesn't already exist, then we research and we make a recommendation; we only recommend one term normally. And it's not that we're saying we're prescribing this, we're making a recommendation arising out of an enquiry... Recently someone was writing about 'helicopter' and they said, 'ingearán' is used regularly in such and such an area; well this is what the committee said: 'we know that, we've heard that, but it doesn't mean that we're banning that word, but we don't have to include every single term that was ever used anywhere'. The inclusion of all the various terms for a given concept was not the aim of the work. In the preface to his English-Irish LGP dictionary (1959), Tomás de Bhaldraithe lists some seventeen Irish equivalents he found for the concept described by the English term 'telescope', and he described how his approach was to choose one. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The original area [of the Terminology Committee's work] was education and I suppose the idea then was you must have one clear term in the textbook that will match the term in the exam and, for anything that would have to do with signage and safety, technical things in safety, it would be important to be very clear. And then, on the other hand, there are the enquiries that verge towards general language and

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prescription in it, because several of the words are not in use any longer, they were once and they're in sources like *An Béal Beo* and folklore collections. That was description and reportage, but we were really filling gaps in people's speech.'

phraseology which strictly speaking we shouldn't be working with at all, but it does happen that people ask about all sorts of things and, in that case, we wouldn't be prescriptive, we would say well you can say it like this or like that or maybe you'd give them five or six examples. But that would probably not be a technical term. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Other descriptive projects include the *Flora and Fauna Nomenclature*, in which several synonyms for birds, insects, fish, animals and plants were collected. In this case, the commonest name was given precedence for the purposes of textbooks and exam papers, and the additional names were given in brackets, in order to conserve the wealth of native Irish nomenclature. Many other collections in everyday domains, such as Agriculture, Geography, Physiology, Trades, also include synonyms which were collected, or submitted by domain experts. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Meaning is decided by the Terminology Committee, *de facto*, and generally directly based on English concept structures. Research is done on individual and related concepts, but concept systems are not developed due to lack of time.

Since the bulk of our time is taken up with just-in-time terminology work, concept system work is not feasible. Research is carried out on the new concept and includes listing any related concepts already extant in our sources. Further related concepts which turn up in definitions are also included.

Concept systems were developed for some of our smaller subject-field collections, but most collections to date have been of a scope far greater than could be readily handled in this manner. (Ní Ghallchobhair questionnaire)

As discussed in the section beginning on page 64, there is an issue about the lack of research into actual term use.

Níl aon neart air sin sa chomhthéacs sochtheangeolaíoch a bhfuil muid ag obair ann. Tá a fhios agam, institiúidí téarmaíochta eile, muintir na Fraince b'fhéidir go mbeadh acu rogha a dhéanamh idir leaganacha atá in úsáid... Ach ní hamhlaidh dúinne faraor. Tá a fhios agam, níl sé mar ba mhaith leat é a bheith ach níl a fhios agam cén leigheas atá air.<sup>91</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Fiontar's editorial role on Focal is descriptive, as the data is supplied by Foras na Gaeilge.

Oh it's descriptive mainly, as I said, going back to the legacy data question, that's there, we don't have any room for manoeuvre with what we do with it, and the Terminology Committee validates all new terminology so I would see it mainly as descriptive. I suppose it's prescriptive in the sense that it's a contribution towards the prescriptive element, the fact that by creating a resource like Focal and by merging all

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<sup>91</sup> 'It can't be helped in the sociolinguistic context in which we're working. I know other terminology institutes, the French might have to make a choice between versions that are in use... But unfortunately that's not the case for us. I know it's not what you'd want but I don't know how it can be solved.'

the sources you actually facilitate correct usage. It's easier for people to do the right thing which is obviously the prescriptive element there. And otherwise I think we don't have much of a role in the prescriptive side of things. And I don't think it has changed much. (Nic Pháidín)

In terms of administrative usage, the Terminology Committee's work is regarded as prescriptive without enforcement (this is discussed in the section beginning on page 19).

ÚB: And do you think – a similar question is the Coiste Téarmaíochta, do you think their role is descriptive or prescriptive?

DÓB: It's prescriptive but without enforcement. Other than people who are working on behalf of the State and in legislation, and there's a huge issue there that isn't resolved, there can't be an enforcement mechanism. They prescribe or they should prescribe the appropriate term or the recommended term for any particular concept and the question of whether that becomes embedded in the language and used is a separate question after that. (Ó Briain)

**There are discussions in the literature of the steps of term research or of database creation and a list of the attributes needed for successful terms: transparency, consistency, appropriateness, linguistic economy, derivability, linguistic correctness, and preference for native language. Does this correspond to the attributes considered important in the Irish term planning organisation's work?**

All these are considered attributes of good terminology; appropriateness is particularly important.

Well I'm not sure what the English for 'nádúrthacht' would be, maybe something like appropriateness, but that would be fairly high up on the list. If you remember we were talking about 'trespass', that sense of while it could be argued that the legal term is linguistically correct, and you could even say it's transparent if *treaspás* is the transliteration of trespass, but we would feel that it's not very *nádúrtha*, it's not very appropriate. So I would probably say that appropriateness would come near the top. Transparency I would say would be the next thing, and consistency next. And, of course, linguistic economy would be delightful. If we can say something in a neater, smaller word than the English, it's wonderful. Very often that doesn't happen, but if we can keep it short, we would try. And derivability, I imagine that that would have been the issue with say 'leictreachas' and 'aibhléis'. Certainly, with a lot of the scientific suffixes and prefixes, derivability would have been very important. And preference for native language, well, that's in there, I don't know what number it would be but certainly when we receive a request for a new concept, the first stop will always be 'is there anything in the native language already that we can use or that we can modify in some way?'. Can we make a noun out of an adjective, can we make a compound? That would be the first stop, unless it's a technical term based on Latin and Greek roots for which you know there will be hardly any possibility of anything existing. In that case, we have a ready-made set of rules for transliterating and that, in effect, makes those ones the easiest to deal with. So, yes, preference for native language, except perhaps for those kind of scientific terms. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

## 2.7. Dissemination: Awareness-raising

### **What is the Irish term planning organisation's approach to marketing? What marketing work is carried out?**

The Terminology Committee and Foras na Gaeilge carry out no marketing of terminology work, although some limited marketing is carried out by Fiontar as part of its contracts.

The Focal term bank was initially launched in September 2006 with a small initial advertising budget of about €15,000, most of which was spent on online advertising and promotional materials. Subsequent contracts contained no significant marketing budget. A small amount of money has since been spent on online advertising (Google Adwords), and Fiontar's marketing work has focused on increasing awareness of Focal. This has been carried out in several ways. Particular sectors such as libraries and banks have been targeted with specially-created products, such as a wall clock and bookmarks for libraries with relevant terms printed on them. There is also an emphasis on inexpensive awareness-raising, such as regular press releases and presentations to schools and universities.

An tuiscint atá agamsa ná gur shocraigh an Foras buiséad margaíochta agus fógraíochta a chur ar fáil mar chuid den chonradh reatha – na cloig do na bainc mar shampla, agus rud nó dhó do na leabharlanna. Ní cuimhin liom an figiúr ar bharr mo chloiginn anseo ach tá a fhios agam nach raibh ach figiúr an-bheag i gceist.<sup>92</sup> (Ó Ruairc addition)

There is no direct marketing, which means that most users find out about Focal by word of mouth within the Irish-language community.

We don't market it directly, the huge number of users was mainly by word of mouth and basically it's responding to a need because of the lack of an English-Irish dictionary and that is the reason why the stats are so large. So yes, we do talks and visits and all of that, but really the need was there... (Nic Pháidín)

ÚB: So Focal isn't then actively marketed or actively pushed, or is it?

CNP: Not really... Fiontar approached Foras na Gaeilge during the first and second contract in the hope that a broad-reaching marketing campaign would be undertaken, because we felt and still do I think that we are still primarily targeting or marketing or word-of-mouthing through the Irish-language community and that maybe the English speaker, the normal English speaker, the shopkeeper, the bank manager, may not actually know that this resource exists if people are looking for Irish words. So they

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<sup>92</sup> 'My understanding is that the Foras decided to provide a marketing and advertising budget as part of the current contract – the clocks for the banks for example, and a few things for the libraries. I can't remember the figure off the top of my head but I know it was only very small.'

decided that they couldn't or wouldn't be interested in doing that. But I think at this stage there's probably a high level of awareness percolating and filtering down through schools. But I know that there are still teachers and classes at all levels who actually do not know that Focal exists. I suppose it depends how clued-in people are to modern resources and teachers may not be at the forefront of that awareness. (Nic Pháidín)

It is felt that in general the Terminology Committee is becoming better known, although no direct marketing work is done.

Probably better known than it was but no, I think that traditionally, people who weren't directly involved in this kind of work, perhaps they didn't think very much 'where does this technical term come from?' or maybe they thought some civil servant was sitting in an office in Dublin making it up, I don't know. But I don't think that there was wide awareness of the Terminology Committee's work until the information revolution took effect during the 1990s. But I think it's probably improving over the past ten years at least. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The Terminology Committee's interest is in general awareness-raising about terminology work itself.

The Terminology Committee is more interested in awareness-raising of terminology work itself than in marketing any given resource. We are keen to engage people in looking at the linguistic role and processes of terminology work, and in stimulating debate. Awareness is raised primarily through giving talks in third-level institutions and other venues, terminology items on radio, publishing articles in journals and on our website. We obviously give information about the various terminology resources as part of this awareness-raising. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The reason for the lack of marketing work in recent years is a general cutback on any kind of Government-sponsored advertising, due to the economic downturn, after 2008.

Mar sin is fíor a rá nach raibh aon mhargaíocht straitéiseach go dáta ach ní hionann sin is a rá nach raibh margaíocht ar bith ann... Maidir le "Cén fáth", is dóigh gurb é an aeráid buiséid le dhá nó trí bliana anuas an chúis is mó. Tuigim go bhfuiltear ag caint ar thréimhse níos faide ná sin anseo, ach sin í an tréimhse is mó go bhféadfainn labhairt air i gceart i gcomhthéacs na ceiste seo. Chomh luath is a thosaigh cúrsaí eacnamaíochta ag dul in olcas i 2008, tháinig treoir an-soiléir ón Lár maidir le haon chaiteachas ar fhógraíocht nó ar mhargaíocht, treoir atá i bhfeidhm i gcónaí.<sup>93</sup> (Ó Ruairc addition)

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<sup>93</sup> 'So it's true to say that there wasn't any strategic marketing to date but that's not to say that there wasn't any marketing... As to "why" I suppose the budgetary climate for the last two or three years is the main cause. I understand that we're talking about a longer period than that here, but that's the period I can mainly speak knowledgeably about in the context of this question. As soon as the economic situation started getting worse in 2008, very clear directions came from the Centre about any spending on advertising or marketing, directions that are still in effect.'

In previous years, marketing work was not carried out because the Terminology Committee was focused on term provision for textbooks and for education until 1999, and no marketing was needed to ensure the use of approved terms in textbooks. There is no explanation for the lack of marketing work in the period between 1999 and 2008, however.

Maidir leis na cúiseanna nár tharla a leithéid roimh an tréimhse sin, an léamh pearsanta atá agam air ná go mbaineann sé leis an gcaoi ar bunaíodh an Coiste Téarmaíochta agus an chaoi ar fhorbair a chlár oibre thar na blianta. D'fhéadfaí a rá agus an Coiste ag díriú ar théacsleabhair oideachais agus ar an teagasc go ginearálta gur dúradh nach raibh aon ghá le margaíocht nuair a bhí an t-ábhar le cur ar fáil agus le húsáid. Bheifí cinnte go n-úsáidfí é (i scríbhinn ar a laghad) sa chomhthéacs dá raibh sé á chur ar fáil. Mar atá ráite ag Fidelma áit éigin eile sa tuairisc, níor leathnaíodh an clár oibre sin go foirmiúil gur cuireadh an Coiste faoi chúram Foras na Gaeilge, agus a chuid freagrachtaí téarmaíochta sainithe sa reachtaíocht i 1999. Is de réir a chéile a forbraíodh an plé ar chúrsaí margaíochta i gcomhthéacs an chláir oibre leathnaithe seo.<sup>94</sup> (Ó Ruairc addition)

Rannóg an Aistriúcháin does not carry out marketing work, and neither does the Irish Legal Terms Advisory Committee. Rannóg an Aistriúcháin would, however, like its resources to be better known.

VUE: Tá daoine áirithe ann agus fuaireadar amach, cuir mar sin é, go rabhamar ann. Agus déarfainn gurb é an tslí go bhfuaireadar amach ná gur chuireadar an cheist orthu féin, cá bhfaighinn na téarmaí seo? Cá bhfaighinn an teideal oifigiúil ar an aonad seo? Agus faigheann siad amach, bhuel, tá Rannóg an Aistriúcháin ann agus bíonn siad ag aistriú na nithe sin... Agus cuireann siad de stró orthu féin a fháil amach cá bhfuilimid agus ansin cuireann siad de stró orthu féin an glaoch gutháin sin a dhéanamh.

ÚB: An ndéanann sibh poiblíocht nó margaíocht oraibh féin? Mar shampla trí rá ar an suíomh go bhfuil sibh ann agus gurb eo é bhur n-uimhir.

VUE: Bhuel, táimid ag obair air sin faoi láthair. Tá a fhios agat, táimid ag iarraidh saghas droichead a thógáil idir an ról atá againn ó thaobh doiciméid a aistriú agus iad a chur ar fáil agus mar a déarfá na brící tógála lenar tógadh na doiciméid sin a sholáthar chomh maith, sé sin na téarmaí, agus táim ag iarraidh díriú orthu sin.<sup>95</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

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<sup>94</sup> 'As for the reasons there wasn't any [marketing] before that period, my personal reading of it is that it has to do with the way the Terminology Committee was established and the way its work programme developed over the years. You could say that, while the Committee was focusing on educational textbooks and teaching in general, it was decided that there was no need for marketing when the material was to be made available and used. You could be sure it would be used (in writing at least) in the context for which it was being provided. As Fidelma said somewhere else in the report, that work programme didn't broaden out formally until the Committee was brought under the auspices of Foras na Gaeilge, and its terminology responsibilities were defined in legislation in 1999. The discussion on marketing developed gradually in the context of this broadened work programme.'

<sup>95</sup> 'VUE: Some people found out, put it like that, that we were there. And I'd say the way that they found out was that they asked themselves, where would I find these terms? Where would I find the official



**Are efforts made to increase awareness about terminology or about term planning? How is this done?**

Terminology Committee and Fiontar staff regularly give talks and participate in conferences about terminology. There is also a considerable amount of information published on the Focal site, including a module on dictionary use, and articles about terminology and about the Terminology Committee's work.

Both Fiontar and the Terminology Committee emphasise the importance of publications and talks.

ÚB: Is awareness raised about terminology or term planning work? You mentioned talks for example, is there anything else like that?

CNP: Well I suppose formally through published research. We have several staff members involved in aspects of the work over the years who would give papers at conferences and have published work on it. That would be the main area. And as I said through the work on Focal and through the dictionary skills module on the database as well. (Nic Pháidín)

Personally, I've been fairly active over the years with giving talks and workshops, mainly in third level institutions but not solely; sometimes it might be at an event, such as the Gaelscoileanna annual get-together, or Scoil Merriman or something like that. And through a series of radio items on terminology, through articles in journals, and through publishing articles and other terminological material on our website. I also gave a series of workshops to the Irish translators in Brussels and to the team at Fiontar at the outset of the IATE project. In 2007, I developed a terminology handbook, focusing specifically on term formation methods, and I developed an updated version in 2010. Obviously more could be done, and I would like to do more or at least I would like us to be doing more, but I think it has been fruitful in that every time I give one of these talks it usually leads to very stimulating debate and interest and feedback. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010, with addition)

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title for this unit? And they find out, well, Rannóg an Aistriúcháin exists and they translate those things... And they take the trouble to find out where we are and they take the trouble to make that phone call.

ÚB: Do you publicise or market yourselves? For example by saying on the website that you're here and that this is your phone number.

VUE: Well we're working on that at the moment. You know, we're trying to build a kind of bridge between our role in translating documents and providing them, and also supplying the building blocks with which those documents were built, that is the terms, and I want to focus on them.'

## 2.8. Dissemination: Publication

### How are terms made available?

Prior to 2003, terms were available in print and some collections had also been published on CD-ROM and online (Acmhainn.ie) in the form of Word lists. In summer 2003 Fiontar made a proposal to Foras na Gaeilge, requesting its support for an initiative to seek funding from the EU to create a national term bank for Irish. Funding was obtained under INTERREG IIIA Ireland/Wales (Priority One, Measure Four: Communications and Transport Technology) with matching funding from Foras na Gaeilge. During the project, all the Irish terms published by the Terminology Committee, and some it had never published – approximately 130,000 in total – were edited together and made available as one database. A staff of between four and eight did this work from early 2005 to early 2007. Development work has continued with follow-on contracts from Foras na Gaeilge thereafter.

The database was created by compiling fifty-four dictionaries and term lists provided by the Terminology Committee (which were already in electronic format), checking each entry and adding grammar information and variant forms. Considerable editorial work was needed to harmonise terms from different dictionaries and to solve the disparities between decisions reached on different dates by the same or different subcommittees.

Technical innovation was employed in creating a complex search mechanism to find terms regardless of grammatical form. The editorial interface, not visible to the public, is a term management system. The database was designed to be an easily-used editorial tool for the Terminology Committee. It was expected that terms, once proposed or approved, would be directly entered into the database and made available to the public. Thus there is a facility to mark terms as ‘proposed’, ‘approved’, etc.

All the Terminology Committee’s terminology work has been available on Focal since 2006. Once terms have been decided at Terminology Committee meetings, they are entered into the database as soon as possible, although staffing issues have delayed this work.

Once terms have been decided at Terminology Committee meetings, they should ideally be input into the database as soon as possible. While a dedicated staff member was in place, this was achieved within a two-week period from the time of approval. However, the loss of this staff member and all other assistants over the past two years has made it impossible to keep abreast of this work. Ultimately, this work has had to be outsourced and the backlog is being cleared. This is not an ideal situation, of course, since the input of new material often has editorial implications which will not be obvious to the external contract staff. This leads to the need for editorial review of

all newly-input material, for which there are no adequate resources. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Other means of publication include term dictionaries and smaller lists.

Well, apart from the database – traditionally we published paper dictionaries, and we also had a series of lists in specific domains, which sometimes were just A4 lists, that we sent out on request. Because this type of editorial work is quite intensive, we have some projects in planning for either new editions or new publications in paper format. But anything that will be coming out of these will already be in the database in the first place. So obviously the database is the most immediately accessible resource for most people; however there are many people who like to have their handbook or their list; particularly if they're working in a specific area, they like to have the whole set of terminology for that area. So we try to identify certain smaller sections which mightn't have been made available before. And it has a dual purpose. On the one hand, we prepare a list that deals with a specific area, and also it gives us a chance to work on these in case they need to be updated in some way in the database. Some of these lists have already been published on our website and others are in preparation. It takes time but we think it's useful to work in two directions. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Because there is no up-to-date English-Irish dictionary, the distribution of terminology as part of an LGP dictionary is not an option.

Rannóg an Aistriúcháin has published no term-lists, and in the opinion of one translator with long experience in the area, the lack of resources leads to confusion and poor translation.

Is cinnte nach eol don té a cheapann an dara téarma go bhfuil ceann eile ann cheana. Is fíor an ráiteas sin fad a bhaineann le téarmaíocht atá in úsáid i dtéacsanna reachtacha bíodh siad bainteach leis an Aontas Eorpach nó leis an reachtaíocht náisiúnta, agus cuid mhaith den locht ar an dá eagrais sin le blianta fada nár fhoilsigh a gcuid téarmaíochta don saol.<sup>96</sup> (Ó Ruairc, M 2007, 15).

A list of legal terms, *Téarmaí Dlí*, was published in 1958 by the Irish Legal Terms Advisory Committee. This has been out of print for many years. *Focal sa Chúirt* (Ó Catháin 2001), which contained the *Téarmaí Dlí* list, appeared in 2001. It also contains 7,000 additional entries. Both of these collections are published on Focal's auxiliary glossary.

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<sup>96</sup> 'The person who coins the second term certainly doesn't know that there is already one in existence. That statement is true for terminology in use in legal texts whether national or European Union, and much of the fault lies with those two organisations [Rannóg an Aistriúcháin and the EU] which did not publish their terminology for many years.'

In 2004 all the Acts of the Oireachtas, in English and in Irish (except where an Irish version has not yet been provided) were made available online at [www.achtanna.ie](http://www.achtanna.ie). They are a resource for translators in finding terms and phrases.

Statutory instruments (translated by Rannóg an Aistriúcháin until the early 1990s) are available only in paper format, so although they contain a substantial amount of terminology, they are of little practical use as a terminological resource, since they lack an index. Fiontar is currently working on a project to digitise some statutory instruments and to extract terms from them. Once approved by the Terminology Committee, these will be published on Focal. Rannóg an Aistriúcháin is also working on making its resources more easily consulted.

VUE: Agus ó thaobh téarmaí a bheadh ceaptha againn, cuirtear aon rud a fhoilsímidne, nó a chuirimidne ar fáil, foilsítear é ar shuíomh an Oireachtais – bíodh páipéar na Dála i gceist, nó páipéar an tSeanaid nó Acht. Beidh fáil ag an bpobal orthu sin, beidh siad i leagan leictreonach PDF, is féidir iad a chló amach, is féidir iad a chuardach agus, faoi láthair, táimid ag plé leis an Aonad laistigh de na tithe atá freagrach as an suíomh idirlín chun an próiseas cuardaigh orthu sin a fheabhsú sa tslí is go mbeidh teacht níos gasta ag daoine ar na nithe atá i gceist. Chomh maith leis sin, táimid ag féachaint ar shlí chun na téarmaí againn a chur suas ar an suíomh.

ÚB: Ar shuíomh an Oireachtais?

VUE: Sea, mar chabhair bhreise do dhaoine a bheadh ag iarraidh teacht orthu go gasta, sa tslí is nach mbeadh orthu dul isteach agus Acht a oscailt agus cuardach a dhéanamh ach go mbeadh liosta téarmaí nua atá curtha ar fáil againn, abraimis i rith na míosa roimhe sin nó a leithéid sin ar fáil, agus bheadh saghas bunachar á thógáil de réir a chéile. Agus, ar ndóigh, go mbeadh na téarmaí ar fáil daoibhse in Focal.ie agus in áiteanna eile. Ach teastaíonn uaim an chuid sin d'obair na Rannóige a fhorbairt sa tslí is go mbeidh fáil níos tapúla ar na téarmaí atá á n-úsáid againn.<sup>97</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

In 2006 a large corpus of specialised terminology (about 80,000 items, of loosely structured data, mostly but not exclusively legal terms and sentences) created by Rannóg an Aistriúcháin was made available on Focal with an internal interface so that the material could be regularly

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<sup>97</sup> 'And as regards terms we've created, anything we publish or supply is published on the Oireachtas websites. The Dáil paper, or the Seanad paper, or an act. The public has access to them, they're in PDF format, they can be printed out, they can be searched and at present we're discussing with the unit in the houses which is responsible for the website so that we could improve the search process and people could more quickly find things. As well as that we're looking at ways of putting our terms on the site.

ÚB: On the Oireachtas website?

VUE: Yes, as an additional help for people who want to find them quickly, so that they don't have to go in and open an act and search, but that we'd provide a list of terms that we've created over the month, say, and we'd gradually be building a kind of database. And of course the terms would be available to you in Focal.ie and in other places. But I want to develop that aspect of the Rannóg's work so that the terms we're using can be found more quickly.'

updated by its owners. This process is managed by Rannóg an Aistriúcháin but it is unclear how often it is undertaken ('on an occasional basis', according to Uíbh Eachach).

An dara rud ansin ná iad a chur ar fáil don phobal an mhéid is féidir. Faoi láthair tá socrú againn libhse ó thaobh Focal.ie, agus ní mór dúinn díriú isteach air sin agus é sin a thabhairt chun cruinnis.<sup>98</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

As Rannóg an Aistriúcháin's terminology is available on Focal, Achtanna.ie is seen as less essential.

ÚB: Agus céard faoi fhoinsí, Achtanna.ie mar shampla, an mbainfeá mórán úsáid as sin?

AML: Bhuel ó tháinig an ghluais bhreise ar Focal is dóigh liom gur fíorbheagán úsáid a bhaineann daoine as.<sup>99</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

For the terminology created and used by Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, the immediate priority is its use in legislation, rather than its provision in an accessible format to the public.

Ní feidhm pleanála atá againne anseo, tá feidhm fheidhmeach más féidir é sin a thabhairt uirthi. Go praiticiúil; an gnó atá againn ná táirge a sholáthar i ndeireadh an lae agus bíonn brú orainn fiú amháin é sin a dhéanamh, rudaí a sholáthar ar ardchaighdeán agus go tráthúil. Agus sé an chéad rud a tharlaíonn do na téarmaí sin ná go gcuirtear isteach iad sa doiciméad atá á réiteach le foilsiú – Acht nó páipéar na Dála ... bíonn an obair sin le déanamh againn go laethúil. Sé an rud a dhéanaimid leis na téarmaí atá ceaptha sa chás sin, bídis ina dtéarmaí nua nó ina bhfásaigh, sé an rud a dhéanaimid ná iad a chur isteach sa táirge atá á chur ar fáil againn, sin an chéad rud.<sup>100</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Other groups, such as the Department of the Environment and Local Government, and An Garda Síochána (the police force), have also created corpora, databases and specialised dictionaries, but they are not widely distributed.

Focal and the dictionaries published by the Terminology Committee are the two main sources for terminology.

ÚB: An bhfuil aon fhoinsí eile a rithfeadh leat?

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<sup>98</sup> 'The second thing then is to make them available to the public as much as possible. At the moment we have an arrangement with you as regards Focal.ie, and we must concentrate on that and get it more precise.'

<sup>99</sup> 'ÚB: and what about resources, Achtanna.ie for example, would you use that much?

AML: Well since the advent of the auxiliary glossary on Focal I think it's only used very little.'

<sup>100</sup> 'We here don't have a planning role, ours is an executive or a practical role; our job is to produce a product at the end of the day and we're under pressure to do even that, to provide things to a high standard and in a timely fashion. An the first thing that happens to those terms is that they're inserted into the document that's being prepared for publication, an act or Dáil paper... we have to do that work on a daily basis. What we do with the terms that are created in that case, be they new terms or precedents, we put them into the product we're providing, that's the first thing.'

AML: Bhuel tá a fhios agam go mbíonn plé ar fhóraitm ríomhphoist áirithe faoi chúrsaí téarmaíochta, agus is maith sin. Ach is dóigh liom, sin an dá rud is mó éileamh orthu.<sup>101</sup>  
(Mac Lochlainn)

**It is often suggested that dictionaries and term lists only have limited, indirect influence (that ‘real people don’t read dictionaries’). Is this recognised, and, if so, what steps are taken to address the issue? Are other means of dissemination used? What are they?**

The main means of term dissemination is not through dictionaries but online. The high user numbers for Focal (855,519 searches in March 2010) indicate that there has been a considerable uptake. This may be because most users of the written language are aware of its existence and use it as a source, almost, in some cases, to the exclusion of general language dictionaries. Anecdotally, both TG4 reporters and Fiontar students said that they find it quicker and more convenient to search Focal than a paper dictionary; some Fiontar students (of Irish) did not even own a print dictionary.

Because of the lack of LGP dictionary renewal, the general dictionary is in any case likely either not to contain the term needed, or to contain an outdated version of it.

Ceileann de Bhaldráithe forbairt iomlán na Gaeilge féin ó lár na haoise seo, agus tá gné an Bhéarla chomhaimseartha ann easnamhach ó bhonn faoin tráth seo... Bíonn ar gach foclóir freastal éigin a dhéanamh ar bhéarlagair comhaimseartha, mar a rinne de Bhaldráithe i gcás an Bhéarla iarchogaidh, ach ní mór athnuachan a dhéanamh air gach cúig bliana déag ar a laghad.<sup>102</sup> (Nic Pháidín, Ní Ghallchobhair & Ó Baoill 1999, 1).

One step taken during the 1990s before the creation of Focal was the publication of occasional term lists in the literary magazine *Comhar*. This is seen by one interviewee as symptomatic of a poor approach to term dissemination.

Mar shampla blianta ó shin bhíodh liosta de théarmaí úra i gcló ag *Comhar*. Domsa léiríonn sé sin is dóigh cé chomh holc is atá an córas mar dá mbeifeá ag lorg bealach níos doiléire, ní thiofadh leat bealach níos doiléire a aimsiú ná é a chur i gcló in iris nach dóigh go léifidh an oiread sin daoine.<sup>103</sup> (Delap)

The education system is another means for term dissemination.

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<sup>101</sup> ‘ÚB: Are there any other resources that occur to you?

AML: Well I know there’s discussion on certain email forums about terminology matters, and that’s good. But I think they’re the two in most demand.’

<sup>102</sup> ‘De Bhaldráithe does not show any of the development of Irish itself since the middle of this century, and the contemporary English aspect is completely lacking at this stage... . Every dictionary has to make some provision for contemporary jargon, as De Bhaldráithe did for post-war English, but it must be renewed at least every fifteen years.’

<sup>103</sup> ‘For example years ago lists of new terms used to be published in *Comhar*. That to me shows how bad the system is because if you were looking for a more obscure method, you couldn’t find a more obscure method than to publish them in a journal that probably not many people read.’

Tá sé, ó thaobh soláthair dó ní dóigh liomsa go bhfuil na huirlisí soláthair ann don ghnáthphobal, tá an t-oideachas ann, sin nuair a bhíonn daoine ar scoil ar ndóigh agus má bhíonn siad ag déanamh sainchúrsaí san adhmaadóireacht nó san innealtóireacht nó rud éigin mar sin agus bíonn téarmaí faoi leith de dhíth orthu, cuirtear na téarmaí ar fáil an t-am sin. Agus foghlaimíonn siad iad. Dlíodóirí, bíonn orthu liosta téarmaí a fhoghlaim agus an cineál sin ruda. Níl a fhios agam a mbaineann mórán acu úsáid astu ina dhiaidh ach an dream beag a bheidh ag plé le Gaeilge [ina dhiaidh] sin, sin an bunrud a bhíonn acu agus cloíonn siad leis ina dhiaidh... Is tríd na leabhair scoile a thagann daoine ar na téarmaí nach bhfuil ar eolas acu sa ghnáthshaol.<sup>104</sup> (Ó hIlfearnáin)

It is noted however that terminology training for teachers is inadequate and that this leads to inconsistent uptake.

There would be limited exposure to sort of terminology awareness in teacher training and training for journalists. But I think that it has been identified frequently as a deficit in teacher training... they would literally arrive in the classroom on day one and maybe never have used terminology in that domain in Irish and they would be applying for a post in Irish-medium schools. So because of that the perception by the teacher and therefore by the students is that terminology in Irish is something a bit odd, and a lot of the textbooks they would be using would actually be in English, and it would be seen as something rather difficult and slightly problematic, which is unfortunate, because that could be overcome very easily through better training. (Nic Pháidín)

It is felt by interviewees that other, imaginative, means of term dissemination are needed.

Bhíodh an clár sin ann ar RnaG, Leagan Cainte, is rud bunúsach go leor a bhí ann ach b'fhéidir gur cheart don Choiste Téarmaíochta nó cibé dream a bheidh ag smaoineamh ar bhealach nuálach, bhí clár ag an BBC 'Balderdash and Piffle' nó rud éigin mar sin agus bhíodh, is bealach iontach samhlaíoch a bhí ann le *etymology* agus a leithéid a chur trasna. B'fhéidir go bhfuil oscailt éigin ansin, ach cinnte caithfear an droichead a thógáil idir cumadh na dtéarmaí agus iad a chur in úsáid.<sup>105</sup> (Delap)

Tá rud éigin de dhíth leis an bearna sin a líonadh agus mar a dúirt bhí an clár sin Leagan Cainte, tá sin cineál *obsolete* anois sílim mar choincheap, ach rud éigin a chur ar siúl a bheadh urraithe ag an Choiste Téarmaíochta a bheadh *interactive* agus a bheadh ar fáil

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<sup>104</sup> 'From the point of view of supply I don't think the tools are there for the general community, there's education, when people are at school of course and if they're doing a specialised course in woodwork or engineering or something like that and they need certain terms, the terms are provided then. And they learn them. Lawyers, they have to learn a list of terms and that kind of thing. I don't know if many of them use it afterwards, but the small group that will be dealing with Irish, that's the basic thing they have and they stick to it after that. It's through schoolbooks that people find terms that they don't know in everyday life.'

<sup>105</sup> 'That programme used to be on RnaG [Raidió na Gaeltachta], *Leagan Cainte* ['turn of phrase'], it was pretty basic but maybe the Terminology Committee or whatever group should be thinking about an innovative way, the BBC had a programme 'Balderdash and Piffle' or something like that and it was a really imaginative way to transmit etymology and the like. Maybe there's some opening there, but certainly the bridge has to be built between term creation and putting them in use.'

don phobal i gcoitinne. Níl freagra na ceiste agam dáiríre ach go bhfuil géarghá le teacht ar bhealach. Má chuireann tú oiread stró ort féin teacht ar na téarmaí, agus téarmaí maithe a chumadh, ba cheart duit dul giota beag níos faide lena chinntiú go mbaintear úsáid as na téarmaí sin, ach níl freagra na ceiste agam. Is ábhar machnaimh atá ann.<sup>106</sup> (Delap)

It is also felt that the public should be educated about what terminology work is.

So there is that sense in terms of clarifying understandings and perceptions of what terminology is, what the work of the Terminology Committee is in terms of the public out there, make sure that they're crystal clear in their understanding. Because I think a lot of the pressure that the system is under at the moment arises from misperceptions or miscomprehensions like that. (Ó Ruairc)

**Informal means of dissemination are important, according to the literature. What informal means of dissemination, if any, are used by the Irish term planning organisation?**

The Fóram, an email exchange group in which translators and other language users discuss translation problems, often to do with translating terms from English, is one informal means of term dissemination, although the Terminology Committee are not participants. Many of these discussions are very detailed, and show an active interest in terminology questions. There is, however, no public archive of these messages.

It is felt that there are few fora in which scientific terminology is used in Irish, and that this could be rectified with the revival of a publication such as *An tEolaí*, which was a scientific journal for young people.

Chomh maith leis sin b'fhéidir, sé an trua nach bhfuil tuilleadh rudaí ann leis an téarmaíocht a chur i gcúrsaíocht... An bhfuil *An tEolaí* ann i gcónaí? Tá a fhios agat an rud beag sin a chuirí amach. Bhí sé go maith mar is réimse saoil é sin nach mbíonn faoi thrácht go rómhínic sa Ghaeilge, cúrsaí eolaíochta agus mar sin dó. Bhí sin go maith. Ba mhaith liom sin a bheith ann, agus mar a deirim ba mhaith liom b'fhéidir foclóirí de chineál eile b'fhéidir a bheith ann, rud a chuideodh le daoine an téarmaíocht a úsáid go slachtmhar. Sílim go mba mhór an cuidiú é sin agus sin an rud a dhéanfainse cibé.<sup>107</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

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<sup>106</sup> 'Something is needed to fill that gap and as I said there was that programme *Leagan Cainte*, that's kind of obsolete now I think as a concept, but to create something sponsored by the Terminology Committee that would be interactive and would be available to the general public. I don't know the answer really but that we really need to find a way. If you take so much trouble to find the terms, and to create good terms, you should go a little bit further to ensure that they'll be used, but I don't know the answer. It's something to think about.'

<sup>107</sup> 'As well as that maybe, it's a pity there aren't more things to put terminology in use... Is *An t-Eolaí* [The Scientist] still around? You remember that little thing that used to be put out. It was good because that's a domain that isn't discussed too often in Irish, science and so on. That was good. I'd like it if there



Among the media, there is no network for term discussion or dissemination.

ÚB: Agus i gcás rudaí iomlán nua ar nós mar shampla fliú na muc, a tháinig chun cinn an samhradh seo caite, ba choincheap iomlán nua bhí ann. Céard a rinne sibh?

BD: Is dóigh go ngabhfaidh muid le Focal. Gan sin is dóigh go ngabhfaidh muid leis an chomhairleoir teanga. Ní cuimhin liom go díreach. Tá méid áirithe *copycat* i gceist go mbíonn muid ag dul, ag éisteacht le RnaG, ní dhéarfainn go bhfuil córas ceart leagtha síos, gur *on an ad hoc basis*, agus an chéad fliú eile, beidh muid ag déanamh an rud céanna, ag cumadh téarmaí, ag dul go Focal, ag dul b'fhéidir go dtí an Coiste Téarmaíochta, [ach] is fíorannamh a dhéanann muid é sin.<sup>108</sup> (Delap)

It is acknowledged by interviewees that informal dissemination – and involvement of the user community – is important.

A recent example of successful take-up of a term in current demand arose from a request for an Irish equivalent for 'head shop', which was a topic of discussion in the media. The original enquiry came from a translator, followed by several enquiries from members of the media. The Committee's recommendation of 'siopa siabhráin' was communicated back to those who had submitted the enquiries and it was soon in regular use by the media. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

I think there is a gap between the highly valuable work that's done, almost on a secretive basis, a very low profile, by an Coiste Téarmaíochta, and disseminating that in the wider community. (Ó Briain)

DÓB: One of the issues is the need to do more of that. And also the potential benefits in terms of raising awareness of the language and increasing commitment in the Irish language community to the language and to using terminology, authentic Irish language terminology as distinct from peppering one's speech with the English terminology, to see what can be done, to do what people in the Basque country spoke about at a seminar recently, about seeing terminology as a social project involving the entire language community both in terms of involving speakers of the language and schools and so on in making recommendations and new terms, particularly terms for things that they might be interested in, social networking for example. It strikes me as one that might be useful... And also then as a way of embedding the terms, having that

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were that, and as I say I'd like there to be maybe other kinds of dictionaries, that would help people to use terminology well. I think that'd be a great help and that's what I'd do anyway.'

<sup>108</sup> 'ÚB: And in the case of completely new things like for example swine flu, which emerged last summer, that was a completely new concept. What did you do?

BD: I suppose we'd go with Focal. Failing that I suppose we'd go with the language consultant. I can't remember exactly. There's a certain amount of copycat in that we'd be listening to Raidió na Gaeltachta, I wouldn't say there's a real system, it's on an *ad hoc* basis, and the next flu, we'll be doing the same thing, making up terms, going to Focal, maybe going to the Terminology Committee, but it's very rarely that we'd do that.'

sort of consultative for want of a better phrase process as a way of involving the language community in creating the terms and then embedding those terms once they've been agreed in the language community. It might be sensible if we were involved in doing this.

ÚB: And is there any plan for doing anything like that?

DÓB: There isn't a plan but I think it's one of the issues that's flagged obliquely in the strategy, the twenty year strategy for Irish. There's a whole range of things that arguably should have been done thirty or forty years ago that we're only getting around to doing now. (Ó Briain)

**How have methods of dissemination changed, and why? (And is there any quantitative data for this?)**

The biggest change in term dissemination has been publication online, first in the form of lists on Acmhainn.ie (from 2002) and then via the Focal database from 2006. The growth in users of Focal has been dramatic and surpassed all expectations, with an average annual increase since 2007 of one hundred and forty-three per cent.

Technology also influenced how terms were disseminated during the 1990s. This was due to the introduction of email and the decision to periodically publish lists of terms with the Terminology Committee's contact details. This meant that the public started to become aware of the Terminology Committee's existence and that the number of enquiries increased dramatically – although resources to answer them did not.

Pé uair a thosaigh an ríomhphost thart ar '93-94 thosaigh daoine ag scríobh chugainn ar an ríomhphost. Agus chomh maith leis sin chuir muid amach liostaí beaga sna nuachtáin ó am go chéile. Gach cúpla mí chuirfeadh muid amach liosta, rudaí a bhí tráthúil. Agus is dóigh gur chuir muid na huimhreacha gutháin agus an seoladh ríomhphoist ann, rud a bhí go maith. Ach amháin nach raibh na hacmhainní againn le déileáil go sásúil leis na freagraí. Bhí go leor daoine ag teacht i dteagmháil linn. Is amhlaidh a dhírigh muid go hiomlán ar an ngné seo den obair ó 1997 anonn agus a fágadh obair eagarthóireachta ar shainfhoclóirí i leataobh go ceann roinnt blianta, mar nach raibh ach duine amháin ag obair san oifig. Ag éirí as an athrú treo seo, rinneadh na téarmaí ilghnéitheacha a d'eascair as na fiosruithe seo a bhailiú agus a chur in eagar, agus foilsíodh an chéad chnuasach díobh ar shuíomh Acmhainn.ie i 2002. Tuairim is 18,500 coincheap a bhí ar an liosta sin.<sup>109</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007, with addition)

This was the first time that an awareness was created of the Terminology Committee's work and of terminology work for Irish in general.

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<sup>109</sup> 'Whenever email started around '93-'94 people started emailing us. And as well as that we put out little lists in the newspaper from time to time. Every few months we'd put out a list, topical things. And I suppose we put the phone numbers and the email address on it, which was a good thing. Except that we didn't have the resources to deal with the response. Lots of people were getting in touch with us.'

Ní raibh feasacht ar bith ann an uair sin mar ní raibh a fhios ag an bpobal go raibh an obair ar bun, ní raibh a fhios acu cé a bhí ina bhun, agus ní raibh feasacht ann faoi cad is téarma ann, cad is téarmaíocht ann, cé as a thagann focail. Mar ní raibh na hacmhainní ann agus ní raibh an teicneolaíocht ann agus ní raibh an machnamh ann, mar go bunúsach ag dul i bhfad siar is obair inmheánach a bhí inti sa Roinn Oideachais, dírithe ar na téacsleabhair agus ar na páipéir scrúdaithe.<sup>110</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

There was a gradual, cumulative growth in awareness.

Bailíonn brobh beart, is dóigh gurb in an freagra air sin. De réir mar is mó ábhair a chuireann tú amach chuig an bpobal, is ea is mó den phobal a fhaigheann amach faoi, a chuireann spéis ann, a bhíonn ag scríobh isteach agus mar sin de.<sup>111</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

The number of enquiries from the public, and from translators in particular, has grown over the years.

Is dóigh liom go bhfuil sé ag dul an treo sin ó shin, go bhfuil níos mó ón bpobal agus níos lú ó earnáil an oideachais ach nuair a bhreathnaíonn tú isteach i réimse an phobail, cheapfainn go bhfuil an líon díobh a thagann ó aistritheoirí ag dul i méid.<sup>112</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

#### **How freely are term collections available?**

Focal is generally well known among term users, considering the limited marketing done, and is considered a good resource.

Bhuel sé Focal an rud atá i ndiaidh an saol a athrú, tá sé fíormhaith agus ar ndóigh foilsítear na sainfhoclóirí clóite go fóill agus bíonn ráchairt áirithe orthu sin, is maith le daoine áirithe bheith ag plé le peann agus pár.<sup>113</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

BD: Sílim go bhfuil [an téarmaíocht ar fáil go réasúnta éasca], sílim gur cuidiú é Focal anois, mar a dúirt mé a bheith ag priontáil liostaí in iris acadúil, *forget it*, ní raibh dóigh ar bith go raibh sé sin le dul i bhfeidhm. Ach anois má bhíonn tú ag long téarma, gach seans go mbeidh sé in focal.ie.

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<sup>110</sup> 'There was no awareness back then because the public didn't know the work was going on, they didn't know who was working on it, and there was no awareness about what a term is, what terminology is, where words come from. Because the resources weren't there and the technology wasn't there and the thought wasn't there, because basically going way back it was an internal thing in the Department, directed at textbooks and exam papers.'

<sup>111</sup> 'A little gathers a lot, I suppose that's the answer to that. The more material you give to the public, the more the public finds out about it, gets interested, writes in and so on.'

<sup>112</sup> 'I think it's been going that way since, that there's more from the public and less from the education sector but when you look into the enquiries from the public I'd say the proportion of them from translators is increasing.'

<sup>113</sup> 'Well it's Focal that's changed our lives, it's very good and of course the specialised print dictionaries are still published and there's a certain demand for them, some people like dealing with pen and paper.'

ÚB: Mar sin níl fadhb ann.

BD: Ní fheictear dom go bhfuil.<sup>114</sup> (Delap)

Tá na hacmhainní ann, na hacmhainní foilsithe agus na hacmhainní atá ar líne ar ndóigh, agus freagraíonn siad sin cuid den cheist agus séard a tharlaíonn de ghnáth i mo chás-sa mar shampla, rachainn ar focal.ie sílim i dtús báire agus ansin b'fhéidir chuig na rudaí atá foilsithe nó ag Acmhainn, is ionann iad a bheag nó a mhór, go bhfeicfinn.<sup>115</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

It is considered one of the key strengths of Irish language terminology, even though, by international standards, it was very late in arriving.

One of the strengths we certainly have is in the technological sphere. The likes of Focal, the likes of Logainm, as the more I get involved in this discourse it seems clear to me that these are continental, global pioneers in terms of how you provide a terminological service and engage the broader public, and how you sustain the development. It's like how it sustains the whole dynamic to the work that feeds in to it. It's not just about working out the way, there's also a loop back and it's impacting on understanding and thoughts and opinions about this whole area. So I think that's a key strength that we have a technological and IT structural framework already developed which is very very strong. And it's very clear that there's ongoing planning in terms of how we keep on thinking this over. Not to rest on our laurels. (Ó Ruairc)

It should be borne in mind that all of these technological resources were developed and came online in the current century, beginning with Acmhainn.ie in 2002. Technology has come late to the Irish language, bearing in mind, for instance, that the Canadian term bank, *Termium*, has been in existence since 1975, and some other term banks date back to the 1960s. Now, within an eight-year period, we suddenly have terminology, placenames, and legislation in the Irish language online. A new generation of users is growing up with technological resources which did not exist until just a few years ago. This late development of technological resources can most probably be put down to the sudden availability of financial resources during the first decade of the new century. For instance, the Terminology Committee set about establishing a terminology database in the early 1990s but failed to secure the resources to populate and maintain it. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

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<sup>114</sup> 'BD: I think [terminology is available relatively easily], I think Focal is a help now, as I said to be printing lists in academic journals, forget it, it was never going to have an effect. But now if you're looking for a term, chances are it'll be in focal.ie.

ÚB: So there isn't a problem.

BD: I don't think there is.'

<sup>115</sup> 'The resources are there, the published resources and the online resources of course, and that answers some of the question and what usually happens in my case for example, I'd go to focal.ie first I think and then maybe to the published things or Acmhainn, they're more or less the same, to see.'

Focal is very much user-focused.

In setting up the database the general user was our prime motivation and I think that needs to be stated and it was funded by the European Union on the basis that it would bring the ordinary citizen in contact with ICT technologies, it wasn't funded as a language initiative at all. And I think we were very conscious that... making it easy for the end user to use was the primary motivation and everything else really was secondary, it was a benefit. (Nic Pháidín)

There is, however a serious problem in the gap between LGP and LSP provision. General language terms are often not available in the two LGP dictionaries. There is a question about what the usage of Focal would be if dictionaries were available; in a sense it is filling a gap and terms may be overused as a consequence.

Tá daoine ag éirí rud beag falsa maidir le Focal, an rud atá maith, bíonn daoine rud beag millte b'fhéidir. Agus tá siad ann go minic nach ndéanann siad an machnamh fiú amháin an dteastaíonn téarma anseo. Téann siad go Focal agus úsáideann siad Focal mar a bheadh foclóir ginearálta ann, cé go bhfuil a fhios agam is iomaí rabhadh agus is iomaí fainic a chuirtear. Ach déanann siad sin ar aon nós é...<sup>116</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

This was borne out by discussions with reporters in TG4 and with undergraduate students, who reported that Focal is used instead of the English-Irish dictionary if this is not to hand. Reporters suggested, for instance, that general language information could be included in Focal.

There is a feeling that legislative terminology resources, apart from those published on Focal, are not always availed of.

Tá daoine, fiú amháin aistritheoirí, agus dealraíonn sé, bíonn siad ag aistriú cáipéisí oifigiúla ach an chuma ar an scéal nach bhfuil a fhios acu go bhfuil leagan Gaeilge de na hAchtanna ar fáil. Déanann siad an rud a aistriú as a seasamh faoi mar nár tharla an Tiontú Oifigiúil riamh. Agus is ait liom é sin ach tá fadhb ansin. Braitheann sé go léir ar ghairmiúlacht an duine. Má chuirimid rudaí ar fáil ní hionann sin agus a rá go gcuirfidh daoine áirithe an stró orthu féin féachaint ar na rudaí sin agus na téarmaí cearta a aimsiú. Ach ní dóigh liom gur féidir linn ach na rudaí sin a sholáthar. Ach tá sé an-tábhachtach, ceapaim...<sup>117</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

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<sup>116</sup> 'People are getting a little lazy about Focal, people are a little spoiled by a good thing maybe. Sometimes they don't even think about if a term is needed here. They go to Focal and they use Focal like a general dictionary, though I know there are lots of warnings given. But they do it anyway...'

<sup>117</sup> 'There are people, even translators, and, it seems, they're translating official documents but it's as if they don't know that an Irish version of the Acts is available. They translate the thing off the cuff as if the official translation were never done. And I find it strange but there is a problem there. It all depends on the professionalism of the person. If we provide things that's not to say that certain people will bother looking at those things and finding the right terms. But I don't think we can do more than supply those things. But it's very important I think..'

This may be because of a lack of publicity; journalists and others are not made aware of the legislative term resources available but are expected to find out about it by themselves.

ÚB: Cén chaoi a mbíonn a fhios ag iriseoirí agus a leithéidí go bhfuil sibhse ar fáil agus go bhfuil sibh sásta cúnaimh mar sin a thabhairt?

VUE: Mar a deirim, agus caithfidh mé a bheith an-cháiréiseach i dtaobh na haidiachta de, tá daoine áirithe ann agus fuairéadar amach, cuir mar sin é, go rabhamar ann. Agus déarfainn gurb é an tslí go bhfuairéadar amach ná gur chuireadar an cheist orthu féin, cá bhfaighinn na téarmaí seo? Cá bhfaighinn an teideal oifigiúil ar an aonad seo? Agus faigheann siad amach, bhuel, tá Rannóg an Aistriúcháin ann agus bíonn siad ag aistriú na rudaí sin... Agus cuireann siad de stró orthu féin a fháil amach cá bhfuilimid agus ansin cuireann siad de stró orthu féin an glaoch gutháin sin a dhéanamh.

ÚB: An ndéanann sibh poiblíocht nó margaíocht oraibh féin? Mar shampla trí rá ar an suíomh go bhfuil sibh ann agus gurb eo é bhur n-uimhir.

VUE: Bhuel, táimid ag obair air sin faoi láthair...<sup>118</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

The ready availability of Rannóg an Aistriúcháin's resources is contested by one interviewee, however, who despite working with the language on a daily basis, had never heard of them. This may be indicative of a widespread lack of knowledge about the resources.

ÚB: Agus nuair a bhínn tú ag tóraíocht téarmaíochta, tá Focal.ie ann, an bhfuil áiseanna eile a úsáideann tú?

BD: Logainm.ie fosta. Is beag úsáid a bhaintear as na foclóirí anois, tá siad cineál as dáta. So Focal.ie den chuid is mó. Nó chuirfí ceist timpeall, cén focal atá agat air seo?

ÚB: Céard faoi Achtanna.ie?

BD: Achtanna.ie? Na hachtanna dlí? Ní raibh a fhios agam go raibh a leithéid ann! Ach ní hé sin le rá nach bhfuil a fhios ag daoine eile.<sup>119</sup> (Delap)

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<sup>118</sup> ÚB: How do journalists and so on know that you're available and that you're willing to give help like that?

VUE: As I say, and I have to be very careful about the adjective, there are certain people and they found out, put it like that, that we were there. And I'd say the way they found out was that they asked themselves, Some people found out, put it like that, that we were there. And I'd say the way that they found out was that they asked themselves, where would I find these terms? Where would I find the official title for this unit? And they find out, well, Rannóg an Aistriúcháin exists and they translate those things... And they take the trouble to find out where we are and they take the trouble to make that phone call.

ÚB: Do you publicise or market yourselves? For example by saying on the website that you're here and that this is your phone number.

VUE: Well we're working on that at the moment...'

<sup>119</sup> ÚB: And when you're looking for terms, there's Focal.ie, are there other resources you use?

BD: Logainm.ie as well. The dictionaries are little used now, they're kind of out of date. So Focal.ie for the most part. Or you'd ask around, what word do you have for this?

ÚB: What about Achtanna.ie?

BD: Achtanna.ie? The legal acts? I didn't know there was such a thing! But that's not to say that other people don't know.'

**How are the needs of particular user bases, such as translation, education and the media, responded to? Are there other specific user groups?**

As discussed above, many if not most users of Focal and of the Terminology Committee's *ad hoc* terminology service are translators. The media and educators (and those in education) are also significant groups, but no research has been carried out into their needs.

A 1997 seminar focused on terminology and the media; although some of the recommendations (such as for electronic access) are no longer pertinent, some remain relevant. Some of those in attendance wanted more advisory services, or electronic access to terms; others suggested a committee or forum of journalists, where terms to be used could be agreed upon. There was an understanding of the differences between *in vitro* (Terminology Committee) terminology and *in vivo* (created by the media or by community use) terminology. It was suggested that the Terminology Committee and the media should cooperate so that the terminology published by the Terminology Committee might be more serviceable and the terminology used by the media of a higher standard.

Níor mhór an gaol idir obair an Choiste Téarmaíochta agus lucht na meán a phlé má táthar le cinntiú nach mbeidh téarmaí á gceapadh ag an gCoiste nach rachaidh sa chúrsaíocht riamh i measc an phobail. An bhféadfadh lucht na meáin ionchur níos gníomhaí a bheith acu in obair na dtéarmeolaithe – ionas go dtiocfadh cuid, ar a laghad, de na téarmaí, ón mbonn aníos seachas iad a bheith á mbrú ón mbarr anuas agus gan pobal na teanga a bheith sásta glacadh leo?<sup>120</sup> (Nic Eoin 1997, 3).

The media, because of the pressurised nature of their work, do not have a lot of time to devote to terminology, meaning that the Focal resource is very important. This was borne out in discussions with TG4 reporters.

Ní bhíonn an t-am againn bheith ag smaoineamh an oiread sin faoi chúrsaí téarmaíochta agus a leithéid.<sup>121</sup> (Delap)

Ní fheictear dúinne den chuid is mó gur teangeolaithe [muid] nó go bhfuil aon ghnó mar sin leis. Cinnte tá ach amharcann muid orainn féin mar iriseoirí go príomha, agus

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<sup>120</sup> 'If we wish to be sure that the Committee is not creating terms that will never be used by the public, the relationship between the Terminology Committee and the media needs to be discussed. Could the media people have a more active input in the work of the terminologists – so that some, at least, of the terms would come from the bottom up rather than being pushed from the top and the language community being unwilling to accept them.'

<sup>121</sup> 'We don't have time to be thinking about terminology matters and the like.'

baineann tú úsáid as téarma a bhíonn ar fáil i bhFocal.ie ach ní léifidh tú cén fáth gur roghnaigh an Coiste é nó aon chúis eile a bhaineann leis...<sup>122</sup> (Delap)

Although most journalists are aware of the Terminology Committee, their need is for instant answers.

ÚB: Ach tá a fhios agaibh go bhfuil an Coiste Téarmaíochta ann agus gur féidir ceist a chur acu.

BD: Bhuel tá súil agam go bhfuil. Tá a fhios agamsa go bhfuil. Sílim go bhfuil, sea. Ba cheart go mbeadh. Ach an nglacann sé go leor ama orthu teacht ar ais chugat?

ÚB: Cúpla lá go hiondúil. Lá nó dhó. Is dóigh nach mbíonn an t-am sin agaibh.

BD: Ní bheadh – *now that said*, ní fiú dóibh rud a chumadh ar an toirt ar mhaithe le rud a chumadh, ach ó thaobh na hiriseoireachta de bíonn siad ag iarraidh *instant*, ní leor a rá tiocfaidh mé ar ais agat i gceann cúig lá.<sup>123</sup> (Delap)

According to the Terminology Committee interviewee, on the other hand, all requests from the media are prioritised.

Terminology requests from the media are given top priority, and every effort is made to respond immediately even if only in the form of a temporary recommendation until such time as difficult concepts have been discussed by the Committee. A recent example of successful take-up of a term in current demand arose from a request for an Irish equivalent for ‘head shop’, which was a topic of discussion in the media. The original enquiry came from a translator, followed by several enquiries from members of the media. The Committee’s recommendation of ‘siopa siabhráin’ was communicated back to those who had submitted the enquiries and it was soon in regular use by the media. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The nature of the media’s engagement with terminology is very unstructured, and it is recognised that some form of network would be useful.

BD: Tá méid áirithe *copycat* i gceist go mbíonn muid ag dul, ag éisteacht le RnaG, ní dhéarfainn go bhfuil córas ceart leagtha síos, gur *on an ad hoc basis*, agus an chéad fliú eile [ar nós fliú na muc], beidh muid ag déanamh an rud céanna, ag cumadh téarmaí, ag dul go Focal, ag dul b’fhéidir go dtí an Coiste Téarmaíochta, is fíorannamh a dhéanann muid é sin... Ní aon chúis, ba cheart dúinn é a dhéanamh ach is dóigh gurb í

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<sup>122</sup> ‘We don’t generally see ourselves as linguists or that we have any business like that. Of course we do but we see ourselves as journalists primarily, and you use the term that’s available in Focal.ie but you don’t read why the Committee chose it or any other reason.’

<sup>123</sup> ‘ÚB: But you know that the Terminology Committee is there and that you can send them a question. BD: Well I hope we do. I know that it’s there. I think we do, yes. We ought to. But does it take them long to get back to you?

ÚB: A few days, usually. A day or two. I don’t suppose you have that time.

BD: We wouldn’t. Now that said, it doesn’t make sense for them to make something up instantly for the sake of making something up, but from the point of view of journalism they want instant, you can’t say I’ll come back to you in five days.’



an chúis is mó nach dtéann muid chomh fada leo ná nach bhfuil córas ceart leagtha síos againn. Go bhfuil sé ag feidhmiú ar bhonn *ad hoc*.

ÚB: B'fhéidir nach é an gad is gaire don scornach é.

BD: Ní dóigh gurb é, ba cheart go mbeadh sé ach is dóigh nuair a bhíonn sprioc-amanna ag teannadh agus a leithéid, ní hé an gad is gaire don scornach.<sup>124</sup> (Delap)

ÚB: Meas tú, iriseoirí eile, an bhfuil an córas scaoilte céanna ann, nó an bhfuil dreamanna eile a bhfuil córas acu?

BD: Ní dóigh liom é, déarfainn go mbeadh siad ag faire ar a chéile agus cibé rud a bhíonn ag RnaG, cibé rud a bhíonn ag TG4 agus a leithéid sílim, agus téann siad isteach go Focal leis an rud...

ÚB: An mbíonn aon phlé idir iriseoirí i dtaobh an scéil? Idir sibhse agus RnaG mar shampla?

BD: Ní bhíonn. Sin an rud a déarfainn, tá sé scaoilte go leor agus níl aon chóras leagtha síos.

ÚB: Dá mbeadh aon líonra mar sin ann, an mbeadh sé iomarcach nó...

BD: Bhuel bheadh sé úsáideach.<sup>125</sup> (Delap)

There is a media representative on the Terminology Committee, but that does not mean that all members of the profession are reached.

We have fairly regular contact with certain members of the media, we have a representative from the media on the committee. That doesn't mean that she knows everybody else who works in the media, but we do have contacts in the media and we get a certain amount of feedback from them. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

It is suggested that media involvement could be improved.

I would think it would be good in the Irish situation especially with the difficulties maybe of term implantation in a language in the situation of Irish, that it would be

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<sup>124</sup> 'BD: There's a certain amount of copycat in that we'd be listening to Raidió na Gaeltachta, I wouldn't say there's a real system, it's on an *ad hoc* basis, and the next flu [like swine flu], we'll be doing the same thing, making up terms, going to Focal, maybe going to the Terminology Committee, but it's very rarely that we'd do that... There's no reason, we should do it but I suppose the main reason we don't go to them is that we don't have a proper system set out. That it's working on an *ad hoc* basis.

ÚB: Maybe it's not the top priority.

BD: It probably isn't, it should be but I suppose when deadlines are coming up and so on, it's not the top priority.'

<sup>125</sup> 'ÚB: Do you think, other journalists, is it the same loose system, or are there other groups with a system?

BD: I don't think so, I'd say they'd be looking at each other and whatever Raidió na Gaeltachta has, whatever TG4 has and so on I think, and they go into Focal with the thing...

ÚB: Is there any discussion between journalists about things? Between you and RnaG for example?

BD: There isn't. That's what I'd say, it's quite loose and there's no system set out.

ÚB: If there were a network like that, would it be excessive or...

BD: Well it would be useful.'

good to have stronger and more frequent media representation or involvement. Because the media are at the end of the day the mediators in the dialogue. Media people and educators are the mediators, they are in the centre and they are the people who can best support implantation and report back on, influence term creation so that you would hope to maximise implantation. (Nic Pháidín)

I know some work has been done by Foras na Gaeilge in terms of publishing short guides to terminology for people doing radio broadcasts and so on. (Ó Briain)

In conversation with reporters, it also emerged that although RTÉ maintains an internal style and usage guide for the English language, there is no such equivalent for Irish. There is therefore a difference between the usage of individual reporters.

Because of the nature of the work, clarity is a top priority for journalists, meaning that legal term resources are rarely if ever used.

BD: Ach le bheith fírinneach, arís an gnó atá againne ná an scéal a insint go simplí agus ní bheinnse ag moladh do dhuine ar bith go mbainfí úsáid as ainm acht i dtuairisc nuachta mar is *legalese* atá ann agus is cuma má tá duine ag teacht os comhair na cúirte de bharr mír 2 de Acht na bla bla bla, tá sé níos fusa a rá 'tugadh é os comhair na cúirte de bharr gur ionsaigh sé duine' nó rud éigin mar sin. É a choinneáil simplí.

ÚB: Ní bhaineann sé leis an réimse dlíthiúil.

BD: Bhuel b'fhéarr liom nach mbainfeadh sé, tá téarmaí ann i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla a bheadh róchasta don ghnáthdhuine, sílim.<sup>126</sup> (Delap)

In education, it is felt that training is lacking (see the section beginning on page 140) – but again, no research has been carried out into the needs of educators.

#### **How are users of terminology websites catered for?**

Informal feedback suggests that those Irish speakers who use the language daily for their work are well aware of the existence of Focal and use it frequently.

Well I think that's improving as well, certainly everyone who contacts us, most of them will have already searched in the database and those of them who obviously haven't, we tell them about it. We ask them specifically to search the database first. I think that your own statistics show that the usage is constantly rising... (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

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<sup>126</sup> 'BD: But to be honest, again our job is to tell the story simply and I wouldn't be recommending to anyone to use the name of an act in a news report because it's legalese and it doesn't matter if someone is being brought before court because of paragraph 2 of the bla bla bla Act, it's easier to say 'he was brought before court because he attacked someone' or something like that. Keep it simple.

ÚB: It's not related to the legal domain.

BD: Well I'd rather it wasn't, there's terms in Irish and in English that would be too complicated for ordinary people, I think.'

### Is there a common exchange format between term banks?

A tool is under development to export Focal data in TBX format, but it is acknowledged that there can be problems with this, in that not all data can be exchanged.

An freagra gearr: Is féidir, ach...

An freagra fada: Tá roinnt formáidí ann atá ceaptha chun sonraí téarmaíochta a mhalartú ó bhunachar go bunachar. Is é TBX (TermBase Exchange) ceann acu agus an ceann is sofaisticiúla, dar liom. Tá mé féin ag obair ar áis chun sonraí Focal a easpórtáil i bhformáid TBX. Tá sé sin ar siúl agam mar chuid d'fhothionscadal na n-uirlisí aistriúcháin agus seans maith go mbeidh sé réidh ag deireadh Aibreáin.

Tá cúpla rud ar gá cuimhneamh orthu, áfach. Rud amháin ná gur formáid sách solúbtha é TBX agus is féidir é a oiriúnú ar go leor bealaí. Mar sin, agus tú ag tabhairt sonraí do dhuine éigin, ní gá a rá "seo chugat stuif i bhformáid TBX", caithfidh tú a mhíniú cén saghas de TBX atá i gceist.

Rud eile ná go gcaillfear cuid den struchtúr nuair a dhéantar sonraí a easpórtáil go TBX. Mar shampla, ní féidir réimsí ordlathacha a bheith in TBX, ní féidir téarma amháin a bheith á roinnt ag iliomad coincheapa, agus mar sin de. Ní fhreagraíonn TBX (nó aon fhoramáid eile dá bhfuil ar eolas agam) 100% do struchtúr Focal.<sup>127</sup> (email from Michal Boleslav Měchura, technical consultant for Focal)

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<sup>127</sup> 'The short answer: you can, but...

The long answer: There are several formats for exchanging terminology data between databases. TBX (TermBase Exchange) is one of them and the most sophisticated, I think. I'm working on a tool to export Focal data in TBX format. I'm doing that as part of the translation tools subproject and it may well be finished at the end of April.

There are a few things that must be remembered, however. One thing is that TBX is quite a flexible format and it can be adapted in many ways. So when you're giving someone data, it's not enough to say 'here's stuff in TBX format', you have to explain what kind of TBX it is.

Another thing is that some of the structure will be lost when data is exported to TBX. For example, you can't have hierarchical domains in TBX, you can't have one term shared between many concepts, and so on. TBX (or any other format that I know of) doesn't respond 100% to Focal's structure.'

## 2.9. Implantation

The successful implantation of terms, as was seen in the literature, is linked to factors such as the quality of the terms, their dissemination, and the participation of intended users in the terminology process. It is not, however, a process which is controllable by the organisation, and therefore there are no questions that can be asked about how the implantation aspect of terminology management is 'done'.

It seems, anecdotally, that native speakers of Irish – all of whom can speak English – are often reluctant to use modern terms, often preferring an English word. This is particularly the case in informal language registers.

Tá dearcadh áirithe ann agus arís níl mé ag iarraidh bheith cosantach ach tá daoine áirithe ann nach nglacfaidh le teanga shainfheidhme ar bith sa Ghaeilge. Is cuma cad é a dhéanfá. Is diúltú iomlán atá ann agus ní thiocfadh iad a shásamh ar bhealach ar bith.<sup>128</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Cara liom [ar as an Spidéal dó] a bhí ag tógáil tí ar an Spidéal ar na mallaibh. Dúirt sé go raibh sé thar a bheith greannmhar agus thar a bheith spéisiúil chomh maith ansin. Go labhródh sé i nGaeilge le gach duine. Gach uile cheardaí a tháinig sa teach, na daoine a bhí ag tógáil, daoine a raibh saineolas fuinneoige acu agus mar sin de. Gach uile rud i nGaeilge ar feadh an ama. Ach nuair a bhí rud éigin, teachtaireacht le fágáil ar an ghuthán nó rud éigin a bhain le cúrsaí airgid, rud éigin scríofa am ar bith, bhí sé sin ar fad i mBéarla. Ba chuma cé mhéid uair a deireadh sé féin leo é i nGaeilge ansin, thiocfadh an rud ar ais i mBéarla i gcónaí ansin. Téacsanna faoi na fuinneoga a bhí le cur isteach, nó bhí slinneáin faoi leith le cur ar an urlár agus bhí duine ag teacht faoina choinne sin. Gaeilge bhreá uaidh, ag gach uile dhuine a bhí ag obair ar an láthair ach níorbh fhéidir aon rud a bhaineann le gnó a phlé ach i mBéarla.<sup>129</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

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<sup>128</sup> 'Some people have an attitude and again I'm not trying to be defensive but there are certain people that wouldn't accept any specialised language in Irish. It wouldn't matter what you said. It's a complete refusal and there'd be no pleasing them.'

<sup>129</sup> 'A friend of mine [from Spiddal, in the Gaeltacht] was building a house in Spiddal there recently and he said it was very funny and very interesting too. That he'd speak Irish to everyone. Every craftsman that came in, the builders, the window specialists and so on. Everything in Irish the whole time. But when there was something, a message to be left on the phone or something to do with money, anything written, that was all in English. It didn't matter how often he said it to them in Irish, it'd always come back in English. Texts about the windows that were to be installed, or particular slates for the floor and someone was coming for that. He had fine Irish and so did everyone working there but nothing to do with business could be discussed except in English.'

Tá an droichead sin le tógáil idir cumadh na dtéarmaí, agus níl aon locht agam ar chumadh na dtéarmaí, is léir go bhfuil daoine oilte agus go gcumann siad téarmaí maithe, ach iad sin a chur ansin i mbéal na ndaoine, sin ceist eile.<sup>130</sup> (Delap)

I think it's unfortunate that we don't have more studies of term implantation, it's almost as though these strata exist *beag beann ar a chéile*, where the native speakers don't really see terminology as being highly relevant to them, except maybe in the media, where you have TG4 and Raidió na Gaeltachta, they see it necessary in formal [domains]. (Nic Pháidín)

To a degree this may be linked to a psychological difficulty with the idea of a language standard, whether in grammar, spelling or terminology.

TÓhl: Tá deacracht... ag daoine fós leis an chaighdeán sna ceantair Ghaeltachta agus ag daoine a labhraíonn Gaeilge ó dhúchas. Is minic gur rud síceolaíochtúil atá ann is dóigh liom chomh maith. Ceapann daoine go bhfuil an caighdeán difriúil ón chaint atá acu, rud nach bhfuil dáiríre... Ach an rud a cheapann daoine, sé an rud atá fíor, agus ansin má thagann an próiseas seo les an Choiste Téarmaíochta chun cinn ar an dóigh chéanna, ceapfaidh siad nach bhfuil na téarmaí bailí ach oiread, go mbaineann siad le téarmaí nach mbeadh in úsáid ag mórán, mar atá an caighdeán.

ÚB: Mar gheall ar gur rud isteach iad, nó mar gheall ar...

TÓhl: Rudaí saorga, rudaí bréagacha ar bhealach. Gur rud bréagach atá sa chaighdeán. Bíonn ort a fhoghlaim agus a úsáid ar scoil agus ansin muna bhfuil tú ag plé le Gaeilge ina dhiaidh sin go gairmiúil, pé scéal é, ba chuma faoi dáiríre. Agus mar a chéile leis na téarmaí ansin... Tá deacracht ann, tá bearna ansin. Agus is bearna é atá líonta ag cuid mhór de na teangacha eile, ach a bhaineann leis an débhéascna, más féidir liom an focal a úsáid. An dóigh ina bhfuil muid anseo, tá údarás áirithe ag baint leis an rud áitiúil; nuair nach bhfuil focal áitiúil ann tá níos mó údaráis ag baint leis an Bhéarla, cuid mhór, ná mar atá ag an téarma a chuireann an Coiste Téarmaíochta ar fáil.<sup>131</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

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<sup>130</sup> 'The bridge has to be built between term creation, and I've no problem with the term creation, it's obvious that they're well-educated people and that they create good terms, but to put them in people's mouths, that's a different question.'

<sup>131</sup> 'TÓhl: People still have a problem with the standard in Gaeltacht areas and among native Irish speakers. It's often a psychological thing and as well I think people believe that the standard is very different from their own speech, which isn't really true... But what people believe, that's what's true and then if this process with the Terminology Committee emerges in the same way people will think that the terms aren't valid either, that they're terms that aren't used much like the standard.'

ÚB: Because they're coming in from outside, or because...

TÓhl: They're synthetic, false in a way. That the standard is a false thing. You have to learn it and use it in school and then if you're not dealing with Irish professionally it doesn't matter really. And the terms are the same... There's a problem, a gap there. And it's a gap that's been filled by a lot of other languages, which is to do with diglossia, if I can use that word. As things are here, the local thing has a certain authority; when there's no local word English has more authority than the term the Terminology Committee supplies.'

Modern terminology may not be well known, particularly in informal registers and by older people.

Fiú má labhraíonn muid faoi dhaoine atá b'fhéidir níos sine ná mise, sna caogaidí, seascaidí agus mar sin de, nach raibh ar ollscoil... Ní thuigeann siad buntéarmaí. Bhí mé ag caint le duine atá sna seachtóidí cúpla lá ó shin... bhí duine ag cur isteach ar phost anseo, agus dúirt mé nár dhóigh liom go raibh seans ar bith ag an duine sin, nach raibh na cáilíochtaí aice. Ach níor thuig sí an focal 'cáilíochtaí', séard a thuig sise as sin ná gur duine deas í nó go bhfuil sí go maith nó rud éigin. Ach níor rith sé leithe gur dioplómaí a bhí i gceist nó céimeanna agus mar sin de. Is buntéarma é sin a bheadh in úsáid ag daoine a bhfuil oideachas orthu. Agus níor thuig sí é dáiríre.<sup>132</sup> (Ó hIfearnaín)

Interviewees understood the importance of the media for term creation and dissemination; this was also discussed at a 1997 conference.

Tá droichead le tógáil idir cumadh na dtéarmaí agus iad a chur in úsáid agus go háirithe tá an-tábhacht ag baint leis na meáin chumarsáide sa dóigh seo, go háirithe na meáin chraolta, mar gur dóigh gur ansin a chloisfidh daoine é. Agus níl an droichead sin tógtha...<sup>133</sup> (Delap)

ÚB: Agus i gcásanna go gceapann sibh go gcaithfidh sibh cloí leis an bhfocal, tuige ar gá cloí leis dar leat?

BD: Bhuel sílim go bhfuil sé tábhachtach go mbeadh *blueprint* ann agus go mbeadh – is craoltóir seirbhís poiblí é RTÉ agus TG4 mar sin tá sé tábhachtach má tá téarma nua ann go mbainfeadh muid úsáid as.<sup>134</sup> (Delap)

An nath nua a chloisfear ar an raidió agus ar an teilifís inniu, is é a bheas i ngnáthúsáid ag pobal na Gaeilge amárach. Is riachtanach mar sin go mbeadh an nath sin ceart agus ag teacht le ciall agus dúchas na teanga.<sup>135</sup> (Ó Gaora 1997, 13).

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<sup>132</sup> 'Even if we talk about someone older than me, in their fifties, sixties or so, who didn't go to university... They don't understand basic terms. I was talking to someone in her seventies a few days ago... She was applying for a job and I said I didn't think she had any chance because she didn't have the qualifications ['cáilíochtaí']. And she didn't understand the word 'cáilíochtaí', she understood by it that she's a nice person or that she's good or something. And it didn't occur to her that it meant diplomas or degrees and so on. That's a basic term that anyone with education would be using. And she didn't really understand it.'

<sup>133</sup> 'There's a bridge to be built between term creation and getting them in use and in particular the media are very important in this, because that's probably where people would hear it. And that bridge hasn't been built...'

<sup>134</sup> 'ÚB: And in cases where you think you have to stick to the word, why do you think you need to?'

BD: Well I think it's important that there be a blueprint and that – RTE and TG4 are public service broadcasters and so it's important that if there's a new term that we use it.'

<sup>135</sup> 'The new phrase heard on the radio or the television today will be the one in general use among the Irish language community tomorrow. It is therefore necessary that that phrase be correct and in sympathy with the sense and nature of the language.'

The final decision about the suitability of a particular term for the context rests with the journalist, it is felt.

Dá mbeadh sé róchasta, bhainfeadh muid úsáid as leagan níos simplí. Is sampla 'teastas imréiteach cánach'. Ní thuigeann daoine an rud maith é sin nó drochrud ach dá ndéarfá 'teastas glan cánach'. Tuigim gurb é 'teastas imréitithe cánach' an téarma cuí agus an téarma ceart ach tá sé tábhachtach go mbeadh an gnáthdhuine in ann é seo a thuiscint agus tuigfidh siad 'teastas glan cánach'.<sup>136</sup> (Delap)

Bhuel maidir le téarmaíocht is dóigh an bhaint a bhíonn againn leis ná ar ndóigh bíonn muid ag iarraidh teacht ar théarmaí le haghaidh scéalta nuachta agus amanna tagann na hiriseoirí chugam agus deir siad, seo é an focal atá ag focal.ie agus céard é do bharúil faoi? Agus amanna deireann muid, bhuel caitheann muid cloí leis an bhfocal sin, amanna eile deireann muid tá sé ró-dhoiléir, amanna eile, deireann muid caithfidh muid cloí leis an bhfocal ach caithfidh muid an leagan Béarla a thabhairt mar nach dtuigfeadh daoine é.<sup>137</sup> (Delap)

Is fíor go bhfuil focail áirithe foilsithe i sainfhoclóirí an Choiste Téarmaíochta/ an Ghúim nach mbaintear mórán úsáide astu... Rud amháin atá cinnte, agus is é sin gur faoi na hiriseoirí, agus ní faoi na téarmeolaithe, a bhíonn sé an rogha ceart a dhéanamh go minic. Más foinsí luachmhara eolais agus saibhrithe teanga iad na liostaí téarmaí, ní ann dóibh mar chuid den teanga bheo mura bhfónann siad do riachtanais laethúla an phobail. Is iad na hiriseoirí is oilte go minic lena n-oiriúnacht a mheas.<sup>138</sup> (Nic Eoin 1997, 7-8).

It is pointed out, too, that the question of language register is important in journalism.

The question of language register is central in discussing terminology used by the media. People working in the sound media, in particular, emphasise the importance of conveying their message as simply and as clearly as possible. This sometimes compromises the criterion of accuracy. An example from a lexicography workshop

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<sup>136</sup> 'If it was too complicated, we'd use a simpler version. 'Tax clearance certificate' is a example. People don't understand if that's a good thing or a bad thing but if you said 'clear tax certificate'. I know 'tax clearance certificate' is the right term and the appropriate term but it's important that the ordinary person can understand this and they understand 'clear tax certificate'.

<sup>137</sup> 'Well with terminology I suppose what we have to do with it is that of course we need to find terms for news stories and sometimes the journalists come to me and say, this is the word on Focal.ie and what do you think of it? And sometimes we say, well we need to stick to that word, sometimes we say it's too obscure, other times, we say we have to stick to the word but we'll have to give the English version because people wouldn't understand it.'

<sup>138</sup> 'It is true that there are some words published in the specialised dictionaries of the Terminology Committee/An Gúm that don't get much use... One thing is certain, and that is that the right choice is often up to the journalists and not the terminologists. Even though the term lists are valuable resources for information and for enriching the language, they aren't part of the living language if they don't serve the daily needs of the public. Journalists are often the best-equipped to judge their suitability.'

illustrates this point: the workshop was concentrating on the various meanings of the headword 'forge' and examples such as 'forged passport', 'forged bank notes', etc. were being discussed. The precise equivalent of the verb 'to forge' in Irish is 'brionnaigh', and the verbal adjective is 'brionnaithe'. Participants in the workshop from Gaeltacht areas were not happy about this term, as the verb 'brionnaigh' has been forgotten in native speech. The New Corpus for Irish, which contains a weighted amount of print media, was consulted and no trace of the verb 'brionnaigh' or its adjective was found. However, the corpus revealed several references to 'pas bréige', 'airgead bréige', 'nótaí bainc falsa', which translate as 'false passport', 'false money', 'false banknotes' (or, in one dialect, 'lazy banknotes'). It could be argued that the notes used in the game *Monopoly* would be called 'airgead bréige' or 'nótaí bainc bréige', so it would obviously be problematic to use such terms in a legal document or, indeed, in a court case. On the other hand, their meaning could normally be gleaned from the context in which they are used. This phenomenon is not uncommon and relates particularly to technical concepts commonly referred to in the public domain, such as some medical terms. In many such cases, the matter of language register is also pronounced in English and other languages, e.g. 'heart attack' and 'myocardial infarction', and both registers need to be provided for in Irish as well. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

There is a feeling that Foras na Gaeilge needs to do more to support term implantation.

I think looking at the wider organisation in terms of Foras na Gaeilge one of the things it needs to do more of is to try and disseminate, embed terminology. (Ó Briain)

There is also, however, a sense of helplessness – there is a limit to what can be done from the top down to encourage implantation.

ÚB: There's a big issue, isn't there, with speakers of the language, not in an official capacity, but in ordinary speech if you like, in the use of terminology, even very general terminology.

DÓB: And it seems to me that there are distinct regional patterns and that there's a greater willingness to use even very simple terminology like the Irish work for 'bicycle' in some areas and not in other areas.

ÚB: I wonder how that could be addressed.

DÓB: I'm not too sure. There's a point at which Government can facilitate, Government can provide resources but if the speakers of a language don't have sufficient pride in it to try and keep it – not to be derogatory, but to keep it clean and authentic and to avail of new resources, but take a perverse – pride is not the right word – in not using Irish language terminology or using official Irish or Dublin Irish and importing English terms. You wonder. You can look at other languages across the world and see how two languages interact with one another and large chunks of vocabulary were taken in from one language to another, and remained as an independent language. It's difficult to see how Irish could, given its low numbers and weak status, not in legal terms but in social terms, how Irish could actually survive a process like that. (Ó Briain)



Mar shampla... luaitear... gur dheas an rud an pobal a dhéanamh páirteach sa rud, b'fhéidir é a phlé agus go mbeadh fóram éigin sna meáin lena aghaidh sin. Ach tá rudaí ann cheana, mar shampla tá clár plé ar Beo, agus tá rud ann, 'ceap téarma' nó rud éigin mar sin. Agus tá téarma amháin air ó bunaíodh é, 'nanny state'. 'Stát buime' a mholtar. So níl mé ag iarraidh bheith diúltach faoi agus níl mé ag iarraidh bheith cosantach faoi ach níl a fhios agam cén *take-up* a bheadh ar a leithéid. Sin an eagla a bheadh orm.<sup>139</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Term usage is recognised as one of the major issues for term planning for Irish, although a certain amount of implantation is being achieved through the educational system.

On the other hand, a certain amount of implantation is clearly being achieved through the educational system. The example of the preference for the English term 'bicycle' is often quoted, and certainly has a basis among older speakers. However, in discussion I had with a young man in his twenties from the Irish-speaking area of *An Cheathrú Rua*, he said that his generation have no problem using the word 'rothar' and Irish equivalents for many other such everyday concepts because they learned them at school, and are not embarrassed to use them. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

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<sup>139</sup> 'For example... it's suggested... that it would be nice to involve the public in things, to discuss it and to have a forum in the media for that. But there are things already, for example there's a discussion board on Beo, and there's a thing, 'make up a term' or something like that. And there's been one term since it was set up, 'nanny state'. 'Stát buime' is suggested. So I'm not trying to be negative about it and I'm not trying to be defensive but I don't know what take-up there'd be for the like. That's what I'd be afraid of.'

## 2.10. Evaluation: User feedback

### **Is research carried out into the use of focal.ie? What have the findings been?**

Statistics are gathered on the day-to-day use of Focal; these are accessible to editors. Monthly usage statistics are published on the website and circulated to stakeholders.

As well as statistics, there have been three minor surveys of term users, one in 2007, one carried out by an MA student in 2008, and a small survey to evaluate opinions about the redesigned website in 2009 (discussed in the section beginning on page 115). There has, however, been no major investigation by Fiontar or by Foras na Gaeilge into user behaviour or into the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the service provided. Most feedback is received by email or anecdotally in discussion with users.

The statistics show that an average of 17,000 searches are done daily (2009). Most users are in the Republic of Ireland, but there are also users abroad. Most searches are for English terms – for example in May 2010, ninety-three per cent of terms which were searched for a hundred or more times were in English.

A survey carried out of 421 users in March 2007 (Fiontar 2007) indicated general satisfaction among users. It was found that one third of Focal users were students – both second and third level – followed by professional translators at sixteen point four per cent. Thirteen point two per cent of users were teachers or lecturers.

The 2008 research found that almost half of Focal users are translators or educators. Respondents regarded the following as key strengths for Focal: speed, convenience, authority, ease of use, quality of terminological data, and modernity. Weaknesses and recommendations for improvement focused on lexicographic enrichment of the data (addition of ‘ordinary’ words and phrases and of terminology for journalism; incorporation of the general language dictionaries; more usage samples and grammar information; verb tables) and on technical improvements such as smart searching and a ‘plain text’ results box, and publication on CD-ROM. (These technical changes have since been made and a CD-ROM is in development.) Sixty per cent of users said they would use a discussion board or blog if this was available.

### **How interactive is the website? How much user feedback is received?**

Users of Focal can contact Fiontar and the Terminology Committee by email – the address is listed on every page – and through an enquiry form.

In the January-March 2010 quarter, for example, fifty emails were received, of which twenty-one pointed out errors or perceived errors in the database, eleven were requests for terms or translations, and eighteen were general enquiries. All emails were responded to promptly, and errors were rectified. Most of those who pointed out errors were translators and regular users of the site; they are the most likely to spot inconsistencies such as multiple equivalents for an English term or spelling variations between related terms. Enquiries from non-professional language users tended to focus on general language questions, such as surnames, folklore and grammar questions.

There are about forty enquiries per month through the enquiry form. One reporter spoken to in TG4 did not realise, however, that this service was available. This is supported by the 2008 survey, in which eighty one per cent of respondents reported rarely or never using the enquiry form (Mac Lochlainn 2008, 34), which might be due to a lack of prominence on the site.

The Terminology Committee receives a further 650 or so enquiries per month directly via e-mail and phone, and the number received through the enquiry form is relatively small (about 40 per month over the past two years). (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

**What is done with feedback about terms or about the way they are made available?**

Feedback about terms sent to Fiontar is passed on to the Terminology Committee. If errors are pointed out, they are corrected immediately and the informant is thanked.

Suggestions for improvements to the website are noted. Particularly during the development phase, feedback from the public was used to identify priorities. The importance of feedback became evident during a redesign of the website in 2009. Users of Focal reacted strongly against a new-look website which was being trialed. Sixty-five emails were received within seven days, some of them very strongly worded. Many of those who sent emails or took part in a subsequent survey were professional users – mostly translators – and they emphasised how much they depended on Focal. The design of the website was quickly changed, taking many of the suggestions and criticisms on board.

Feedback on particular terms is studied and acted on if necessary.

Generally, we present it back to the committee, unless there's some very obvious answer to the user. But if the user is recommending new [terms] or finding fault with something that's there and if it is a reasonable point then we will refer that question back to the committee who – if it's reasonable they will normally accept it, and we will then get back and say that's fine, and we'll include that and thanks for your input and so on. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

**Is the public consulted (through meetings, interviews or surveys)? About what? How (online surveys, focus groups...)?**

As shown in the section beginning on page 115, regular users of Focal feel a strong sense of ownership towards the site and frequently voice their opinions.

The Terminology Committee does not proactively engage with the public, either about term choice, development plans, or term provision.

ÚB: And how about going out and asking people? Is that done, or consulting the public?

FNG: Well no, we never had resources to do that. We have consulted the public about grammatical issues, when we're working on a specific document but I'm not sure how exactly we would carry out consultation with the public about one term, about a hundred terms, about two thousand. We do get feedback for collections, just last week we got feedback about the sailing dictionary. We've got feedback about other dictionaries. Insofar as it can be implemented we take it on board. But no, we don't send out surveys or interviews or anything. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Well of course we can monitor the sale of dictionaries, that's relatively easy. We can examine the feedback we get about the products, we do, whatever feedback we get we certainly take it on board. But we don't set out to generate feedback. We basically respond as best we can to the needs of our customers and we take whatever feedback they give us on board, and we go on to the next concept. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

This is seen by one interviewee as problematic.

I think there are several areas not addressed particularly well. Interaction with users comes to mind first. I think the mould is very traditional, I think it's to do with the State producing what it thinks is good for citizens rather than being driven by the needs of the citizen. Now that might be too harsh because at the same time on another level all of the term creation in Irish is not corpus based, it's actually produced because of a demand – but I think the dialogue between these two levels maybe could be improved. (Nic Pháidín)

On the other hand, it is pointed out that most of the Terminology Committee's work is user-driven, based on requests and suggestions.

It should be borne in mind that the bulk of our work has been concentrated for more than a decade on interaction with users, through their requests or suggestions and our follow-up. In other words, our work is user-driven, and users' suggestions are usually taken on board, as stated above. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

**How frequent is evaluation? Are the results published?**

The results of a minor survey carried out in 2007 (Fiontar 2007) were published on the Focal website, but this is now of little interest because of the significant change in user numbers and

in the resource itself. Apart from that there is little evidence of frequent evaluation of the term service, and no results or studies have been published.

## 2.11. Evaluation: Implantation

### **Are the dissemination and implantation of already standardised terms studied? How important is this considered? What are the findings?**

There has been no quantitative research into term use, distribution or acceptance in Gaeltacht or other areas, but it is recognised that term acceptance and use is problematic (see the section beginning on page 108). The needs of users and their opinions have not been sought and this is pointed out by several interviewees as creating a problem.

I think it's unfortunate that we don't have more studies of term implantation, it's almost as though these strata exist *beag beann ar a chéile*, where the native speakers don't really see terminology as being highly relevant to them, except maybe in the media, where you have TG4 and Raidió na Gaeltachta, they see it necessary in formal [domains]. (Nic Pháidín)

Collaboration between the Coiste and universities should go beyond mere representation there. Aspects like implantation should be topics of postgraduate research. (Nic Pháidín addition)

Agus b'fhéidir gurbh fhiú staidéar a dhéanamh, gur cheart do leithéidí Fiontar amharc ar na téarmaí a tháinig isteach agus a bhfuil in úsáid, cosúil le 'fón póca', déarfainn, sin ceann a ritheann liom. Cén dóigh ar tharla sé go bhfuil sé sin i mbéal na ndaoine anois agus go mbaintear úsáid as sna meáin chumarsáide agus d'fhéadfaí foghlaim as sin cén dóigh le téarmaí úra a chur i mbéal na ndaoine.<sup>140</sup> (Delap)

At present doctoral research is underway into term use among Gaeltacht businesses (Ní Ghearáin, 2011). It is recognised by the Terminology Committee that this is important work.

Well this is very important academic work and it would require researchers, whether they be students or terminologists... Obviously we would like very much to have more information of this kind but we certainly at the moment can't do it ourselves... We have so much practical work to be done that we're still trying to catch up with that backlog. It does seem like a very worthwhile area of academic research, and I do mention it when I'm talking in the universities. To try and inspire people to think about the area, to research the area, to go out collecting terms in some of the very few subject fields which might be still extant. I certainly make those suggestions. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

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<sup>140</sup> 'And it might be worth studying, maybe the likes of Fiontar should look at the terms that came in and are in use, like 'fón póca', that's one that occurs to me. How did it happen that that's in use now and that it's used in the media and you could learn from that how to get new terms in use.'

As I say I try and raise awareness when I go to the universities, I can't force them to do anything. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The lack of implantation studies means that the effect of term planning is not scientifically known.

Sin an t-easnamh is mó atá ann is dóigh. Cuirtear na rudaí ar fáil mar aiseolas, mar mholadh, nó cuirtear iad ar liostaí ansin agus bíonn muid ag súil go mbainfear úsáid astu. Ach níl a fhios, go heolaíochtúil, pé scéal é, níl a fhios againn an bhfuil siad in úsáid nó nach bhfuil.<sup>141</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

This lack of research into term use is tied to the fact that there is no language observatory. Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (ITÉ), the Irish institute for linguistics, was abolished in 2004.

Níl aon saotharlann teanga againn sa tír seo, ní bhíonn duine ar bith ag féachaint ar an teanga agus ag éisteacht agus ag déanamh staidéar ar an teanga go fírinneach ar feadh an ama.<sup>142</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

#### **How important is it for the Irish term planning organisation to research how and which terms are in use?**

It is pointed out in the sections beginning on pages 77 and 118 that the lack of a language observatory means that there is no planned research into current term usage or *in vivo* creation, and that this research is not carried out by Foras na Gaeilge.

This is a very important area of research and often mentioned by members of the Terminology Committee, and universities are encouraged to engage in it as, clearly, the Committee office is not equipped to carry out such research in a structured manner. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Anecdotally, though, it seems that not much spontaneous creation of terminology is found in literature and other sources in recent decades, and there is a question about the vitality of such sources for terminology.

Is beag leabhar Gaeilge a thagann amach nach ndéanaim iarracht treabhadh tríd agus dar leat b'fhéidir gur foinse mhaith téarmaíochta *in vivo* é ach mo thaithí féin air – *no*. Bíonn téarmaí ann ceart go leor, cuid acu – bhuel bíonn fadhb réime ann go minic. Pádraig Stándún, bhí úrscéal aige agus bhí duine, stop na gardaí é agus é 'breathalysed' agus bhí mé ag rá liom féin, aha, 'breathalysed', ba dheas an téarma Gaeltachta seo a fháil. Ach sé an rud a bhí aige ná 'cuireadh an mála orm', agus tá amhrán le John Beag Ó Flatharta, téann sé céim níos faide agus deir sé, 'cuireadh an baigín orm' [laughter]. Arís tá sé sin an-deas agus sílim gur cheart sin a bheith ar Focal ach tá fadhb réime leis

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<sup>141</sup> 'That's the biggest gap, probably. Things are made available as feedback, as suggestions, or they're put on lists and we're hoping they'll be used. But we don't know, scientifically anyway we don't know if they're in use or not.'

<sup>142</sup> 'We don't have any language laboratory in this country, no-one is looking at the language and listening and really studying the language continuously.'

sin, is deacair a shamhlú go ndéarfadh breitheamh le garda, 'agus an fíor gur chuir tú an baigín air?' Tá na deacrachtaí sin ann le cuid mhór. Téarmaí fíorthaicniúla ní dóigh liom go bhfaighidh tú iad ar an dóigh sin. B'fhéidir go bhfaighidh tú téarmaí cineál meafarach agus béarlagair, b'fhéidir go bhfaighidh tú cuid de sin.<sup>143</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

On the other hand, another interviewee felt that many vibrant domains are not being researched.

Ó thaobh innealtóireachta gluaisteán de nó rud éigin mar sin, déarfainn go bhfuil focail faoi leith ag roinnt daoine atá ag obair eatarthu féin... Tá mé cinnte má bhíonn daoine ag deisiú gluaisteán le chéile ar feadh fiche bliain i gCarna go bhfuil téarmaí faoi leith acu ar chuid den inneall agus baineann siad féin úsáid astu ach ní hionann sin agus a rá go bhfuil údarás ar bith ag baint leis nó a dhath mar sin, ach sin an dóigh a bhfuil sé. Agus bheadh sé an-deacair, gan aon saotharlann a bheith ann, fáil amach céard atá á rá acu siúd agus úsáid cheart a bhaint as nó a mholadh do dhaoine eile... Bíonn na bearnaí á líonadh ag na daoine a déarfainn.<sup>144</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

For Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, research into term use not considered a priority.

VUE: Chun freagra gonta a thabhairt, ní dhéanann. Níl ann ach rudaí atá cloiste againn bunaithe ar an aiseolas a fhaighimid. Ach ní théimid amach chun aiseolas a lorg... B'fhéidir gur chóir dúinn é sin a dhéanamh.

ÚB: An mbeadh sé tábhachtach don Rannóg fáil amach cén áit a bhfuil an téarmaíocht in úsáid?

VUE: Sa mhéid is go bhfuil tuairim mhaith againn cheana féin ó thaobh na spriocdhreamanna a bhfuilimid ag díriú orthu... ní fheadar ar ghá dúinn córas ar leith a bhunú chun é sin a dhéanamh. Ceapaim go bhfuil a fhios againn go bhfuil an t-ábhar agus na téarmaí a sholáthraímidne in úsáid ag daoine agus mar a deirim, ó thaobh glaonna a fhaighim agus teagmháil a fhaighim, tá a fhios agam go bhfuil sé sin ar siúl. Agus ní fheadar faoi láthair... Ó thaobh díreach a fháil amach cad a dhéanann daoine leis ina dhiaidh sin n'fheadar an cuspóir é sin faoi láthair.<sup>145</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

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<sup>143</sup> 'Nearly every Irish book that comes out I try and get through it and you'd think that it would be a good source of *in vivo* terminology but in my own experience – no. There's terms all right, but there's often a problem with the register. Pádraig Stándún had a novel, and a man was stopped by the guards and 'breathalysed', and I was saying to myself, aha, 'breathalysed', it'd be nice to get the Gaeltacht term for this. But what he had was 'the bag was put on me', and there's a song by John Beag Ó Flatharta, it goes a step further and he says, 'the little bag was put on me' [laughter]. And that's really nice and I think it should be in Focal but there's a problem with register, you can't imagine that a judge would say to a garda 'and is it true that you put the little bag on him?'. There are those problems with a lot of them. I don't think you'll find very technical terms like that. You might get metaphorical and slang terms, you might get some of that.'

<sup>144</sup> 'I'm sure that if people are fixing cars for twenty years in Carna that they have a specialised term for parts of the engine and they use it themselves. But that doesn't mean that it has any authority or anything, but that's the way it is. And it would be very difficult, without having any laboratory, to find out what they're saying and to use it properly or to recommend it to other people... People are filling the gaps I'd say.'

<sup>145</sup> 'VUE: To answer you briefly, we don't. It's only what we've heard based on the feedback we get. But we don't go out to look for feedback... Maybe we should.'



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ÚB: Would it be important for the Rannóg to find out where the terminology is in use?

VUE: Insofar as we have a good idea already about the target groups we're aiming at... I don't know if we need to establish a specific system to do that. I think we know that the material and the terms we supply are in use by people and as I say with the calls I get and contact I get I know that that's going on. And I don't know if at present... From the point of view of just finding out what people do with it afterwards I don't know if that's a priority at present.'

## 2.12. Evaluation: Methods and products

### **Are term production mechanisms, such as the number of terms, time spent, and quality of methods used, monitored?**

Evaluation of numbers of terms produced and time spent is done in Fiontar through planning for contracts, in which targets are set out; for example in the project to create terminology for IATE, the target for 2009 was 16,500 terms per year.

Our contract is quite specific, it is to supply a certain number of terms, 16,500 each year... when we're costing a contract we have to be quite specific about the resources we need and what we can do. Usually we can assess that fairly well, not always, because sometimes it depends on the nature of the work that we have to do. (Nic Pháidín)

In the case of the Terminology Committee, work is reported on and there is the monthly meeting as a target.

Well, I write reports and plans and corporate plans and so on and so forth, so I have to at least report on what was done during a certain timeframe and compare this maybe to what I expected might have been done. The mechanisms, well I suppose, when it comes to terminology research and term formation no two issues are quite alike because some things are mechanical and relatively easy and some things are complex. Certainly you could add up all the numbers and divide by whatever number of days in the year and figure out how many terms you can do in a year, but I suppose ultimately we have the punctuation of our monthly meetings by which time everything that we've received – ideally everything that we've received in the previous month should be done but sometimes what we've received is more than we can deal with so we present as much as we can and we process as much as we can. When there is no adequate structure or number of staff, plans for desirable targets often do not reach fruition because staff members leave and are not replaced. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The responsibility for the evaluation of term quality rests with the Terminology Committee, since they have sole responsibility for term creation. Terms created by Fiontar for the European Union, for example, are sent to the Terminology Committee for approval. Fiontar established an extranet to co-ordinate feedback from EU translators.

In terms of the quality of the work I suppose it's monitored or evaluated through certain, in consultation with certain external bodies, like working with the Irish language translators, all the EU terminology is examined by them and comments come back and we have a formal system for doing this. Any new terminology is of course validated by an Coiste Téarmaíochta which is another quality mechanism, another quality stage in the process. (Nic Pháidín)

We haven't developed any mechanisms in-house to actually judge the quality of the terms produced, because I suppose at the end of the day that responsibility, seeing as we have to work through other external agencies and they have the last say on this, it's not really – we could do it, but the usefulness of it would be open to question I think. (Nic Pháidín)

There is a sense in the Terminology Committee that methods cannot be changed because of the pressure under which the work is done and that evaluation of term production mechanisms would not therefore serve any useful purpose.

But I suppose if you're saying, if we monitored them would we change our methods, I don't really, under the current circumstances, think we can change our methods very much because we work hard, we work long hours, we work to our deadlines as best we can, and we generally have more to do than we can get done. That's just how it is. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

There is a question about how much strategic planning is done by the Terminology Committee, and the Terminology Committee itself feels that its goodwill is abused by external interests, which limit its capacity for strategic planning.

This function clearly belongs at strategic level within the Coiste Téarmaíochta. And that is a national committee and as I said previously I have no personal knowledge about how they build in that reflective and that strategic planning element into their monthly meeting or in what forum they do it... But obviously there's quite clearly a need for it but I'm not quite sure where the process is. I don't know. (Nic Pháidín)

It's worth noting that strategic planning at Committee level has been severely damaged by external interests. The Committee was not consulted about their role in reviewing all new terms for the IATE project, nor was it allocated any additional staff to prepare this work. A reference above to terminology from statutory instruments to be submitted to the Committee for approval has at no time been proposed to or discussed by the Committee. The outsourcing of various projects to Fiontar over the past five years has created impossible demands for feedback and direction on terminology, editorial and policy questions. While much of the terminology stock was not ready for publication, all unedited draftlists were input into the database although the Terminology Committee asked that these lists be hidden from the public until such time as they were edited. This did not happen, and lists of questions were directed to the Committee with urgency, although they clearly did not have the resources to respond to them. All in all, there is a strong feeling among members that the goodwill of the Terminology Committee has been abused and continues to be abused by external interests. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

**What evaluation is carried out of terminology products and resources, such as dictionaries and databases?**

Evaluations of Fiontar's work are carried out annually by an external consultant. He primarily looks at the technical solutions and the management processes used for Focal and for Fiontar's other databases. A report is submitted to the funding organisations. The linguistic or terminological content is not included in this review.

We do periodic project reviews really looking at the IT side of things and project management in general. (Nic Pháidín)

Fiontar's work is monitored by the funding bodies on a continuous basis. However, no comprehensive review has been undertaken to date. Foras na Gaeilge has not published any strategic document on corpus planning or terminology provision since 1999, when a discussion paper on corpus planning was published (Nic Pháidín et al. 1999).

In the case of dictionaries, it is recognised that a period of reflection is needed.

Again once we finish the sports project we should probably look at if we were to do another one – you have to sit back and reflect, you don't just necessarily sit back and say 'that was fine and we'll use that again'. You have to look at what worked and what didn't work and what you would change. (Nic Pháidín)

**ISO 23185 is one mechanism mentioned in the literature for the assessment and benchmarking of term resources: terminological data, data input, data output and data management. Is this used by the Irish term planning organisation? Why? Are other mechanisms used?**

ISO 23185 is not used.

**What do terminologists in the Irish term planning organisation consider 'good' terminology research (transparency, consistency, appropriateness, linguistic economy, derivability, linguistic correctness, and preference for native language...)?**

Appropriateness is considered the most important attribute of new terms, as well as transparency, linguistic economy and derivability.

Well I'm not sure what the English for *nádúrthacht* would be, maybe something like appropriateness, but that would be fairly high up on the list. If you remember we were talking about 'trespass', that sense of while it could be argued that the legal term is linguistically correct, and you could even say it's transparent if 'treaspás' is the transliteration of 'trespass', but we would feel that it's not very *nádúrtha*, it's not very appropriate. So I would probably say that appropriateness would come near the top. Transparency I would say would be the next thing, and consistency next. And of course linguistic economy would be delightful. If we can say something in a neater, smaller word than the English, it's wonderful. Very often that doesn't happen, but if we can keep it short, we would try. And derivability... Certainly with a lot of the scientific suffixes and prefixes, derivability would have been very important. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Preference for native language is also considered important, except for scientific terms.

And preference for native language, well, that's in there, I don't know what number it would be but certainly when we receive a request for a new concept, the first stop will always be 'is there anything in the native language already that we can use or that we can modify in some way?'. Can we make a noun out of an adjective, can we make a compound? That would be the first stop, unless it's a technical term based on Latin and Greek roots for which you know there will be hardly any possibility of anything existing. In that case, we have a ready-made set of rules for transliterating and that, in effect, makes those ones the easiest to deal with. So, yes, preference for native language, except perhaps for those kind of scientific terms. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

This claim is questioned by one commentator, however, who finds that term creation is highly dependant on English.

Bíonn daoine ag santú an Bhéarla, rud nach gcreidim cuid mhaith faoin gCoiste Téarmaíochta, bíonn siad ag rá i gcónaí nach mbíonn sé sin ar cheann de na rudaí a dhéanann siad, déanann siad cailc nó athscríobh ar leagan den Bhéarla. Séanann siad é ach sé dáiríre a dhéanann siad is dóigh liom, cuid mhór. Níl aon locht agam air sin *per se* ach sé an coincheap atá taobh thiar de, agus...<sup>146</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

Tá deacrachtaí den chineál sin ann ach go príomha na téarmaí atá ar fáil is aistriúcháin nó cailc iad ar na téarmaí Béarla agus is annamh is dóigh liomsa a bhíonn téarmaí maithe Nua-Ghaeilge ag teacht chun cinn atá neamhspleách ón mBéarla.<sup>147</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

ÚB: Agus an é go bhfuil téarmeolaíocht na Gaeilge spleách ar théarmeolaíocht an Bhéarla más ea?

TÓhl: Sin an locht is mó a fhaighimse uirthi.<sup>148</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

This criticism is contested, however.

The two main criticisms of Irish term formation bear out directly opposing viewpoints. One commonly-held view is that new Irish terms should be based on native words or particles, a view common to many 'small' or minority languages – a case in point being Icelandic. Many Irish people complain about 'Béarlachas' ('anglicism', a term which

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<sup>146</sup> 'People want English, something I don't really believe about the Terminology Committee, they always say that that's not one of the things they do, but they do a calque or transcription of an English version. They deny it but really it's what they do I think, a lot of the time. I don't have a problem with that *per se* but it's the concept that's behind it, and...'

<sup>147</sup> 'There are problems of that sort but mainly the terms that are available are translations or calques on the English terms and it's rare I think that good modern Irish terms emerge that are independent of the English.'

<sup>148</sup> 'ÚB: And is it that Irish language terminology is dependant on English language terminology?  
TÓhl: That's my biggest criticism of it.'

refers to transferring English syntax into Irish sentences), and mistakenly attribute loanwords to 'Béarlachas' when it appears that the Irish term looks like the English term. There seems to be little awareness of the long tradition Irish has of borrowing words and terms from Latin, Old Norse, French, and Middle-English, without disturbing the fabric of the language. In more recent times, however, the fabric of the language is being disturbed increasingly by the introduction of English syntax, or 'Béarlachas'. There also seems to be little awareness that the majority of such loanwords are not of English origin at all, most having Greek, Latin or French roots, and are widespread across many languages. One of the Irish loanwords which has excited repeated opposition is the term 'rampa'. The English term 'ramp' comes from French 'rampe', from the Old French verb 'ramper'. A brief foray via Dictionary.com's translator throws up the following equivalents in various languages using the Roman alphabet: *ramp* (English, Finnish, German, Hungarian, Indonesian, Malay, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Welsh); *rampa* (Filipino, Irish, Italian, Lithuanian, Maltese); *rampa* (Galician); *rampur* (Icelandic).

The other major criticism of Irish term formation is the opposing view that new terms are being formed in Irish when the English terms left unchanged are perfectly fine, simple and understandable. This view is borne out by the research carried out by Helena Ní Ghearáin on IT terms in use in companies in the Irish-speaking area of Connemara. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

It is also pointed out that time pressures preclude an in-depth exploration of native-language alternatives.

Ach brú oibre as cuimse agus... Cuir i gcás, go minic téarmaí meafaracha, abair. Is cuimhin liom muid a bheith ag plé an leagan cainte sin 'the glass ceiling'... Bhí muid á phlé sin agus tá mé cinnte, dá mbeifeá, dá mbeadh deis mhachnaimh agat go dtiocfadh leat leagan maith Gaeilge a chur ar fáil ansin, ach bhí muid ag plé an téarma ar feadh i bhfad agus ní raibh muid ag déanamh dul chun cinn ar bith agus b'éigin, faoi dheireadh bhí orainn glacadh le *calque*, 'an tsíleáil ghloine'. Agus b'fhéidir nach bhfuil neart air sin, b'fhéidir gurb in an toradh a bheadh ar an phlé ar aon nós... Ach mothaím go mbíonn an brú sin ann agus nach bhfuil deis i ndáiríre mórán machnaimh a dhéanamh ná foinsí a cheadú.<sup>149</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

B'fhéidir gur cuimhin leat go raibh cuairteoir againn ón tSualainn, Henrik, ag caint ar a chuid oibre siúd agus dúirt sé b'fhéidir go mbeadh cúig théarma in aghaidh an lae le ceapadh acu nó rud mar sin, agus nuair a chuala mé é sin tháinig fonn gáire orm mar

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<sup>149</sup> 'But there's huge work pressure, and...Take metaphorical terms, for example. I remember we were discussing that phrase, 'the glass ceiling'... We were discussing that and I'm sure if you were, if you had time to think you could provide a good Irish term there, but we were discussing the term for a long time and we were making no progress and in the end we had to accept a calque, 'an tsíleáil ghloine'. And maybe that can't be helped, maybe that would have been the result in any event... But I feel that there's that pressure and that there's really no opportunity to do much thinking or to consult sources.'

bíonn liosta chomh fada le maide rámha le déanamh againne ag gach aon chruinniú. (Mac Lochlainn) [Addition: Tháinig mé ar nótaí a scríobh mé le linn léacht Henrik. Dúirt sé gur caitheadh 100-250 uair an chloig ag socrú caoga téarma ar thionscadal amháin.]<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> 'You might remember that we had a visitor from Sweden, Henrik, talking about his work and he said that they'd have maybe five terms a day to create or something like that, and when I heard that I wanted to laugh because we have a list as long as your arm to do at every single meeting.' ['I found a note I wrote during Henrik's lecture. He said 100-250 hours were spent deciding fifty terms on one project.']

## 2.13. Evaluation: Organisational and general

### Is the organisation as a whole evaluated, and if so, by whom and how?

The Terminology Committee is a part of Foras na Gaeilge, but it is unclear what part Foras na Gaeilge plays in evaluating the Terminology Committee.

I suppose, yes, taking it on another level over the Coiste Téarmaíochta, Foras na Gaeilge is the body charged statutorily with doing this planning work. But I'm not aware that it, that Foras has been involved as an agency at strategic level apart from, through the Coiste. On a more senior level the last occasion that I know that was undertaken would have been under Bord na Gaeilge just before the functions were transferred [1999]. They did set up a working group to look at lexicography, the official standard and the question of terminology. And it was following on from that then that the functions were specifically covered off in the legislation at an organisational level... The other point to make I suppose is that it was the EU status that has actually been the catalyst to try and resolve maybe some of the structural outstanding issues. (Nic Pháidín)

There was a review of the Terminology Committee as well as other sections of Foras na Gaeilge around 2002, which led to the decision to create a new directorate and to recruit additional staff. It was also decided to change the structure of the Committee, with the abolition of the Permanent Committee, and the limitation of appointments to three-year terms after 2008.

De réir mo thaithí ní dhearnadh aon mheasúnú foirmiúil ar an gCoiste ach arís braitheann sé ar céard go díreach atá i gceist agat le measúnú i.e. measúnú ar fheidhmiú oibríochtúil an Choiste nó measúnú ar an téarmaíocht a ghineann sé. Tá a fhios agam go ndearna comhairleoirí neamhspleácha athbhreithniú ar an nGúm, Coiste Téarmaíochta agus Áis (timpeall 2002 ach níl mé cinnte faoi sin). Ag eascairt as na moltaí a rinne siad, chinn an Foras ar fhoireann bhreise a lorg do na rannóga sin agus stiúirthóireacht nua a bhunú – Foilsitheoireacht, Foclóireacht agus Téarmaíocht. Idir an dá linn is sa stiúirthóireacht oideachais a bhí siad (agus atá faoi láthair, toisc nár ceapadh an stiúirthóir go fóill). Chinn an Foras ar struchtúir an Choiste a leasú chomh maith. Cuireadh deireadh leis an mbuanchoiste agus leis an gCoiste Stiúrtha agus anois níl ach Coiste Stiúrtha ann. Roimhe seo ní raibh aon teorainn le tréimhse aon chomhalta ar an gCoiste. Ach i Márta 2008 cheap Bord an Fhorais coiste nua agus is ceapachán trí bliana gach ceann acu. Réitíodh tuairisc ghairid ar chur i bhfeidhm na struchtúr nua seo in Earrach 2009.<sup>151</sup> (Ó Ruairc addition)

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<sup>151</sup> 'In my experience there was no formal evaluation of the Committee but again it depends on what exactly you mean by evaluation, i.e. evaluation of the operational performance of the Committee or evaluation of the terms created. I know that independent consultants did a review of the Committee, the Gúm and Áis (around 2002 but I'm not certain about that). Arising from their recommendations, the



There is no sense, however, that this evaluation takes place or that an evaluation of the overall structures for terminology for Irish has been carried out. This may be because of the upheaval caused by the transition to Foras na Gaeilge in 1999, coupled with the fact that staff changes were not implemented until 2007.

ÚB: And then for sort of bigger evaluation, the Coiste Téarmaíochta as a whole, is it ever evaluated, and if so, by whom?

FNG: No. At least, not that I'm aware of... We would certainly write reports, etc. But we aren't evaluated. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Go bhfios dom ní dhéantar measúnaithe eile i réimse na téarmeolaíochta ó thaobh an Fhorais de, go háirithe measúnú straitéiseach den chineál atá faoi chaibidil sna freagraí eile. Ceist íogair í seo ar go leor bealaí, má thuigtear gur aistríodh isteach na rannóga sin de réir na reachtaíochta i 1999, ach nár cuireadh an t-aistriú i bhfeidhm go hoifigiúil (ó thaobh na foirne de) go dtí 2007. Feictear dom gur imir sé seo tionchar ar cheist an mheasúnaithe i.e. bhí gnéithe eile den chlár oibre le cur i bhfeidhm sula bhféadfaí tabhairt faoina leithéid.<sup>152</sup> (Ó Ruairc addition)

Responsibility for evaluation ultimately lies with the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. There were conflicting opinions about the amount and quality of such evaluation as had taken place.

ÚB: And how about the Department, from the point of view of evaluation do you think that the responsibility lies with them or with Foras na Gaeilge as an organisation sponsored by them?

CNP: Ultimately it lies with the Department. I mean obviously you have a minister and a public service and then they devolve, or they work through devolved functions through a body like Foras na Gaeilge who then work through the Coiste Téarmaíochta so I suppose ultimately, the ultimate responsibility does lie with the Department and I think judging by developments over the last three, four, five years it is evident that those responsibilities are being taken seriously. (Nic Pháidín)

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Foras decided to recruit additional staff for those departments and to create a new directorate – Publishing, Lexicography and Terminology. In the meantime they were under the education directorate (and are at present, because the director hasn't been appointed yet). The Foras decided to improve the Committee structures as well. The permanent committee and steering committee were abolished and now there's only a steering committee. Before now there was no limit to any member's term of office. But in March 2008 the Board of Foras appointed a new committee and they were all three year appointments. A short report on the implementation of this new structure was prepared in Spring 2009.'

<sup>152</sup> 'As far as I know no other evaluation in the terminology area is done by the Foras, particularly strategic evaluation of the kind being discussed here. This is a sensitive question in a lot of ways, if you consider that those departments were transferred in by legislation in 1999, but that the transfer was not implemented officially (from a staffing point of view) until 2007. I think that this had an effect on the evaluation question, i.e. other aspects of the work programme had to be put into effect before something like that could be undertaken.'

If there had been any genuine evaluation of the work of the Terminology Committee, clearly adequate structures and staffing allocation would have had to be provided. Since this was not done, there is a question about the will to evaluate the work. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

**What is done with the results of these evaluations? Are they published?**

This question is not relevant as no distinct evaluation is carried out.

**What else is evaluated by the Irish term planning organization, and how?**

In the case of Fiontar, a more long-term evaluation mechanism is through academic research and discourse.

I suppose the more academic, self-reflective aspect where there is more genuine academic R&D involved in the work would be through people undertaking PhD research, where there's a long period and where a lot of reading, research, analysis and thought over time, which does then feed back into the way the projects work. And as I said through papers, by attending conferences and by hosting, we're hosting the TKE conference this summer, so through processes like that. (Nic Pháidín)

University departments are required by legislation to undertake comprehensive external quality peer-reviews. These are organised by the University and monitored by the Irish Universities Quality Board. The last full review of Fiontar took place in 2004. Terminology work was included as an important part of Fiontar's research agenda. The next review of Fiontar is scheduled for late 2010 as part of a full faculty review. These reports are published in full.

## 2.14. Modernisation/maintenance

**Are new research technologies and methods, and work practices, used as they are developed? [Could you give me an example of some recent innovations?]**

There is a question about how much modernisation there is of the Terminology Committee's technologies and methods: as discussed in the section beginning on page 122, there is a sense that methods cannot be changed due to pressures on the system. Among new methodologies, obvious improvements such as the recent introduction of computing resources are recognised.

Well I suppose the obvious one there would be the online resources which weren't available – I can remember the time when this work was done without computers, then I remember a time when we had one computer between two of us, and when we had email but no internet access, and so it goes. So now we can do a lot more research online than was possible before. We still refer to paper resources from time to time and we refer to subject field specialists and so on. And we use, if we can get electronic versions of them on a CD or something, we use those. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Term extraction is not considered relevant to Irish terminology, because there is no big technical corpus except for textbooks, which only contain Terminology Committee terms.

I'm aware of the practice, I remember when I heard about it first, I thought, that's not going to work in Irish because we don't have any big corpora, and it seems to me that the most obvious candidate corpus would be the legal material. Of course we could build a technical corpus of all the textbooks we were involved in, except that we would have supplied the terms for them in the first place. So the other possibility is the project that we have contracted to you, to build a link to the language corpus. I suppose it remains to be seen how valuable – well, this wasn't about term extraction, it was about assisting the user in seeing terms in context. So I think it will be valuable but I'm not sure I expect that it'll be an ideal candidate for extracting terms, I'm not sure. (Ní Ghallchobhair)

Other interviewees, however, gave corpus research a much higher priority on the agenda for terminology work.

Terminology in Irish is not corpus-based and I would feel that by now certain aspects of the terminology work should be corpus-based. And that terminology in a domain should not be just developed in response to people asking for certain terms, because you can arrive at a situation, and the legacy data I think (our terminology database) bears this out, you can have a very skewed domain balance when you're just responding to requests rather than developing for the needs of a language. So I think the literature would bear that out. (Nic Pháidín)

Ach nuair nach bhfuil siad ag faire ar an teanga ansin tá sé deacair a rá go bhfuil údarás ar bith acu. Ta údarás acu i ngeall go bhfuil saineolas acu agus go bhfuil siad á

dhéanamh le tamall agus mar sin dó agus tá meas ag daoine orthu ach ní fhéadfaí a rá go bhfuil siad bunaithe ar aon chorpas nó go bhfuil sé bunaithe ar úsáid. Caithfidh tú a fháil amach cén úsáid atá ann agus ansin caithfidh tú a rá, bhuel tá an úsáid ann ach níl sé go maith, mar sin níl muid ag dul a' glacadh leis. Tá an úsáid chomh coitianta sin nach maith linn é ach go bhfuil muid ag dul á bhreacadh síos mar sin féin agus caithfidh muid a rá ní mholann muid é ach.. Agus ansin d'fhéadfaí a rá, tá na daoine á rá sin agus tá sé contráilte ar fad, nó tá míthuiscint ag an bpobal ar an rud ansin. Ach níl an t-údarás acu chuige sin.<sup>153</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

In Fiontar, new work practices and innovations in the legal term research project include research on term extraction techniques. In the IATE terminology project, an extranet system was developed as a means of sharing term lists with EU translators; and the sports dictionary work is innovative in the involvement of a large group of external experts, as well as an in-house corpus of sports texts and journalism.

As regards Focal, it is recognised as being of a high standard, but needs constant innovation.

One of the strengths we certainly have is in the technological sphere. The likes of Focal, the likes of Logainm, as the more I get involved in this discourse it seems clear to me that these are continental, global pioneers in terms of how you provide a terminological service and engage the broader public, and how you sustain the development. It's like how it sustains, the whole dynamic to the work that feeds in to it. It's not just about working out the way, there's also a loop back and it's impacting on understanding and thoughts and opinions about this whole area. So I think that's a key strength that we have a technological and IT structural framework already developed which is very very strong. And it's very clear that there's ongoing planning in terms of how we keep on thinking this over. Not to rest on our laurels. (Ó Ruairc)

Unlike print, where publication is the final format and cannot be changed, digital resources are born when they 'go live'. They are dynamic, and users have valid and changing expectations of levels of service and innovation. 'Graceful degradation' where resources remain dormant and not renewed constantly, is the single biggest risk of digital dissemination. The need for creative development of both content and technology cannot be over-emphasised. Standing still is not an option. (Nic Pháidín, addition)

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<sup>153</sup> 'But when they're not observing the language it's hard to say that they have any authority. They have authority because they have expertise and because they've been doing it for a while and so on, and people respect them, but it couldn't be said that they're based on any corpus or based on usage. You have to find out what usage is and then you have to say, well the usage is there but it's not good, so we won't accept it. Or the usage is so common that we don't like it but we're going to put it down anyway though we don't recommend it.. And they could say, people say this and it's entirely wrong, or there's a popular misunderstanding about this. But they don't have the authority for that.'

An example of planned modernisation is the proposal to develop a new framework for lexical resources to replace Focal. Called 'Léacslann', this will provide a platform for storing and managing all of Fiontar's lexical and placenames projects in one database and would overcome some of the current technical and editorial restrictions on Focal and on other resources, restrictions which have developed over the years as changes were made and new tools were added on an *ad hoc* basis.

#### **How are terminology resources kept up to date?**

Focal is updated continuously, and material from Terminology Committee meetings and subcommittees is added as resources allow. If a mistake is noticed – as a result of an email, for example – it is corrected by Fiontar or the Terminology Committee staff immediately.

There are still problems in the database, however, in that conceptually related entries may have Irish terms which don't correspond – for example a particular English term might have one translation, but a compound of that term might be built using an different Irish root. In other cases, there are several corresponding Irish terms for an English term, and the context of each is not sufficiently clear.

Mar sin sin an chéad rud a déarfainn ná gur fhás na réimsí seo cineál neamhspleách ar a chéile agus, dá réir sin, ní luíonn siad an-chompórdach le chéile cuid den am. Agus feiceann tú é sin, abraimis, in Focal má chuardaíonn tú téarma. Ní hamháin go mbeidh sé leagan againn féin, b'fhéidir, ach má bhreathnaíonn tú sna samplaí ón reachtaíocht go minic bíonn leaganacha éagsúla acu féin fiú ó acht go hacht.<sup>154</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Terminology resources are recognised as not being up to date.

ÚB: And in terms of making sure that terminology resources are kept up to date?

FNG: We're never up to date. That's the simple answer to that. We try, we do our best, but no, we've never been up to date. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The lack of dynamism is related by one interviewee to the fact that term usage and implantation are not observed or measured and that, particularly in the academic sphere, term usage and meaning fluctuates constantly.

Is dóigh liomsa go bhfuil cúpla deacracht mhór a bhaineann leis an gCoiste Téarmaíochta. Ar an chéad dul síos níl go leor acu ann, an dara rud is dócha níl aon saotharlann ann, níl duine ar bith ag obair ar *observatory* nó aon rud don teanga agus

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<sup>154</sup> 'So the first thing I'd say is that these domains grew sort of independently of each other and so they don't sit very comfortably together some of the time. And you can see that in Focal say when you search for a term. Not only would we have six versions maybe but if you look at samples from legislation often they have different versions from one act to the next.'

an tríú rud ansin an ghné seo atá dinimiciúil; tá síorathrú ann, tá síorghluaiseacht sa bhrí atá sa téarma agus tharla nach bhfuil an chéad dá phíosa sin ann bheadh sé an-deacair acu aon rud a chumadh láithreach bonn agus bheith ag bogadh leis. Baineann [an fhadhb] sin leis an réimse acadúil ach níl sé chomh deacair sin don ghnáthshaol ar bhealach agus b'fhéidir gur ann atá an ról acu dáiríre.<sup>155</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

Ach bheadh leisce orm bheith páirteach in aon fhoclóir a bheadh le foilsiú in sna sainréimeanna sin de bharr go mbíonn siad ag athrú ar feadh an ama. Agus má amharcann muid ar leithéidí *Dictionary of Sociolinguistics*, bíonn siad ag athrú, agus bíonn brí éagsúil le baint as an téarma céanna, go leor bríonna [éagsúla] agus nuair a bhíonn muid ag iarraidh é sin a phlé sa Ghaeilge bíonn orainn an téarmaíocht sin a úsáid chomh maith agus a chur ann.<sup>156</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

There is a recognition that the Terminology Committee has to periodically address and revise general language and grammar questions, such as the rules of transliteration, in order to keep resources up to date and correct.

We're regularly updating the principles, particularly in terms of transliteration because we discover new unidentified anomalies from time to time, so that is a work in progress. The rules developed by Tomás de Bhaldraithe in the 1950s and subsequently revised by himself, Niall Ó Dónaill and Éamonn Ó hÓgáin in the 1970s, were collated and revisited by the Terminology Committee in the early years of the current century, and built into a terminology handbook developed in 2007 by the secretary, and revised in 2010. But grammar is another thing that has come up again and again – either grammar or some sort of usage... It's probably not pure grammar but it's usage that is very relevant to terminology. So we did some work on that. But the other thing about grammar, the long-running one is the issue about the *séimhiú* after feminine nouns, and that arose out of our own frustration at the kind of lack of clarity in the grammatical sources. And I'm sorry to say that there's still a certain degree of confusion about those rules because they've been interpreted differently and so on. So we now have to revisit them. But we wouldn't attempt to take on the whole revision of Irish grammar or anything like that, but those issues in grammar which come into play in term formation... We have to deal with those, yes. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010 with addition)

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<sup>155</sup> 'I think the problem, there's a few problems with the Terminology Committee. In the first place there aren't enough of them, in the second place probably there's no observatory, no-one is working on an observatory or anything for the language and the third thing then this dynamic aspect, it's constantly changing, there's constant movement in the meaning of the term and because the first two parts aren't there it would be very difficult for them to create anything instantly and move with it. That problem relates to the academic context but it's not that difficult for everyday life in a way and maybe that's where their role is really.'

<sup>156</sup> 'But I'd be reluctant to be part of any dictionary that was to be published in those specialist domains because they're constantly changing. And if we look at the likes of the *Dictionary of Sociolinguistics*, they're changing, and different meanings attach to the same term, many meanings, and when we try and discuss that in Irish we have to use that terminology as well and put it in.'

The other thing about the Coiste Téarmaíochta in terms of actual term creation, I think the rules that they developed historically for transliteration of terms and all of that, I reckon that that was probably very well done, that was developed in the 1970s, 1980s I think. And I think they were probably established on good linguistic principles. Again I'm not quite sure how often, what time they take out to sort of revise and develop these, or whether they need to be revised or developed. But again these things do need to be looked at periodically. (Nic Pháidín)

### **How is modernisation of the organisation carried out?**

It is suggested that modernisation is crucial for the Terminology Committee, especially because it has been in existence for so long.

Again the only comment I would make is that maybe because the Coiste Téarmaíochta is there so long, any organisation going back so long, you actually need periodically every ten years or fifteen years to really analyse is it fit for purpose in the sense that working methods change, new opportunities come up and what mechanisms that may have been very appropriate in the 1960s or the 1980s may not be the most effective ways to do work at the moment. The whole committee structure and everything like that. Again I can't comment as to whether it's effective or not because I don't work in it. But I know that you do need to look at these things periodically. Certainly I think with the huge increase in demand for terminology which has come on stream following the status changes, that increases of that level in volumes means that you do need to look at work processes. Otherwise what you can find is you get bottlenecks and stresses on people and on levels in an organisation. (Nic Pháidín)

A survey of the Terminology Committee office staffing structure was carried out some years ago, but it was felt that the requirements of the work area were not taken into account and no change was implemented (Ní Ghallchobhair addition). There is a feeling that Terminology Committee members and staff do not have the time or resources to fundamentally change their working methods.

There was a revision of the structure and membership of the committee a few years ago: there had been three levels if you like, you had a permanent Terminology Committee, you had the steering committee and you had subcommittees. It was decided to amalgamate the permanent and the steering committee, and update the membership. So what eventually happened was that a lot of the older members of the permanent committee retired or resigned and some new members were recommended, particularly for representative purposes. It was felt, for instance, that we should have somebody from the media, that we should have somebody from the translation sector and so on. In that sense, there was an updating or a modernisation of the membership. But that's something that – and I think it's built into the standing orders that the membership should be revised every three years or something like that, which is a good idea because sometimes people tire and they'd like to get out

and sometimes we could benefit from fresh blood and so on. So that structure is set in place. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

I suppose if you're saying, if we monitored them would we change our methods I don't really under the current circumstances think we can change our methods very much because we work hard, we work long hours, we work to our deadlines as best we can, and we generally have more to do than we can get done. That's just how it is. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

**What changes have been made within the Irish term planning organisation in recent years, as a result of evaluation?**

As a result of an evaluation by external consultants around 2002, Foras na Gaeilge planned to create a new directorate within the organisation and to recruit additional staff. A time limit was also imposed on the term of Terminology Committee members, and the committee was restructured.

Tá a fhios agam go ndearna comhairleoirí neamhspleácha athbhreithniú ar an nGúm, Coiste Téarmaíochta agus Áis (timpeall 2002 ach níl mé cinnte faoi sin). Ag eascairt as na moltaí a rinne siad, chinn an Foras ar fhoireann bhreise a lorg do na rannóga sin agus stiúrthóireacht nua a bhunú – Foilsitheoireacht, Foclóireacht agus Téarmaíocht. Idir an dá linn is sa stiúrthóireacht oideachais a bhí siad (agus atá faoi láthair, toisc nár ceapadh an stiúrthóir go fóill). Chinn an Foras ar struchtúir an Choiste a leasú chomh maith. Cuireadh deireadh leis an mbuanchoiste agus leis an gCoiste Stiúrtha agus anois níl ach Coiste Stiúrtha ann. Roimhe seo ní raibh aon teorainn le tréimhse aon chomhalta ar an gCoiste. Ach i Márta 2008 cheap Bord an Fhorais coiste nua agus is ceapachán trí bliana gach ceann acu. Réitíodh tuairisc ghairid ar chur i bhfeidhm na struchtúr nua seo in Earrach 2009.<sup>157</sup> (Ó Ruairc addition)

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<sup>157</sup> 'I know that independent consultants did a review of the Committee, the Gúm and Áis (around 2002 but I'm not certain about that). Arising from their recommendations, the Foras decided to recruit additional staff for those departments and to create a new directorate – Publishing, Lexicography and Terminology. In the meantime they were under the education directorate (and are at present, because the director hasn't been appointed yet). The Foras decided to improve the Committee structures as well. The permanent committee and steering committee were abolished and now there's only a steering committee. Before now there was no limit to any member's term of office. But in March 2008 the Board of Foras appointed a new committee and they were all three year appointments. A short report on the implementation of this new structure was prepared in Spring 2009.'



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**How are research standards maintained (manual, training of new staff, etc)?**

There is a complete editorial and user guide for Focal, and new staff in Fiontar are introduced to it during induction. There is also an in-house style guide. New staff are generally trained by doing work in the database. The database stores a complete history of user changes, so work done can be monitored. The work of editorial assistants is co-ordinated by the editorial manager.

Fiontar staff are generally facilitated in taking part in training courses; during 2008 and 2009, some editorial assistants participated in the Infoterm Terminology Summer School in Vienna, and others took part in advanced grammar and language training courses in Ireland. Another member of staff took a Trados training course. Because few of the editorial staff are native speakers of the language, enhancement of language skills is particularly important.

## 2.15. Training

### **Are university courses in terminology available for Irish terminologists? Are they appropriate and up to date?**

There is very little training for would-be terminologists or those such as translators who will be working with terminology.

ÚB: Ag breathnú ar théarmeolaithe nó daoine a bheidh ag obair le téarmaíocht, meas tú an bhfuil traenáil ar fáil dá leithéid siúd?

AML: B'fhéidir gur sin an áit a bhfuil an ball laige. Sílim go bhfuil méid áirithe déanta maidir le téarmaíocht a láimhseáil, ach maidir le téarmeolaithe a dhéanamh de dhaoine, bhuel is dóigh liom an t-aon bhealach a bhí ann go dtí seo ná bheith sáite san obair.<sup>158</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

There would be limited modules on some translation courses, but they would be maybe one module or a piece of a module. And I reckon that the standards would vary very greatly. I would suspect that on most courses for Irish language translation that the training is very specific, that it's about how to use Irish language resources... And what would be available would not actually equip graduates to really work in terminology. They would be more users of terminology than creators of terminology. (Nic Pháidín)

One of the problems may be that there is no tradition of terminology work in Ireland, in English or in Irish, and consequently a lack of trainers.

Tá daoine a chuireann rudaí mar sin [traenáil téarmeolaíochta] ar fáil, ach... bheadh sé sin ag brath ar dhaoine a raibh an saineolas sin acu cheana féin, agus ní dóigh liom go bhfuil aos daoine sa tír a bhfuil an cineál saineolais sin acu lena chur ar fáil. Chun an cineál sin oiliúna a chur ar fáil do dhaoine eile. Tá daoine ann atá beagáinín chun tosaigh más maith leat – ach tharla nach bhfuil an traidisiún sin againn, níl an traidisiún sin againn i mBéarla sa tír seo ach oiread. Tá sé deacair é a dhéanamh is dóigh liom.<sup>159</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

It is felt that historically third level institutions had no interest in language planning issues, but that this may be changing. It is felt that language planning was ignored in favour of literature.

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<sup>158</sup> ÚB: Looking at terminologists or people who will be working with terminology, do you think training is available for them?

AML: Maybe that's where the weakness is. I think a certain amount is done about handling terminology, but as to turning people into terminologists, well I think the only way is to be immersed in the work.'

<sup>159</sup> 'There are people who provide things like [terminology training], but... that would depend on people who already have the expertise, and I don't think there's a class of people in the country who have that kind of expertise in order to provide it. To provide that kind of training to other people. There are people who are a little ahead if you like – but because we don't have that tradition, we don't have that tradition in English in this country either. It's hard to do I think.'

Ní dóigh liom gur chuir na hinstiúidí oideachais, go háirithe na hinstiúid trío leibhéal, gur chuir siad spéis sa réimse seo riamh agus tá athrú éigin ag tarlú de réir a chéile anois, ach bhí sé de cheart acu díriú ar an réimse seo den teanga i bhfad ó shin. Bhí siad ag díriú an iomarca, is dóigh liom, ar chúrsaí litríochta agus tá sé sin ar ndóigh tábhachtach, ach ag cur san áireamh gur mionteanga í agus na dúshláin ar fad a bhaineann leis sin, le mionteanga ar bith, ach dúshláin faoi leith a bhaineann leis an mionteanga seo, shílfeá go raibh sé de cheart ag na hinstiúidí díriú ar chúrsaí na teanga féin agus cúrsaí pleanála teanga seachas díreach glacadh leis má choinnítear an Ghaeilge beo sa Ghaeltacht go mbeidh muid slán.<sup>160</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Agus an rud eile a dhéanfainn ná rannóg teanga cheart a bhunú i ngach ollscoil, áit a mbeidís ag díriú ar staid na teanga sa lá atá inniu ann, is dóigh an t-aon díriú a rinne siad ná go raibh teanglann ann agus go raibh daoine ag foghlaim cén chaoi leis an teanga a labhairt ach ní raibh éinne ag machnamh ar cén fáth go bhfuil an teanga á labhairt mar seo, agus ní raibh aon chaint ar – bhuel tá caint air anois, ar phleanáil teanga agus ar shochtheangeolaíocht, ach ba chóir go mbeadh sé sin ag tarlú i ngach ollscoil agus instiúid trío leibhéal freisin, agus go mbeadh daoine, go leor daoine ar do nós féin ag fás aníos agus ag machnamh agus ag dul amach agus ag éisteacht leis an bpobal agus ag éisteacht leis na meáin agus ag éisteacht le hoiliúnóirí agus féachaint cén áit a bhfuil na dúshláin agus céard ba chóir dúinn a dhéanamh faoi. Agus ansin taighde a dhéanamh. Taobh istigh de réimse na téarmeolaíochta féin tá an oiread sin rudaí a bhféadfaí taighde a dhéanamh orthu, an oiread sin rudaí, agus níor chuir aon ollscoil aon spéis ann go dtí anois.<sup>161</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

It is also felt that there is little research into language usage. This tends to be limited to harvesting lexical materials in native dialects.

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<sup>160</sup> 'I don't think the educational institutions, particularly third level institutions, I don't think they ever took an interest in this area and there's some change happening gradually now, but they should have looked at this aspect of the language a long time ago. They were focusing too much, I think, on literature and of course that's important, but taking into account that this is a minority language and all the challenges that go with that, with any minority language but particular challenges with this one, you'd think that the institutions should have focused on the language itself and planning issues rather than just accepting that if Irish is kept alive in the Gaeltacht that we'll be okay.'

<sup>161</sup> 'And another thing I'd do is to found a proper language department in each university, where they'd be focusing on the state of the language today, probably the only focusing they did is that there was a language laboratory and that people were learning how to speak the language but no-one was thinking about why the language is being spoken like this, and there was no discussion about – well it's being spoken about now, language planning and sociolinguistics but that should be happening in every university and third level institution too, and people, lots of people like you should be coming up and thinking and going out and listening to the people and listening to the media and listening to educators and seeing where the challenges are and what we should be doing about it. And then to do the research. Within the area of terminology itself there are so many things that could be researched, so many things, and no university has taken any interest till now.'

**Are terminology users given training and educational resources? (For example, journalists, teachers?)**

Information about terminology work and an interactive course in dictionary use are available on Focal; there are also educational resources directed at translators on Acmhainn.ie. These are however limited in scope and penetration.

As stated above the majority of terminology users are translators. In state sponsored training programmes, the emphasis is on training translators to fill a perceived skills gap.

In the last two or three years... we've been funding courses to try and increase the supply of graduates who have some basic knowledge base and skill base in terms of terminology, translation, editing and so forth. And that... organically is beginning to generate these links between the third level and the State system at a practical level, workplaces for example, internships and things like that. ...There was a generation gap opening up, with some very noble exceptions, we didn't seem to be ensuring a supply of young people coming out who you could even work with. And it seemed to be resting too much on *ad hoc* contacts... But that's not enough any more. I'm not sure if it ever was in the first place but particularly with for example the status being achieved. (Ó Ruairc)

We've put a lot of money recently into training of translators. Some of those courses cover terminology and the course run by King's Inns for lawyer-linguists puts a lot of emphasis on legal terminology, but that's training in translation and in the use of appropriate terminology in translation as distinct from training in *téarmaolaíocht*, in the business of the theory and so on. I'm not aware that there's an awful lot of training courses available in that area. I think there is a gap between the highly valuable work that's done, almost on a secretive basis, a very low profile, by an Coiste Téarmaíochta, and disseminating that in the wider community. There's an issue there. Foras na Gaeilge have started with the most urgent need... which is providing training for translators; and that includes issues around accessing the appropriate terminology and making choices, and training in terminology as such is down the line a little bit. (Ó Briain)

A joint initiative has been established between Fiontar and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to create a two-year internship programme in which the main focus is terminology, for six interns. Internships have also been facilitated for undergraduates and graduate students from NUI, Galway, DCU and UCC.

And this idea of masters programmes in translation studies, administration, copyright editing, these are very very recent creatures but its something that's impacted very directly in my own work for example that a number of institutions have come to me and said listen, we have these young people on these programmes, we want to organise work placements, and... I'd like them very much. Because there is a mindset, and I can understand why people might have it, that they are a bit worried about taking young people for three or four months at a time and that they have to invest

time in them and they're gone out the door and another one comes in. But as far I'm concerned it's time well worth investing. (Ó Ruairc)

One of the main difficulties emphasised is the problem of teaching translators and others when to use terminology and when it is not needed, particularly since terminology resources are often used in place of dictionaries.

ÚB: Agus ó thaobh daoine eile a bhíonn ag úsáid na téarmaíochta, tá a fhios agam go bhfuil ceist ann sa Ghaeilge i dtaobh an difríocht idir focal agus téarma agus go háirithe agus Focal ann go mb'fhéidir go n-úsáideann daoine é mar fhoclóir.

AML: Ó sea, sin an chéad chéim is dóigh liom.<sup>162</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Agus chomh maith leis sin is dóigh, b'fhéidir scéal an-tábhachtach ar fad, fios [a bheith] acu cén uair ba chóir téarma a úsáid agus cén uair ba chóir parafrása a úsáid. Tá sampla agus ní thiocfadh leat seo a chumadh tá sé chomh holc sin. An iris Beo, bhí fear ag caint ar thuras a rinne sé thart ar Mheiriceá i Greyhound Bus, agus is dóigh gurb é an rud a bhí i gceist aige ná 'Americans only use public transport in extreme circumstances'. Scríobh sé 'Ní bhaineann na Meiriceánaigh úsáid as an córas iompair phoiblí ach in imthosca foircneacha'. Mar sin tá sé sin ann, an mhí-úsáid sin, baineann sé ar ndóigh leis an téarmaíocht a láimhseáil. Is féidir méid áirithe a dhéanamh sa dá réimse, bunphrionsabail na téarmeolaíochta a chur ina láthair, ach is obair fheidhmeach a bheidh ann, beidh béim ar an rud i gcónaí, i gcúrsa aistriúcháin ar aon nós.<sup>163</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

One of the other main areas in which terminology is used is in teaching. There is a problem in that teachers working through the medium of Irish receive no training in terminology use.

There would be limited exposure to sort of terminology awareness in teacher training and training for journalists. But I think that it has been identified frequently as a deficit in teacher training. Particularly at second level when the qualifications to teach at post-primary level are a degree in the subject... Niney nine per cent of them do the degree through English, if you're a maths, science teacher or whatever. And then a one year higher diploma in education where you do teaching methods and all of that. There would be probably only one module or two modules within those type of

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<sup>162</sup> 'ÚB: And then from the point of view of other people using terminology, I know that there is a question in Irish about the difference between a word and a term and particularly with Focal there that maybe people use it as a dictionary.

AML: Oh yes, that's the first step I think.'

<sup>163</sup> 'And as well as that, maybe a very important thing is that they know when they should use a term and when they should use a paraphrase. There's an example and you couldn't make it up it's so bad. The magazine Beo, there was a man talking about a trip he took around America on Greyhound Bus, and I suppose what he meant was 'Americans only use public transport in extreme circumstances'. He wrote 'Ní bhaineann na Meiriceánaigh úsáid as an chóras iompar poiblí ach in imthosca foircneacha' [a very legal term]. So there's that, that misuse, of course it relates to handling terminology. You can do a certain amount in both areas, to present the basic principles of terminology, but it's practical work, you have to always emphasise the thing, in a translation course at any rate.'

programmes specific to teaching your subject at all and... they would literally arrive in the classroom day one and maybe never have used terminology in that domain in Irish and they would be applying for a post in Irish-medium schools. So because of that the perception by the teacher and therefore by the students is that terminology in Irish is something a bit odd, and a lot of the text books they would be using would actually be in English, and it would be seen as something rather difficult and slightly problematic, which is unfortunate, because that could be overcome very very easily through better training. (Nic Pháidín)

As for journalists, it was felt by one interviewee that training in language skills, with some reference to terminology usage, would be more useful than training in terminology itself.

ÚB: An mbeadh traenáil ag teastáil in úsáid na téarmaíochta, in úsáid cheart na téarmaíochta, nó an bhfuil gá lena leithéid sin de rud, má tá an bhfuil sé ar fáil?

BD: Níl sé ar fáil, ceist eile an bhfuil gá leis. Seo i measc iriseoirí? Níl a fhios agam an mbeadh sé mar bhuntáiste an-mhór. Bheadh cruinneas na Gaeilge, dá mbeadh sé mar chuid de mhodúl a bhain le cruinneas agus úsáid na Gaeilge agus cén dóigh leis na téarmaí is úire a chur isteach, bheadh sé úsáideach, ach níl a fhios agam an mbeadh mórán tóir ar chúrsa a bheadh ag plé go sonrach – tá sé teicniúil agus is cuid de ghnó an iriseora a bheadh ann ach ní bheadh sé ar an rud is práinní.

ÚB: Mar sin b'fhéidir mar chuid de thraenáil ábhar iriseoirí.

BD: Sea, traenáil teanga.<sup>164</sup> (Delap)

For those learning a profession, terminology is made available through professional training, for example for solicitors.

Nuair a bhíonn daoine ar scoil... agus má bhíonn siad ag déanamh sainchúrsaí san adhmaadóireacht nó san innealtóireacht nó rud éigin mar sin agus bíonn téarmaí faoi leith de dhíth orthu, cuirtear na téarmaí ar fáil an t-am sin. Agus foghlaimíonn siad iad. Dlíodóirí, bíonn orthu liosta téarmaí a fhoghlaim agus an cineál sin ruda. Níl a fhios agam a mbaineann mórán acu úsáid astu ina dhiaidh ach an dream beag a bheidh ag plé le Gaeilge ansin, sin an bunrud a bhíonn acu agus cloíonn siad leis ina dhiaidh.<sup>165</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

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<sup>164</sup> 'ÚB: Is training needed in the use of terminology, in the proper use of terminology, or is something like that needed, is it available?

BD: It's not available, another question is whether it's needed. Is this among journalists? I don't know if it'd be a big advantage. Correct language use, if it was part of a module to do with correct language and language usage and how to put in the newest terms, it would be useful, but I don't know if there'd be much demand for a course dealing specifically with that – it's technical and it would be part of the journalist's job but it's not the most urgent.

ÚB: So maybe as part of the training for future journalists.

BD: Yes, language training.'

<sup>165</sup> 'When people are at school... and if they're doing a specialised course in woodwork or engineering or something like that and they need certain terms, the terms are provided then. And they learn them. Lawyers, they have to learn a list of terms and that kind of thing. I don't know if many of them use it afterwards, but the small group that will be dealing with Irish, that's the basic thing they have and they stick to it after that.'

### **What kind of on-the-job training is provided to new and old staff?**

Terminology Committee staff learn on the job, by working and listening. Previously there was an attitude that language proficiency was the only skill required, but it is now recognised that this is not the case.

Níl aon traenáil fhoirmeálta ann, is trí a bheith ag obair is ag éisteacht a d'fhoghlaim mise pé rud a d'fhoghlaim mé, agus na daoine a chuaigh romham. Is dóigh ag dul i bhfad siar gur easpa feasachta a bhí ann, nár tuigeadh go raibh oiliúint ar leith ag teastáil don obair seo. Is dóigh gur ceapadh faoi mar a cheapann go leor daoine fós, má tá tú in ann Gaeilge a labhairt tá tú in ann obair mar seo a dhéanamh. Agus ar ndóigh níl sa líofacht teanga ach uirlis amháin. Ar ndóigh, bunuirlis ach ina dhiaidh sin tá go leor rudaí eile a gcaithfeá a chur san áireamh.<sup>166</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

It is felt that some of the on-the-job training provided to temporary staff was wasted because these people were not kept on.

Since the transfer of the office of the Terminology Committee to Foras na Gaeilge in 1999, we have taken on students on work experience every summer, some of whom we were able to hold onto for longer periods. Ideally, some of these young people should now hold permanent positions in the office, but no such permanent positions were ever approved and all the investment in training has been lost. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Another advantage for the secretary of the Terminology Committee has been exposure to international fora.

Through my involvement in ISO TC37 and the Board of the EAFT and participation in the TermNet Summer School, I learned a lot about international terminological practices, and bear them in mind in my daily work and training of assistants. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The situation is the same for Terminology Committee members, and no particular induction course or other training is provided.

Is dóigh liom gur, mar a deir an Béarla, *training on the job* atá ann. Mar cuid mhór acu ar ndóigh tá eolas acu ar chúrsaí téarmaolaíochta cheana féin. Ach bíonn an plé, foghlaimíonn tú cuid mhór ón phlé. Tá a fhios agam daoine a bhí páirteach sa Choiste agus i bhfochoistí agus bhí cineál faitíos orthu nach raibh siad gníomhach go leor sna coistí. Is cuimhin liom duine amháin a dúirt 'níor mhol mé oiread agus téarma amháin ó tháinig mé agus b'fhéidir gur cheart dom éirí as'. Ach de réir a chéile tagann siad isteach air agus feicim forás sna daoine sin mar, mar gheall ar easpa acmhainní,

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<sup>166</sup> 'There's no formal training, I learned whatever I learned though working and listening, and the people before me. I suppose going a long way back that it was lack of awareness, that it wasn't understood that a particular training is needed for this work. I suppose it was thought, as a lot of people still think, that if you can speak Irish you can do this kind of work. And of course language fluency is only one tool. It's a basic tool of course but there are lots of other things you'd have to take into account.'

glacann sé tamall fada na sainfhoclóirí seo a fhoilsiú. So is deis oiliúna an méid sin féin, an próiseas sin.<sup>167</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

A particular advantage is that some Terminology Committee members have been there for a long time, and so can share their accumulated wisdom.

Is dóigh an leanúnachas a bhí ann... ná na baill ar an gcoiste. Cuid de na baill ar an gcoiste bhí siad ann le fada agus bhí siadsan in ann a gcomhairle siúd a chur ar aghaidh agus d'fhoghlaim muid go leor uathu siúd.<sup>168</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Bhí daoine ar an gcoiste a bhí ag obair istigh i lár an réimse seo le fada an lá... Ach ní hé go bhfuil aon sainoiliúint ar théarmeolaíocht ar fáil sa tír seo, agus ní heol dom go ndeacha duine ar bith acu thar lear ar chúrsaí téarmeolaíochta.<sup>169</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Agus is dóigh gurb é an dearcadh a bhí ann i gcónaí ná tógáil ar an méid a bhí ann cheana féin, bailigh an méid atá ann cheana féin agus cuir leis agus is dóigh go raibh meas ag daoine ar na tuiscintí a bhí ag daoine a raibh taithí na mblianta acu mar léachtóirí agus mar shaineolaithe teanga. Gur glacadh leis gur thuig siad cúrsaí téarmaíochta chomh maith.<sup>170</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

It is not felt that Rannóg an Aistriúcháin staff need particular training in terminology, since the emphasis is on the use of precedent.

VUE: Ní dhírímidne ar a leithéid ach amháin ó thaobh, uimhir a haon, a mhíniú do dhaoine mar bunphrionsabal go bhfuil an obair bunaithe ar na fasaigh, a mhíniú dóibh cad iad na fasaigh, cá bhfaigheann siad na fasaigh, conas is fearr na fasaigh a úsáid... Deirimid le daoine i gcónaí díriú ar na fasaigh atá againne agus ansin mura bhfuil an téarma ar fáil ansin dul lasmuigh go dtí focal.ie nó dul go dtí áit éigin eile.

ÚB: Mar sin ní fhaigheann siad traenáil i dteoiric na téarmeolaíochta, *per se*.

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<sup>167</sup> 'I think it's like they say in English, training on the job. A lot of them of course know about terminology matters already. But you learn a lot from the discussion. I know people who were in the Committee and in subcommittees and they were kind of worried that they weren't active enough in the committees. I remember one person who said, 'I haven't suggested a single term since coming and maybe I should give up'. But gradually they get the hang of it and I see an improvement in those people because – due to lack of resources – it takes a long time to publish specialised dictionaries. So that's a training opportunity, that process itself.'

<sup>168</sup> 'I suppose the continuity was... the committee members. Some of the members had been there for a very long time and they could give their advice and we learned a lot from them.'

<sup>169</sup> 'There were people on the committee who had been working in this area for a very long time... But it's not like any specialised training in terminology is available in this country, and I don't know that any of them went abroad on a terminology course.'

<sup>170</sup> 'And the attitude was probably always to build on what was already there, collect what's already there and add to it and I suppose people respected the understanding of those who had many years' experience as lecturers and as language experts. It was accepted that they understood terminology matters as well.'



VUE: Ní fhaigheann.

ÚB: Níl sé ag teastáil uathu.

VUE: Níl sé ag teastáil, níl. Ní ag ceapadh téarmaí a bhíonn daoine den chuid is mó ach ag úsáid agus ag roghnú téarmaí atá ann cheana.<sup>171</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Fiontar staff are trained on the job. All are graduates with an MA qualification or higher in Irish, and a postgraduate qualification is essential for recruitment. There is considerable documentation provided on how to use the databases, and an in-house style guide. Staff are sent to training courses, such as the International Terminology Summer School run by Termnet, and courses on Trados MultiTerm and on other resources. Personal individual research is a priority for staff, and is encouraged and supported. Several staff are active in PhD research, presenting at conferences and publishing research. All of this research activity constitutes training and feeds back into the work.

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<sup>171</sup> 'VUE: We don't focus on things like that except for, first, to explain to people as a basic principle that the work is based on precedents, to explain what the precedents are, where to find them, how best to use them... We always say to people to focus on the precedents we have and then if the thing isn't available to go outside to focal.ie or to somewhere else.

ÚB: So they don't get training in terminology theory, *per se*.

VUE: They don't.

ÚB: They don't need it.

VUE: They don't need it, no. People aren't creating terms for the most part but using and selecting terms that are there already.'

### 3. Evaluation: general reflections

These are already mentioned above in the relevant places. Some points were made once; others were made by several interviewees. This is indicated in the commentary and by the number of quotations. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are listed in a logical order, however, and not necessarily according to how often they were mentioned.

#### 3.1. What are the Irish term planning organisation's main strengths?

The strengths pointed out by interviewees are goodwill and institutional support, backed up by legal status and structures; cooperation among institutions; tradition and expertise; efficient working methods; and technical innovation.

There is considerable goodwill among Irish speakers towards terminology work, shown by the high use of and interest in resources such as Focal and the discussions on the Fóram email exchange group ([foram@acmhainn.ie](mailto:foram@acmhainn.ie)), as well as the voluntary work done from month to month under the auspices of the Terminology Committee.

I think the main strength that we have and we have had from day one is commitment and goodwill... we've had a lot of help from people who either served on committees or subcommittees or simply were happy to advise us, all sorts of people. A lot of them are Irish-speakers but some of them aren't, some of them are just experts in some field or other. And we've had so much goodwill. And this works very well in our committees and subcommittees that most people are so committed and so helpful that it makes the work a pleasure... And that's commitment, I suppose, partly of public service and partly cultural, to the language and the public. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

What's becoming clear to me is that there are many people out there who are very keenly interested in these issues. But it's not their full time job. And they really want to be involved in some way in for example the official standard review but also terminology work, and want to contribute their tuppence worth. (Ó Ruairc)

Translators, for example, are actively engaged with the Terminology Committee.

Bíonn na ceisteanna oilte go maith, toisc gur aistritheoirí iad agus is aistritheoirí scrupallacha iad. Dá mba drochaistritheoirí iad ba chuma leo. Chumfadh siad téarma éigin agus ba chuma leo. Daoine iad a bhfuil fios gnaithe acu go minic agus atá scrupallach mar a deirim. So go minic molann siad féin leagan b'fhéidir agus níl ann ach glacadh leis nó é a phlé. Agus is maith liom sin. Is maith liom sin go mór. Sin athrú amháin atá tugtha faoi deara agam. Agus chomh maith leis sin feiceann siad

neamhréireachtaí... So bíonn siad chugainn go minic mar gheall air sin agus is fiú go mór tabhairt faoin obair sin sílim.<sup>172</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

The fact that at present Irish is being given a considerable amount of institutional support (through EU status, the Language Act, Foras na Gaeilge and so on) means a positive attitude towards terminology work and a recognition of its necessity. EU support can also be seen in the initial funding provided for Focal.

An ceangal leis an Tuaisceart, an tAcht Teanga, stádas sa Bhruiséil, bhí na rudaí seo ar fad ag teacht go sciobtha i ndiaidh a chéile. Agus tuigean an Foras go bhfuil an téarmaíocht tábhachtach. Rud nár thuig an Roinn [Oideachais].<sup>173</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

I think the other element that works, that is good is the prioritisation given to terminology since the language status took hold, and it would have to be acknowledged that there has been, in my view, good government support. I mean everybody doesn't get what they want all the time but I think there is good commitment at government level and in particular another strength is the Irish language terminology work having an international dimension through IATE, and I think that's to the benefit of the situation. (Nic Pháidín)

The new legal structures provide a foundation for terminology support and development.

I think we've done a lot, I think between the work of the Coiste over the years and the work of Fiontar in the last five years, I think a lot has been achieved and Irish terminology is in a much stronger position having this conversation than it would have been if we'd been having it five years ago and we were looking at language status and no national database. How could we have achieved what we're doing with the European Union without those tools? You would have absolutely nothing to build on. It would have been very very difficult indeed. (Nic Pháidín)

Cooperation between organisations and internationally is thought to have improved.

Ar bhealach tá grúpa ansin atá ag obair le chéile ansin [don téarmeolaíocht agus don fhoclóir], go fisiciúil tá siad in aice lena chéile fiú. Agus thig leo a bheith ag obair le

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<sup>172</sup> 'The questions are pretty learned, because they're translators and they're careful translators. If they were bad translators they wouldn't care. They'd put in some term and they wouldn't care. They're often people who know what they're doing and are careful as I say. So they often recommend a term themselves and we only have to accept it or discuss it. And I like that. I like that a lot. That's one change I've noticed. And as well as that they see inconsistencies... So they often come to us because of that and it's well worth doing that work I think.'

<sup>173</sup> 'The connection to the North, the Language Act, status in Brussels, all these things were coming quickly one after the other. And the Foras understands that terminology is important. Which the Department [of Education] didn't.'

chéile ar bhealach atá níos tairbhí b'fhéidir ná mar a bhí go dtí seo. Is rud maith le bogadh chun tosaigh é sin, is dóigh liom.<sup>174</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

I think there is good, as far as I can tell, good partnership between government agencies and universities, a case in point even being the Coiste and Fiontar, the way the collaboration works, and I think it's to the improvement of the service for the public that the two bodies are involved now in the work. (Nic Pháidín)

I think the existence of the Terminology Committee on a historical basis, it's very good that it's there, not every small language has that to draw on. I think the ISO representation and those fora are very good, and I think working through international conferences and that kind of thing is very important as well. So I think networks and aligning the work as closely as possible with academic best practice is essential. (Nic Pháidín)

The fact that there is a long tradition of terminology work for Irish, and that the Terminology Committee and Rannóg an Aistriúcháin have long experience of the work, is seen as positive.

Well the main strengths are that we do have a long tradition of Irish as an official language, so a lot of work has been done. Even a comparison with some of the new languages that became official languages of the European Union in 2004, we have a substantial amount of work done, there are a lot of areas where we've had legislation since the foundation of the State, and terminology exists there. There are issues about duplication and so on, but that's a huge resource to us. (Ó Briain)

Bhuel is dóigh liom, ábhar nirt atá ann ná go bhfuil na córais atá againn atá seanbhunaithe agus ag feidhmiú de réir caighdeán – ardchaighdeán atá leagtha amach acu dóibh féin. Táim tar éis an córas atá againne a phlé leat agus ó thaobh an Choiste Téarmaíochta, tá an Coiste Téarmaíochta ann le fada an lá, faigheann an Coiste Téarmaíochta ionchur ó shaineolaithe i réimsí éagsúla agus cabhraíonn sé sin leo ó thaobh téarmaí a cheapadh atá cruinn agus, chomh maith leis sin, ceapaim go bhfuil dóthain taithí againn go léir agus saineolais sna cúrsaí seo sa tslí is go seachnóimis téarmaí a cheapadh a bheadh útamálach mar théarmaí agus go mbeadh sé deacair ar dhaoine iad a rá nó cuimhneamh orthu, nó go mbeadh daoine míshásta leo. Ceapaim go bhfuil céim bainte amach againn go léir go dtuigimid nach bhfuilimid ag obair *in vacuo* leis na rudaí seo ach go bhfuil daoine amuigh ansin agus go mbeidh na daoine sin ag brath orainne chun téarmaí maithe, nua-aimseartha, cruinne a sholáthar dóibh

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<sup>174</sup> 'In a way there's a group there that's working together [for terminology and for the dictionary], physically they're next to each other, even. And they can be working together in a way that's more profitable maybe than it was until now. That's a good thing for moving forward, I think.'

agus téarmaí gur furasta cuimhneamh orthu, iad a rá agus a leithéid sin.<sup>175</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

The Terminology Committee's expertise and that of the staff is also an advantage.

Tríd is tríd sílim go bhfuil sé éifeachtach... An bua is mó atá againn ná an t-eolas atá ag na baill agus ag an rúnaí agus bhí an t-ádh orainn i gcónaí go raibh na daoine, na hoibrithe ar conradh, go bhfuil siad féin fíordhíograiseach agus gur cainteoirí breátha Gaeilge iad chomh maith agus iad eolach ar an obair. Sin an bua is mó, an t-eolas sin a bheith ag na baill.<sup>176</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Mar a dúirt mé níos luaithe, feictear dom go gcuireann siad an-stró orthu féin téarmaí a chumadh agus go mbíonn saineolaithe [ann] agus is maith sin agus glacann siad a gcuid am, agus ní bhíonn sé díreach bunaithe ar an Bhéarla, agus sílim go bhfuil sé sin iontach.<sup>177</sup> (Delap)

Productivity, both for the Terminology Committee and for Fiontar, are other measures of success and of effectiveness.

It's not the most important measure of effectiveness, but from where I sit, the measure we use is whether the Coiste can produce lists of new terms at a reasonable pace to respond to urgent European Union and other requests. And notwithstanding the problems in relation to resources, we've been able to do that. The Coiste with assistance from DCU and resources from the Department has been able to do that. (Ó Briain)

In spite of the weak position of the language we have been able to produce sufficient translators and sufficient terminology to meet European Union needs, and again it's been a struggle all along, and to meet domestic needs in terms of translating legislation. (Ó Briain)

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<sup>175</sup> 'Well I suppose one strength, one source of strength is that our systems are long-established and are functioning according to a standard, a high standard they have set for themselves. I've discussed our system with you and for the Terminology Committee, the Terminology Committee has been around for a long time, it gets input from experts in different domains and that helps them in creating terms that are precise. And as well as that I think we all have enough experience and knowledge of these systems so that we can avoid creating terms that are awkward and that would be hard for people to say or to remember, or that people wouldn't be happy with. I think we've all reached a point where we understand that we're working *in vacuo* with these things but that there are people out there and that those people will be depending on us to provide good, modern, precise terms and terms that can be easily remembered and said and so on.'

<sup>176</sup> 'On the whole I think it's effective... Our greatest advantage is the knowledge that the members and the secretary have and we were always lucky that the contract workers are very zealous and that they're great Irish speakers as well and know a lot about the work. That's the best thing, the members having that knowledge.'

<sup>177</sup> 'As I said earlier, I think they go to a lot of trouble creating terms and that there are experts and that's a good thing and they take their time, it's not just based on the English, I think that's wonderful.'

Well I think that if you position the Irish-language situation through the Coiste and Fiontar etc, if you position that on an international scale I think from what I can see compared with our IATE partners for example I would rank the working methods and the processes as between good and very good. As I said I think it's a good thing that the Coiste Téarmaíochta exists, that we have this process, this organisational structure. (Nic Pháidín)

The Focal database can be seen as another strength for Irish term planning.

One of the strengths we certainly have is in the technological sphere. The likes of Focal, the likes of Logainm, as the more I get involved in this discourse it seems clear to me that these are continental, global pioneers in terms of how you provide a terminological service and engage the broader public, and how you sustain the development... It's not just about working out the way, there's also a loop back and it's impacting on understanding and thoughts and opinions about this whole area. So I think that's a key strength that we have a technological and IT structural framework already developed which is very very strong. And it's very clear that there's ongoing planning in terms of how we keep on thinking this over. Not to rest on our laurels. (Ó Ruairc)

Technological innovation is an obvious strength in the Irish case. Building the national database and the massive user uptake on the Internet is clearly an achievement. This can only be done successfully in my view by an interdisciplinary team where linguistic, technological and project management expertise sit side by side. Creative dialogue within the development team itself is essential for innovation and renewal. Other languages have expressed an interest in our working methods as have the EU institutional partners on the IATE project. (Nic Pháidín, addition)

The Focal database is important to those working with terminology and also to the public; it also facilitates dialogue with the public and raises awareness of terminology work.

- All available terminology work carried out by the Terminology Committee and its Subcommittees since at least the nineteen-sixties now available online
- Facilitates those of us working in the field – which is still primarily term-formation work
- Facilitates the public, including educators, students, translators, public bodies and the media
- Leads to feedback from the public about certain terms
- Raises awareness of the nature of terminology work
- Assists implantation of standardized terminology
- Enhances the status of a minority language in a very weakened position
- Provides opportunities for further elaboration of the terminology stock or parts thereof
- Provides research opportunities for universities and other entities involved in linguistic projects (Ní Ghallchobhair 2009)

### 3.2. What are the Irish term planning organisation's weaknesses?

Interviewees mentioned many weaknesses in Irish term planning. These can be categorised as follows.

Firstly there are problems to do with the structures for term creation, such as the Terminology Committee's methodology, structure and staffing levels, with associated problems of neglected domains and gaps in provision.

Secondly, there are issues of strategic planning and reflection, with particular questions about the lexicographic deficit. Institutional structures and jealousies are also problematic, and there is a larger question of the usefulness of current work for language maintenance on a long-term basis.

Thirdly, there are questions about term implantation in the media and generally, questions which rest in part at least on matters of language awareness and education; the lack of corpus research or enquiry into term use is also related to this problem.

These three areas are addressed in turn below.

The methodology of the Terminology Committee is considered problematic. Terms are sometimes changed once decided. Lists of terms submitted by publishers or members of the public are presented at monthly meetings. They do not represent a structured section of a particular domain, and the concepts and definitions may not have been adequately researched due to lack of time.

We've never been able to effectively elaborate the material and we've never been able to divide it up into small chunks, because I think the recommended number of concepts to work on for elaboration is less than 200. And most of our terminology dictionaries would have, I think geology has 13,000 terms. Some of them are just so big that it would be impossible. I'm not saying anything's impossible. If you have enough people and enough resources anything is possible but we don't. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

B'fhéidir gur cuimhin leat go raibh cuairteoir againn ón tSualainn, Henrik, ag caint ar a chuid oibre siúd agus dúirt sé b'fhéidir go mbeadh cúig théarma in aghaidh an lae le ceapadh acu nó rud mar sin, agus nuair a chuala mé é sin tháinig fonn gáire orm mar bíonn liosta chomh fada le maide rámha le déanamh againne ag gach aon chruinniú. (Mac Lochlainn) [Addition: Tháinig mé ar nótaí a scríobh mé le linn léacht Henrik. Dúirt

FNG: I think that we tend to be quite exhaustive in our research on individual concepts. However I am also conscious that if we had a different staff structure, that it would be nice and productive to, say, work on concept systems, so that you don't just have one *ad hoc* concept, but you have all the related concepts. Now we've never been able to do that, except..

ÚB: Because of time pressures?

FNG: Because of the nature of the work, because we're constantly having different things thrown at us but never the full set, except in the context of the subcommittees we would do a certain amount of concept planning – well we don't exactly build concept systems formally, but we would certainly think in terms of concept systems and the opposite concept and the related concept and the different stages of a concept. So we've had quite a lot of work of that nature in our education subcommittee, for instance, where there would be a lot of related concepts. But it's practically impossible to do this with the *ad hoc* material because you would very seldom get what you would call the full set. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Technological improvements and the availability of new collections online may gradually help to reduce the number of inconsistencies, however, for example with Rannóg an Aistriúcháin's materials.

There is overlap and there is an uneven coordination, or there has been uneven coordination over the years, for various reasons, partly because we didn't have ready access to each others' material. Whereas we published a certain amount of material in the form of dictionaries and so on, and lists of various types, the publications from Rannóg an Aistriúcháin would have been in the form of paper acts and I suppose it would take a lot of time to read all those acts. So it's only in recent times that a lot of that material is available online; not all. And also the terminology is not very easily accessible, you have to know what you're looking for. And not all of the acts are translated or at least not all the translations are on the site. But I hope that with better technology and with regular physical contact that better coordination can emerge. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

The voluntary nature of the committee has its limitations as well, and committee members contribute a significant amount of time to the project. Members living in Dublin, where the meetings are held, are more likely to attend.

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<sup>178</sup> 'You might remember that we had a visitor from Sweden, Henrik, talking about his work and he said that they'd have maybe five terms a day to create or something like that, and when I heard that I wanted to laugh because we have a list as long as your arm to do at every single meeting.' ['I found a note I wrote during Henrik's lecture. He said 100-250 hours were spent deciding fifty terms on one project.']



AML: I ndeireadh an tsaoil is coiste deonach é seo agus – déanaim amach, bíonn cruinniú míosúil ann agus idir an liosta sin a chrochtar ar an idirlíon le nach mbeidh sé le déanamh le linn na gcruinnithe féin, caithim seal leis sin, caithim seal... Idir na liostaí sin agus na liostaí a bhíonn le plé le linn na gcruinnithe, caithimse cúpla lá leis sin agus tá a fhios agam daoine eile go gcaitheann siad tamall fada leis chomh maith. Mar sin sin oibríthe deonacha atá ag tabhairt b'fhéidir trí lá in aghaidh na míosa saor in aisce.

ÚB: Tá fadhb leis sin?

AML: Sin beagnach mí oibre in aghaidh na bliana.

ÚB: Agus meas tú an oibríonn sé sin, an bhfuil sé sásúil mar chóras ó thaobh na mball de agus ó thaobh na hoibre de?

AML: Faoi mar atá sé, go leor daoine atá ar an choiste tá siad éirithe as obair agus ní miste leo, is cuma leo, tá siad á dhéanamh ar son na Gaeilge mar a déarfá. Ach bheadh sé, as seo amach b'fhearr liom go mbeadh an chuid is mó den réamhobair déanta ag foireann an Choiste, nach mbeadh oiread plé ar rudaí áirithe. Thiocfadh linn gearradh siar go mór ar na rudaí a bheadh le plé le linn an chruinniú. Tá sé sin ann.<sup>179</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Na daoine is mó a thagann chuig na cruinnithe is lonnaithe timpeall ar Bhaile Átha Cliath atá siad.<sup>180</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

There are questions about how much of this work is being recognised, in university structures, for example.

And another issue that arises in that context is the whole area of recognition of the work where obviously third level accountability, like any other area of life is becoming a much liver issue and they have to be able to justify their time and the spend of their time to the college authorities, and if they're going off for these day-long meetings on terms, university authorities begin to question, well, how does that contribute to the university's life? They come under pressure to justify their involvement to that extent. (Ó Ruairc)

The voluntary nature of the work also means that planning and decision-making relies largely on the wishes and interests of particular members.

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<sup>179</sup> 'AML: At the end of the day this is a voluntary committee and – as I reckon it, there's a monthly meeting and between the list that's put online so that it won't have to be done during the meetings themselves, I spend a few days with that and I know others spend a long time with it as well. So that's voluntary workers giving maybe three days a month for free... That's almost a month's work a year.

ÚB: And do you think that works, is that satisfactory as a system from the members' perspective and from the work point of view?

AML: As it is, a lot of people on the Committee are retired and they don't mind, they're doing it for the cause if you like... From now on I'd rather most of the preparatory work be done by the Committee's staff, that there not be so much discussion of certain things. We could really cut back on the things that would need to be discussed during the meeting. There's that.'

<sup>180</sup> 'The people that come to meetings most often are based around Dublin.'

Ní hé nach mbíodh pleannanna agus straitéisí agus a leithéid ann... ach is dóigh liom go mbaineann sé seo cuid mhaith le hearnáil dheonach ar bith. Nuair atá tú ag brath ar dhaoine freastal nó seirbhís a chur ar fáil go deonach níl siad ag fáil íocaíocht ar bith... Agus ní féidir dáiríre orduithe a thabhairt dóibh. Agus chomh maith leis sin go minic cuireann siad a gcroí is a n-anam ann agus tá sé an-deacair casadh thart agus a rá, éist, níl muid ag iarraidh foclóra sa réimse seo.<sup>181</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

As well as the lack of lexicographic resources (discussed below), a perceived problem in provision is the failure to keep up to date with terminology needs. This is despite the fact that media requests are given priority and answered as quickly as possible.

BD: An nglacann sé go leor ama orthu teacht ar ais chugat?

ÚB: Cúpla lá go hiondúil. Lá nó dhó. Is dóigh nach mbíonn an t-am sin agaibh.

BD: Ní bheadh – *now that said*, ní fiú dóibh rud a chumadh ar an toirt ar mhaithe le rud a chumadh, ach ó thaobh na hiriseoireachta de bíonn siad ag iarraidh *instant*, ní leor a rá tiocfaidh mé ar ais agat i gceann cúig lá.<sup>182</sup> (Delap)

The transition to one terminology database, Focal, has also created challenges because of inconsistencies and inaccuracies which came to light. This can create confusion for users.

- Translation from paper to electronic format creates new challenges, e.g. lack of clear contexts – hence the need for refinement of subject-field classifications, definitions and usage examples
- Merging over 70 collections reveals inconsistencies, inaccuracies, multiple versions for the same English term which may or may not designate the same concept in one or more fields
- Ongoing harmonization work can lead to uncertainty and confusion for users
- Confusion in the minds of many users between lexicography work and terminology work - expect a one-stop shop
- Conflicting terms in external resources – including the spoken language – increases confusion and amount and types of enquiries (Ní Ghallchobhair 2009)

Mar sin, sin an chéad rud a déarfainn ná gur fhás na réimsí seo [obair an Choiste Téarmaíochta agus obair Rannóg an Aistriúcháin] cineál neamhspleách ar a chéile agus dá réir sin ní luíonn siad an-chompórdach le chéile cuid den am. Agus feiceann tú é sin, abraimis, in Focal má chuardaíonn tú téarma. Ní hamháin go mbeidh sé leagan againn

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<sup>181</sup> 'It's not that there weren't plans and strategies and so on... But I think that this has a lot to do with any voluntary sector. If you're depending on people to attend or provide a service voluntarily, they're not getting any payment... And you can't really give them orders. And as well as that they often put their heart and soul into it and it's very hard to turn around and say, listen, we don't want a dictionary of this domain.'

<sup>182</sup> 'BD: Does it take them long to get back to you?

ÚB: A few days, usually. A day or two. I don't suppose you have that time.

BD: We wouldn't. Now that said, it doesn't make sense for them to make something up instantly for the sake of making something up, but from the point of view of journalism they want instant, you can't say I'll come back to you in five days.'

féin b'fhéidir ach má bhreathnaíonn tú sna samplaí ón reachtaíocht go minic bíonn leaganacha éagsúla acu féin fiú ó acht go hacht.<sup>183</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

The Terminology Committee's series of some twenty terminology dictionaries, which are available in the Focal database, all include verbs, adjectives and adverbs. In fact, this feature has given rise to a significant harmonization headache, due to the fact that the same 'word' appears in several disparate collections, often conveying different concepts or contexts but merged into the same entry in the relational database. In hindsight, it would have been preferable to postpone the input of such entries until such time as disambiguation, definitions or usage examples had been added. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

If Irish were in use for research or other primary uses, the inconsistencies within the database would not be tolerated. The community itself would regulate (either actively, or by example in its publications) term use. However, most terminology use in Irish is by translators, usually from English, and often of official documents. For this reason terms are not used in their strict, original sense most of the time. Furthermore, few official translations are consulted. This leads to a lack of consistency in term use.

Más fíor nach bhfuil aon aird á tabhairt ar na haistriúcháin oifigiúla atá ann, leanann sé de gur beag leanúnachas atá le feiceáil sa téarmaíocht...<sup>184</sup> (Ó Ruairc, M 2007, 15)

The Terminology Committee has rarely been provided with adequate staff or money to carry out its work in an efficient manner.

FNG: The main weaknesses I would say are structural and resource-based because this was never identified as an area worth investing in and with the result that whatever aspirations my predecessors might have had they were never brought to fruition or at least only partially and so much more could be done.

ÚB: And you think that's still the case?

FNG: Well, of course. It's still the case because we're always behind and since I've started working in this area I've been trying to catch up with unfinished tasks. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

ÚB: And do you think the Terminology Committee has the resources in terms of people and so on to address that sort of thing in a timely sort of way?

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<sup>183</sup> 'So the first thing I'd say is that these domains grew sort of independently of each other and so they don't sit very comfortably together some of the time. And you can see that in Focal say when you search for a term. Not only would we have six versions maybe but if you look at samples from legislation often they have different versions from one act to the next.'

<sup>184</sup> 'If it is true that little attention is being paid to existing official translations, it follows that there is little consistency in terminology...'

DÓB: No, it doesn't. There are proposals to give it additional staff but it has been a neglected area within Foras na Gaeilge. A lot of the burden fell on one person. We managed to get some assistance and there's other assistance coming through Dublin City University. (Ó Briain)

Ní léir go dtuigeann daoine, bíonn daoine iontach sásta le stádas oifigiúil san Eoraip agus sin go léir ach ní thuigeann siad go bhfuil ualach oibre ag baint leis sin. So tá sin ann, ní féidir oiread taighde a dhéanamh agus ba mhian leat.<sup>185</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

The work of terminology needs substantial resources, more resources than exist. (Ó Briain)

The shortcuts and other mechanisms used by the Terminology Committee to speed up the work, such as the use of an extranet and of subgroups at meetings, have an effect on the quality of the work done and these shortcuts are stretched to their limit.

Mar gheall ar an bhrú oibre atá orainn faoi láthair b'éigean dúinn roinnt mhaith cleasanna a chumadh, mar shampla ní raibh ag éirí linn an ceathrú cuid de na téarmaí a bhí le plé againn a phlé le linn cruinnithe so cleas eile a rinne muid, chuir muid suíomh gréasáin inmheánach ar bun agus cuirtear an chuid is simplí de na téarmaí ansin, téarmaí nach samhlófá go mbeadh mórán plé orthu... tá siad bunaithe ar mhíreanna a bhí ann cheana féin agus rudaí mar sin sa dóigh is nach mbeidh sé sin le plé le linn na gcruinnithe, agus sé an chaoi a bhfuil sé muna bhfuil ceist ag duine faoi na téarmaí sin atá ar an liosta sin, ansin glactar leis go bhfuil siad ceart go leor agus go bhfuil siad faofa. Laghdaíonn sin rud beag ar an ualach oibre chomh maith ach is dóigh liom, tá na cleasa ar fad, na cártaí ar fad a bhí ar lámh againn, tá siad imeartha againn faoin am seo agus níl a fhios agam – má leanann muid orainn mar seo tá an-eagla orm faoi an mbeidh muid in ann ag an obair gan breis acmhainní.<sup>186</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Ach an obair a bhaineann le IATE, cé gur fiú go mór é agus níl doicheadh ar bith roimhe, tá sé ag cur brú orainn agus b'éigean dúinn cleasa a cheapadh le dul i ngleic leis mar

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<sup>185</sup> 'ÚB: Isn't it strange that that has happened after all the talk about terminology matters.

AML: Well it's not clear that people understand, people are very happy with official status in Europe and all that but they don't understand that there's a related workload. So there's that, you can't do as much research as you'd like.'

<sup>186</sup> 'We weren't managing to discuss a quarter of the terms that we had to discuss during meetings, so another trick we did, we created an internal website and the simplest terms are put there, terms that you wouldn't imagine there'd be much discussion about, things that are exemplary already, they're based on portions that already existed and so on; so that doesn't need to be discussed during meetings, and then if no-one has a question about those terms on those lists, we assume they're all right and they're approved. That reduces the workload a bit as well but I think all the tricks, all the cards we had have been played by now and I don't know – if we carry on like this I'm very worried about whether we can carry on without extra resources.'

shampla le linn na gcruinnithe anois bíonn fochoiste den Choiste Stiúrtha ann agus fágann siad an seomra agus pléann siad na liostaí casta a bhaineann le IATE.<sup>187</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

There is no time, either, to carry out proper research into new terms that could be based in the language.

Ach brú oibre as cuimse agus... Cuir i gcás, go minic, téarmaí meafaracha, abair. Is cuimhin liom muid a bheith ag plé an leagan cainte sin 'the glass ceiling'... Bhí muid á phlé sin agus tá mé cinnte, dá mbeifeá, dá mbeadh deis mhachnaimh agat go dtiocfadh leat leagan maith Gaeilge a chur ar fáil ansin, ach bhí muid ag plé an téarma ar feadh i bhfad agus ní raibh muid ag déanamh dul chun cinn ar bith agus b'éigin, faoi dheireadh bhí orainn glacadh le *calque*, 'an tsíleáil ghloine'. Agus b'fhéidir nach bhfuil neart air sin, b'fhéidir gurb in an toradh a bheadh ar an phlé ar aon nós... Ach mothaím go mbíonn an brú sin ann agus nach bhfuil deis i ndáiríre mórán machnaimh a dhéanamh ná foinsí a cheadú.<sup>188</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

This leads to questions about how much Irish terminology is dependant on the English language, although this view is contested (on page 78 above).

Nuair a bhíonn buneolas ar chúrsaí nádúir agus cúrsaí coitianta timpeall orainn, nuair nach bhfuil sé sin ag na daoine, ansin tá ceist mhór ann faoi chúrsaí téarmaíochta is dóigh agus an dóigh a ndéanann tú téarmaí. Níl na buntagairtí agat sa saol agus bíonn tú i dtuilleamaí an Bhéarla agus níl tú i dtuilleamaí fiú an Bhéarla cheart, mar atá ag daoine atá i Sasana agus a labhraíonn Béarla le míle bliain nó mar sin. Tá tú i dtuilleamaí rudaí teicniúla atá i bhfoclóirí agus mar sin de, agus tá daoine á gcumadh agus tchí muid é ar feadh an ama... Bíonn muid ag rá rudaí i nGaeilge atá cosúil leis an rud i mBéarla agus tá sé le feiceáil go háirithe sna téarmaí is dóigh liom a chuirtear ar fáil. Tá muid ag cur síos ar choincheapa atá ag teacht chugainn ó theangacha eile seachas a bheith ag smaoineamh ar an rud agus ag iarraidh rud nua a fháil. Mar a deirim is ceist ollmhór í sin.<sup>189</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

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<sup>187</sup> 'But the work relating to IATE, even though it's very worthwhile and there's no resentment towards it it's putting pressure on us and we had to come up with tricks to deal with it, for example during meetings now there's a subcommittee of the Steering Committee that leaves the room and discusses the complicated IATE lists.'

<sup>188</sup> 'But huge work pressure, and... Take metaphorical terms, for example. I remember we were discussing that phrase, 'the glass ceiling'... We were discussing that and I'm sure if you were, if you had time to think you could provide a good Irish term there, but we were discussing the term for a long time and we were making no progress and in the end we had to accept a calque, 'an tsíleáil ghloine'. And maybe that can't be helped, maybe that would have been the result in any event... But I feel that there's that pressure and that there's really no opportunity to do much thinking or to consult sources.'

<sup>189</sup> 'When basic knowledge about nature and common things around us, when people don't have that, then there's a big question about terminology matters I think and how you make terms. You don't have the basic references in life and you're dependant on English and you're not even dependant on proper English, like that of the English who have been speaking English for a thousand years or so. You're dependant on technical terms in dictionaries and so on, and people are making it up and we see it all the time... We say things in Irish that are like the thing in English and it's particularly visible in the terms

Bíonn daoine ag santú an Bhéarla, rud nach gcreidim cuid mhaith faoin gCoiste Téarmaíochta, bíonn siad ag rá i gcónaí nach bhfuil sé sin ar cheann de na rudaí a dhéanann siad, déanann siad cailc nó athscríobh ar leagan den Bhéarla. Séanann siad é ach sé dáiríre a dhéanann siad is dóigh liom, cuid mhór. Níl aon locht agam air sin *per se* ach sé an coincheap atá taobh thiar de, agus...<sup>190</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

ÚB: Agus an é go bhfuil téarmeolaíocht na Gaeilge spleách ar théarmeolaíocht an Bhéarla más ea?

TÓhl: Sin an locht is mó a fhaighimse uirthi.<sup>191</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

The subcommittee method can be very slow. For example, a business-terminology subcommittee was established by the Terminology Committee in autumn 2003 to undertake an updated version of the original 1989 dictionary (Uí Bhraonáin 2004, 9). In 2010, this work was not yet finished.

In order to develop a new edition of the business dictionary, it was decided to compile two published dictionaries and one unpublished list into one complete alphabetic list. This involved many repeats, and quite a few synonyms or competing terms. The subcommittee worked on the list for four years, and then a terminology assistant set about editing the list. He left the organisation before this task was completed, however. When it became obvious he was not going to be replaced, the task of inputting the revisions into the database was assigned to a contract worker. While this task has been completed, it is not clear when or if the final editing of the collection will be carried out. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Certain domains have been severely neglected. In some of these, it is true, the language is little used, such as pioneering scientific or technological work in Irish. In other domains, however, the need is obvious. For example, there was no new edition of the dictionary of television terms between 1996 and 2005, although it was a domain in which much work was being carried out through Irish, and in which enormous changes had occurred, such as the transition from Analogue to digital. O'Connell and Walsh (2006) examine the changes in Irish-language translation in recent years, pointing out that terminology dictionaries and term lists in Irish are intended for schools rather than translators. This is now changing, however.

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being made available I think. We're describing a concept that's coming to us from other languages rather than thinking about the thing and trying to find something new. As I say that's a huge question.'

<sup>190</sup> 'People want English, something I don't really believe about the Terminology Committee, they always say that that's not one of the things they do, but they do a calque or transcription of an English version. They deny it but really it's what they do I think, a lot of the time. I don't have a problem with that *per se* but it's the concept that's behind it, and...'

<sup>191</sup> 'ÚB: And is it that Irish language terminology is dependant on English language terminology?

TÓhl: That's my biggest criticism of it.'

Sin gné eile den athrú fócais, más maith leat, ó earnáil an oideachais go dtí earnáil an phobail i gcoitinne.<sup>192</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Mar shampla tá foclóir oideachais sna céimeanna deireanacha anois. Dá mbeadh an saol mar is ceart... Tá a fhios agam go bhfuil sainábhair eile agus b'fhiú go mór sainfhoclóir Gaeilge a bheith ann, agus b'fhiú go mór tuilleadh tochailt agus taighde a dhéanamh faoin réimse sin. Ach níl ar ár gcumas tabhairt faoi.<sup>193</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

Ach dá mbeinn ag obair i dteanga mhór, bheadh na foclóirí seo ann agus bheadh siad ag teacht amach go rialta chomh maith agus leaganacha úra ann agus bheadh nótaí ann faoin bhrí agus mar sin. Ach níl sé sin againn fiú sna foclóirí móra Gaeilge. Bíonn siad ann agus ansin bíonn siad marbh ar feadh deich, fiche, tríocha bliain ina dhiaidh. Tá sé sin ann.<sup>194</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

Issues of strategic planning and reflection, the second strand of weaknesses identified at the beginning of this section, are now discussed.

Interviewees consistently identified a lack of strategic planning and reflection in term planning for Irish. It was pointed out that a single agency looking at terminology overall might be much more productive. It was felt that there is little or no discussion of term planning as a concept on a macro level.

What I'd like to see is a single formal agency... that would look at terminology overall... I'm not being prescriptive in what it would look like, but I think... it's about getting agreement from all the key stakeholders involved in the use of terminology to sit down in a structured forum to look in a very explicit and deliberate way at term planning. That's where I think we're falling down. We're so caught up with the generation of terms and the use of them and getting them out to the public, and that has yielded fantastic fruits thus far, but we need to find some way of creating space. (Ó Ruairc)

I haven't come across – in my involvement for the last couple of years in this area – any explicit acknowledgement of term planning as a concept, it hadn't come up. And

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<sup>192</sup> 'That's another aspect of the change of focus if you like, from the education sector to the public in general.'

<sup>193</sup> 'For example a dictionary of education is in the last stages now... If things were as they ought, I know there are other specialised areas and it would be well worth having an Irish-language dictionary, and it would be well worth doing more digging and researching in that area. But we don't have the capacity to undertake it.'

<sup>194</sup> 'But if I were working in a major language, there'd be these dictionaries and they'd be coming out regularly as well and there'd be new versions and there'd be notes about meaning and so on. But we don't have that even in the big Irish language dictionaries. They're there and then they're dead for 10, 20, 30 years afterwards, There's that.'

that's an interesting thing in itself. I think that the workload is so big – the harvest is great but the labourers are few. And that the people involved at the coalface are under such severe pressure that any – I'm not aware of any major initiative to consciously plan terminology... To step back and say, where do we want to go? (Ó Ruairc)

Weaknesses, I think, well certainly there's areas for improvement, areas I'd like to enhance further would be the joined-up thinking between the key players. And joined-up planning and joined up discussion in a very structured way, and not just *ad hoc*. (Ó Ruairc)

The lexicographic deficit – and lack of strategic planning for lexicography – is another, related, major problem for Irish term planning.

A full programme of cyclical bilingual dictionary renewal, both English-Irish and Irish-English, including pocket and school-dictionary derivatives, updated or replaced each fifteen to twenty years, in both electronic and print formats, is the essential minimum requirement for a language whose status is guaranteed by legislation both in Ireland and the European Union. Individual dictionary projects, however commendable, do not constitute a strategy for corpus planning which includes lexicographical resources, corpora and terminology. (Ní Pháidín 2008, 99-100)

Séard atá de dhíth is dóigh liom ná an togra foclóra a choinneáil ar siúl ar feadh an ama agus bheinn ag rá go mbeadh sé sin níos tábhachtaí ná an Coiste Téarmaíochta... Dá mba rud é go raibh buntogra leanúnach foclóra ar siúl sa tír seachas an rud atá ann faoi láthair – go bhfuil siad chun an rud seo a fhoilsiú i gceann trí bliana agus ansin níl a fhios agam céard atá le tarlú.<sup>195</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

The Terminology Committee regularly receives requests for terms that are already published in dictionaries. Even if new dictionaries were regularly published, it is felt that this problem would persist.

Is iomaí fiosrú, mar shampla, a mbíonn a réiteach le fáil sna foclóirí cheana féin ach nár cheadaigh daoine iad. Dá mba rud é gur foilsíodh foclóirí nua Béarla-Gaeilge go tráthrialta, ní dócha go bhfágfadh sé sin go dtiocfadh deireadh leis na fiosruithe. Bheadh maolú áirithe ann ar bhealach amháin ach ghinfí fiosruithe nua as leaganacha

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<sup>195</sup> 'What is needed I think is to keep the dictionary project going continuously and I'd say that that's more important than the Terminology Committee... If there were a permanent dictionary project in this country rather than what we have at present, that they're going to publish this thing in three years and then I don't know what's going to happen.'



éagsúla nó litriú éagsúil nó gramadach éagsúil i bhfoclóirí éagsúla nó sa teanga bheo.<sup>196</sup>  
(Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The 1977 Irish-English dictionary is available on CD, but not online.

The last major general-language dictionary, *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla* (1977), is available in electronic format on CD, is searchable in Irish or English and includes complete grammar elaboration for all Irish headwords, including conjugation of verbs. The publication of this dictionary was followed by an abridged edition, an English-Irish/Irish-English pocket dictionary with phonetic notation for each headword, and a series of monolingual Irish dictionaries for children and students. A new English-Irish dictionary, planned by the lexicography unit since the late 1970's, was stalled repeatedly by the Department of Education who refused to approve staff recruitment for the project. With the transfer to Foras na Gaeilge in 1999, the project was finally approved and got off the ground about five years ago. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The non-specialised user, who would probably turn to a general dictionary for all language reference work, is likely either not to find the term needed, or to find an outdated version of it. This means a huge reliance on Focal for LGP-type terms. General language words rather than specialised terms are the most searched for, an indication that the database is in use as an LGP dictionary. In conversation with TG4 reporters, it was suggested that Focal should include Irish versions of English idioms, such as 'going forward' or 'running rings around', showing that this is what they expect of the resource. The same results were found by Mac Lochlainn's 2008 survey, where recommendations for improvement focused on lexicographic enrichment of the data such as addition of 'ordinary' words and phrases and of terminology for journalism and incorporation of the general language dictionaries. This is a serious problem from a lexicographic point of view, as entries in Focal are not as long, as detailed or as carefully crafted as they would be in an LGP dictionary. It means over-reliance on *in vitro* terminology rather than the living language.

A weakness not inherent in the terminology itself but in the general language planning, corpus planning situation, is the lack of development of the bilingual lexicography and I think terminology is very much suffering. When I say suffering I think the demand, the level of demand coming in for general language terms is bearing down on thin resources which means that people cannot maybe specialise in the work that is their proper remit. (Nic Pháidín)

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<sup>196</sup> 'Many enquiries, for example, already have a solution in the dictionaries but that people didn't check them. If new English-Irish dictionaries were regularly published, that probably wouldn't mean an end to the enquiries. There would be a certain reduction in one way but new enquiries would emerge from different versions or different grammar in different dictionaries or in the living language.'

But bilingual lexicography, maybe all Irish lexicography, has tended to be developed just on a project-by-project basis, once-off, without a continuous strategy. (Nic Pháidín)

[Ní Ghallchobhair comment: Ní dóigh liom go bhfuil sé seo fíor... De réir mo thuisceana, bhí an straitéis ann ach níor ceadaíodh na hacmhainní. Sampla amháin de seo is ea an t-eagrán nua d'fhoclóir Uí Dhuinnín a leagadh ar Liam S. Gógan, tar éis blianta achrannacha díospóireachta faoi cé dó a thabharfaí an tasc, agus, tar éis obair dhá bhliana, tharraing na foilsitheoirí siar i ngeall ar chúrsaí acmhainní. Mar a thit sé amach, lean sé den obair seo go deonach go deireadh a shaoil agus tá an toradh le feiceáil ar an Idirlíon anois, cé nár foilsíodh riamh é i bhfoirm leabhair. Sampla eile is ea an plean a bhí ag an aonad foclóireachta tosú ar fhoclóir nua Béarla-Gaeilge a luaithe a foilsíodh Foclóir Uí Dhónaill, ach cé gur ceadaíodh buiséad níor ceadaíodh na hacmhainní daonna a earcú chun an obair a dhéanamh.<sup>197</sup>]

Lexicography in Irish is a testament to the dedication and achievement of individuals operating in a policy vacuum. Dictionaries have been commissioned much too late considering the timescale invariably required to complete them. The decision to place statutory responsibility for dictionaries and terminology on one body, Foras na Gaeilge, in 1999, was clearly a step forward, although clarification of the relationships with the Royal Irish Academy (historical dictionary/corpus) and the Translation Section of the Houses of the Oireachtas (official standard) was unfortunately not specified. (Nic Pháidín 2008, 99)

The problem of over-reliance on Focal as an LGP resource may be compounded by the fact that 'focal' means 'word' and not 'term'.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that many users assume the website is a dictionary, partly because the word 'focal' means 'word' and the Irish word for dictionary is 'foclóir', whereas term banks in other languages invariably include the word 'term' in their web addresses pointing up the fact that they are not LGP resources. To bear this out, many correspondents write in to report that such and such a word is available in the main general-language dictionaries but does not appear in the Focal database. There is a general-language advice service called Freagra, accessible by phone or e-mail, which was established a few years ago and to which most LGP and proofing requests to the Terminology Committee are now redirected. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

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<sup>197</sup> 'I don't think this is true... As I understand it, the strategy was there but the resources weren't made available. One example of this is the new edition of Dinneen's dictionary which was entrusted to Liam S. Gógan, after years of argument about who would get the task, and, after two years' work, the publishers withdrew because of resourcing issues. As it happened, he carried on with this work on a voluntary basis until the end of his life and the result can be found on the Internet now, although it was never published in book form. Another example is the plan the lexicography unit had to start on a new English-Irish dictionary as soon as Ó Dónaill's dictionary was published, but although a budget was allocated, permission wasn't given for the human resources to be recruited to do the work.'

The strategic planning situation for the language is not helped by acknowledged institutional jealousies, relating to questions over ownership of legal terminology work and the grammar standard. It is recognised that this deflects attention and effort from more important tasks.

There are certain terms, official terms that the Rannóg have one translation for and the Coiste Téarmaíochta have another translation for. Notwithstanding that the Rannóg have representation on the Coiste Téarmaíochta as well. And even though in a broader scheme of things, in the broader sphere of life this is not the most outstanding issue in the world, nevertheless in terms of the official register context on the European level it is causing difficulties. We have bigger fish to fry and other issues to look at such as safeguarding the status of the Irish language at European level in terms of translators and an adequate supply of translators and interpreters and things like that. But it has certainly caused difficulties and I suppose there's a certain sense of incomprehension as to why we have not been able to iron these difficulties out thus far over what is even in comparison to other issues in the same sphere, not a huge issue. (Ó Ruairc)

The weaknesses is the lack of cooperation across institutional boundaries, the fact that the institutional landscape is fragmented in theory is not a problem, need not be a problem if one had that collaboration but one doesn't so the answer is to streamline the administrative structures. That's the major weakness. (Ó Briain)

DÓB: In practice there are unresolved issues particularly in relation to Rannóg an Aistriúcháin which we're trying to bring about a resolution of, but it's quite difficult and quite slow work.

ÚB: There's a question about responsibility for terminology in legislation.

DÓB: Well, there is an issue as distinct from a question. There isn't a question. The legislation says that Foras na Gaeilge is responsible for terminology. There is a separate body which is unaccountable to the government which translates legislation and which regards itself as having responsibility for keeping the standards of the language and for the official standard and so on. The Government has decided that that is not the case, and in the case of the official standard they have decided that this department should take the lead role in reviewing the official standard and that it be led by the new unit. So there is an unresolved issue which is to do with institutional jealousies, and that sort of personal things which go on, which is unfortunate, and if we were starting again we'd try and make the landscape a little bit neater but that's where we are. (Ó Briain)

The other weakness at the moment or threat at the moment is that the conflicting roles of Rannóg an Aistriúcháin and the Coiste Téarmaíochta, vis-à-vis the official standard and how the official standard is used in terms and that kind of thing – it

deflects effort from where it should be spent, and that does need to be resolved. (Nic Pháidín)

[Ní Ghallchobhair comment: The Terminology Committee has not had a role in the development, publication or maintenance of the official standard. It has, however, developed additional elaboration of rules which were not sufficiently clear or where there were inconsistencies between the rules published in various grammatical sources. These elaborations related to problems arising in term formation, primarily to do with the application of lenition after feminine nouns, and the application of hyphenation in multi-element terms. The recommendations were issued to a wide range of users in 2002 and 2003, were emended according to feedback from users and published online in November 2003.]

It's an administrative, territorial issue basically. That one government body owns or is responsible for the official standard and another government agency is responsible for development of lexicography. And it's unfortunate that the situation is only now beginning to be addressed. And it impacts particularly on the development of terminology. And I suppose it has come to the fore, come to public attention since Irish has become an official working language in the European Union. (Nic Pháidín)

On the weakness side of it, I think any process that's been going on and I don't want to target specific organisations, but any process that's been going on for so long, really since the foundation of the State, invariably... in these situations you can get a build-up of resistance to change because people are doing things the way they did them for so long and that in principle is something that you need to be aware of when you're developing new policies and work methods. (Nic Pháidín)

Ó thaobh na rudaí sin dó, b'fhéidir an comhordú eadrainn go léir a fheabhsú agus b'fhéidir soiléiriú a dhéanamh ar rólanna daoine.<sup>198</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

It is recognised that inter-institutional questions are of little interest to the public at large.

But obviously, coming back to my earlier comment, the public out there, particularly the Irish language community, by and large for the most part are not – for them the *cloch is mó ar a bpaidrín*, the utmost priority, is not the issue of authority, or who has overall charge. They want to see the official standard reviewed, they want to see top quality terminology being generated on a continuous basis as it has already been done over the last number of years. And they want to see evidence of it, like what Focal is doing, and Logainm for example. They want top quality service and ease of access to these things. And they don't really care at the end of the day is it the CRAGA

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<sup>198</sup> 'As for that, maybe to improve the coordination between all of us and maybe to clarify people's roles.'

[Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs] or the Terminology Committee who have ultimate responsibility for it. That's the thing with the public service, you're not supposed to be trying to hog the limelight, you're supposed to be making sure that the thing gets done. (Ó Ruairc)

It is felt that ideally, it would be nice to start again and lay out a proper institutional structure for term planning and other language planning work.

Cheapfainn féin gurbh é an rud a bhí ag teastáil an uair sin [1922] ná acadamh agus tá a leithéid d'acadamh, sílim, sa tSlóivéin, áit a bhfuil na réimsí gaolmhara ar fad taobh istigh den aon eagraíocht amháin, is é sin go mbeadh dream amháin ag plé le foclóireacht, dream eile ag plé le téarmaíocht, dream eile ag plé le canúineolaíocht, dream eile ag plé le foghraíocht, agus go mbeadh siad ar fad ag obair as lámha a chéile agus go mbeadh mórfhlean ann, mórfhlean straitéiseach faoi thaighde, faoi staid na teanga, agus taighde comparáideach maidir le teangacha eile a bhfuil cosúlachtaí áirithe acu le chéile, dea-chleachtas a bhunú bunaithe ar na cinn is rathúla, agus ansin san áit a mbeadh sé ag teastáil, na daoine a chur á n-oiliúint, áit a mbeadh oiliúint ar fáil. Agus plean straitéiseach a leagan amach ansin ó thaobh tosaíochtaí, cad iad na réimsí is tábhachtaí, mar ar ndóigh, más cigire scoile tú, is iad na réimsí is tábhachtaí duitse ná an Ardteist. Mar sin, sin an fáth ar bhealach gur fhorbair rudaí mar a d'fhorbair siad anseo. Ach dá mba rud é gur acadamh stáit a bunaíodh, áit a mbeadh go leor glórtha éagsúla, ní gá gur mar sin a d'fhorbrófaí. Ach níl muid i 1922 agus ní thig linn an méid a rinneadh a dhíothú.<sup>199</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Dá mbeadh slat draíochta agam, thosóinn le leathanach bán mar ansin d'fhéadfá pleanáil go straitéiseach – thosóinn le leathanach bán agus scata daoine cliste agus plean a oibriú amach mar phlean fadtéarmach, agus taighde thar lear a chur san áireamh agus oibriú i dtreo spriocanna aontaithe.<sup>200</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

There is a question, too, about how useful current terminology work, to serve status-driven needs by supplying terms for the EU and for other official purposes, is for the long-term development and survival of the language.

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<sup>199</sup> 'I'd say that what was needed back then [1922] was an academy, and I think there's an academy like that in Slovenia where all the different areas are inside one organisation, with one group dealing with lexicography, one group with terminology, another with dialectology, another with phonetics, and all of them working together. And that there would be an overall plan, an overall strategic plan about research on the state of the language, and comparative research about other related languages, to establish best practice based on the most successful, and then where it's needed, to have people trained, where training is available. And to lay out a strategic plan for priorities, what are the most important domains. Because of course if you're a school inspector, the Leaving Certificate is the most important area for you. So that's why things developed as they did here, in a way. But if a state academy had been established, where there would be a lot of different voices, that wouldn't necessarily have happened. But we're not in 1922 and we can't go back on what's been done.'

<sup>200</sup> 'If I had a magic wand I'd start with a blank page because then you could plan strategically – I'd start with a blank page and a gang of clever people and work out a long-term plan, and research abroad and work toward agreed goals.'

And the last point I would make that I would see as a weakness long-term in general language development is that... while it is a benefit on one side to have the status-driven element to prioritise terminology and to get government resources and all of that, long-long term into the future that is a major weakness, because in a healthy language situation, or in a more healthy language situation, the demand for terminology should be driven by the general user and by the needs of industry, by the needs of domains like medicine, by general life; and for the bulk of terminology to be developed and created for the usage of European [agencies] – for legislation and for documentation, terms that will be written down and never read, quite likely – I think that is skewing the whole balance of what a language should be about, and I think that is definitely a hazard if you like, but it's unavoidable. So what is in one way a strength in prioritising terminology I would see as a huge weakness. We would prefer that writers, teachers, children were looking for terms that they would want to use. (Nic Pháidín)

There is an issue there in terms of what is all this doing to ensure the language survives as a living language as distinct from a piece of academic or official work. (Ó Briain)

European Union status and the Constitutional obligation to translate legislation and the Official Languages Act create demand for official translation, and create demand for new terminology so that's an opportunity. It's also a threat in that we could lose sight of the primary need to make sure that the language remains a spoken, living language, and that's where most of our efforts need to be concentrated. At the end of the day if we're translating all EU legislation and all domestic legislation and there are no speakers, there's no future to that. (Ó Briain)

The work to serve status-driven needs might, it was felt by one interviewee, mean that scarce resources are not used for more worthwhile projects such as collecting existing terminology and developing term collections which would be more useful and relevant to the language community. From a translation perspective, it also meant that not enough emphasis is placed on clear, natural translation.

I'm afraid that the official status, while welcome in many ways, has created something of a beast in that scarce resources are being poured into terminology work that will probably never be useful to the language community proper (except for the purposes of employment as a legal translator). The material is dull and technical, and at a very far remove from everyday discourse, and the resources involved could be much better deployed in focusing on elaboration of existing resources, collection of terminology in receding domains, research on term use and term implantation, development of updated terminology collections and new terminology collections which would have real relevance to the language community. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

Because of the emphasis on literal translation in legislative documents, abominations are appearing in public documents and services where one has to work back to the original English in order to understand the message. An example of this turned up on an ATM which had an Irish-language option: on inserting my card, I was confronted with the following message: *Tá maoin neamhleor agat don idirbheart seo*. This is, of course, a translation issue rather than a terminology issue and, insofar as it appears on a public facility, it seems to me that it would be much more important to have such a message written in clear natural language than to devote massive resources to legislation that few people will ever read. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The third strand of the analysis of weaknesses, questions about term implantation in the media and generally, is now discussed. Term implantation is recognised as problematic.

Agus, ar ndóigh tá an fhadhb, más fadhb í, níos measa ná sin ó thaobh glacadh a bheith ag daoine le téarmaí nó gan a bheith agus, ar ndóigh, tá a fhios againn go léir nach nós le muintir na Gaeltachta glacadh le téarmaí nua agus ní dóigh liom gur maith an comhartha é sin ó thaobh teanga ar bith. Má cheapann pobal cainteoirí gurb é an t-aon áit go bhfaigheann siad téarmaí nua ná i dteanga eile agus iad a thabhairt isteach agus iad a úsáid gan iarracht a dhéanamh fiú amháin iad a chur in oiriúint don teanga, ceapaim gur droch-chomhartha é sin, gur comhartha meatha é agus go mb'fhéidir gur comhartha báis é.<sup>201</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

I think there is a gap between the highly valuable work that's done, almost on a secretive basis, a very low profile, by an Coiste Téarmaíochta, and disseminating that in the wider community. (Ó Briain)

I think looking at the wider organisation in terms of Foras na Gaeilge one of the things it needs to do more of is to try and disseminate, embed terminology. (Ó Briain)

Tá rud éigin de dhíth leis an bearna sin a líonadh agus mar a dúirt bhí an clár sin Leagan Cainte, tá sin cineál *obsolete* anois sílim mar choincheap, ach rud éigin a chur ar siúl a bheadh urraithe ag an Choiste Téarmaíochta a bheadh *interactive* agus a bheadh ar fáil don phobal i gcoitinne. Níl freagra na ceiste agam dáiríre ach go bhfuil géarghá le teacht ar bhealach. Má chuireann tú oiread stró ort féin teacht ar na téarmaí, agus téarmaí maithe a chumadh, ba cheart duit dul giota beag níos faide lena chinntiú go

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<sup>201</sup> 'And of course the problem, if it is a problem, is worse than that from the point of view of people accepting or not accepting terms and of course we all know that Gaeltacht people don't tend to accept new terms and I don't think that's a good sign for any language. If a speaker population thinks the only place they'll get new terms is in another language, and brings them in and uses them without any effort to even adapt them to the language. I think that's a bad sign, it's a sign of attrition and it may be a sign of death.'

mbaintear úsáid as na téarmaí sin, ach níl freagra na ceiste agam. Is ábhar machnaimh atá ann.<sup>202</sup> (Delap)

Term acceptance in the media is problematic, too.

Má tá dóigh níos simplí ann bainfidh muid úsáid as, má tá an téarma doiléir. Tá focail áirithe atá sothuigte, 'ríomhaire glúine' mar shampla, thuigfeadh daoine cad atá i gceist. Ní gá duit 'ríomhaire glúine nó laptop' a rá sa tuairisc mar thuigfeadh daoine é. Ach más gá duit focal Béarla a chur leis, tá fadhb áirithe ann. Tá rudaí teicniúla ann agus caithfidh tú téarma Gaeilge a bheith agat ach sé an gnó atá againne an scéal a insint go simplí agus amanna bheadh orainn an leagan Béarla a úsáid mar go bhfuil an téarma róchasta.<sup>203</sup> (Delap)

[Ní Ghallchobhair addition: Interestingly, 'ríomhaire glúine' is one of the terms rejected by users in Gaeltacht areas, according to Helena Ní Ghearáin's research, where users said that 'laptop' is simpler and clearer. In French, users have a different dilemma in relation to this concept, which is designated as 'portable', but 'portable' is also used for 'mobile phone', so the listener often has to ask which is meant.]

Dá mbeadh sé róchasta, bhainfeadh muid úsáid as leagan níos simplí. Is sampla 'teastas imréiteach cánach'. Ní thuigeann daoine an rud maith é sin nó drochrud ach dá ndéarfá 'teastas glan cánach'. Tuigim gurb é 'teastas imréitithe cánach' an téarma cuí agus an téarma ceart ach tá sé tábhachtach go mbeadh an gnáthdhuine in ann é seo a thuiscint agus tuigfidh siad 'teastas glan cánach'.<sup>204</sup> (Delap)

The lack of implantation may be partly due to the lack of a strong Irish language community.

Ach ceapaim gurb í an fhadhb is mó ná glacadh a bheith ag daoine leis na téarmaí agus – agus b'fhéidir gur fadhb i bhfad níos tromchúisí í seo ná díreach glacadh le téarmaí – pobal a bheith amuigh ansin do na téarmaí seo. Agus táimse, níl aon dabht ach go bhfuil *ábhar pobail* amuigh ansin, ach táimse in amhras go bhfuil pobal Gaeilge amuigh ansin a aithníonn iad féin mar phobal. Agus mura bhfuil pobal mar sin ann, níl siad

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<sup>202</sup> 'Something is needed to fill that gap and as I said there was that programme Leagan Cainte, that's kind of obsolete now I think as a concept, but to put on something sponsored by the Terminology Committee that would be interactive and that would be available to the public in general. I don't know the answer really but that there's a real need to find a way. If you take so much trouble to find the terms, and to create good terms, you should go a little bit further to ensure that they'll be used, but I don't know the answer. It's something to think about.'

<sup>203</sup> 'If there's a simpler way we'll use it, if the term is unclear. There are some words that are understandable, 'ríomhaire glúine' for example, people would understand it. You don't have to say 'ríomhaire glúine or laptop' in the report because people will understand it. But if you have to add an English word to it, there's a certain problem. There are technical things and you have to have an Irish term, but our job is to tell the story and sometimes we'd have to use the English version because the term is too complicated.'

<sup>204</sup> 'If it was too complicated, we'd use a simpler version. 'Tax clearance certificate' is a example. People don't understand if that's a good thing or a bad thing but if you said 'clear tax certificate'. I know 'tax clearance certificate' is the right term and the appropriate term but it's important that the ordinary person can understand this and they understand 'clear tax certificate'.



chun dul ar lorg an téarma oifigiúil Gaeilge mar ní aithníonn siad go bhfuil a leithéid ag teastáil.<sup>205</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

One source of the implantation problem is lack of language awareness.

Is dóigh liomsa go bhfuil easpa feasachta i measc daoine a bhfuil Gaeilge acu. Go háirithe daoine a tógadh le Gaeilge, bíodh siad taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht nó sa Ghaeltacht, ní dóigh liom go bhfuil mórán de fheasacht teanga ann...<sup>206</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

There is a need, then, for education about language awareness and term use.

Tá sé go breá ag díograiseoirí teanga a bheith ag rá gur féidir an Ghaeilge a úsáid in aon réim ar bith agus gur cheart go mbeadh sé ar fáil in aon réim ar bith. Tá an ceart acu ach ag an am céanna tá níos mó de dhíth ná an ráiteas, caithfidh tú an rud a thógáil agus a chur ar fáil agus caithfidh an pobal glacadh leis go bhfuil sé nádúrtha go mbeadh siad ag baint úsáid as an Ghaeilge sna réimeanna seo a bhí teoranta go dtí seo, nach raibh oscailte ach ag an mBéarla. Agus is athrú sa phobal atá de dhíth chuige sin.<sup>207</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

But I think awareness of the importance of using terminology correctly, it could be improved, definitely. (Nic Pháidín)

[The Terminology Committee is] probably better known than it was but no, I think that traditionally, people who weren't directly involved in this kind of work, perhaps they didn't think very much 'where does this technical term come from?' or maybe they thought some civil servant was sitting in an office in Dublin making it up, I don't know. But I don't think that there was wide awareness of the Terminology Committee. But I think it's probably improving over the past ten years at least. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Fiú má labhraíonn muid faoi dhaoine atá b'fhéidir níos sine ná mise, sna caogaidí, seascaidí agus mar sin de, nach raibh ar ollscoil... Ní thuigeann siad buntéarmaí. Bhí mé ag caint le duine atá sna seachtóidí cúpla lá ó shin... bhí duine ag cur isteach ar phost

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<sup>205</sup> 'But I think the biggest problem is term acceptance and – maybe this is a much more serious problem than just term acceptance – having a public out there for these terms. And there's no question but that there's the makings of a community out there, but I doubt that there's an Irish language community out there that recognise themselves as a community. And if there's no community, they won't go looking for the official Irish term because they don't see that it's needed.'

<sup>206</sup> 'I think there's a lack of awareness among people who speak Irish. Particularly people who were brought up with Irish, whether outside the Gaeltacht or in the Gaeltacht, I don't think there's much language awareness...'

<sup>207</sup> 'It's all very well for language enthusiasts to say that Irish can be used in any area and that it should be available in any area. They're right but at the same time more is needed than the statement, you have to build the thing and make it available and the public has to accept that's it's natural to use Irish in these areas that until now were limited to English. And you need a change in the community for that.'

ansin, agus dúirt mé nach dóigh liom go raibh seans ar bith ag an duine sin, nach raibh na cáilíochtaí aice. Ach níor thuig sí an focal ‘cáilíochtaí’, séard a bhí i gceist aici ansin ná gur duine deas í nó go bhfuil sí go maith nó rud éigin. Ach níor rith sé leithe gur dioplómaí a bhí i gceist nó céimeanna agus mar sin dó. Is buntéarma é sin a bheadh in úsáid ag daoine a bhfuil oideachas orthu. Agus níor thuig sí é dáiríre.<sup>208</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

There is also a need for education about the role and the work of the Terminology Committee.

There is a sense in which the growth and development has been so organic and I think, for example to what extent do people out there in terms of how they approach the system, to what extent do they confuse terminology and translation... So there is that sense in terms of clarifying understandings and perceptions of what terminology is, what the work of the Terminology Committee is in terms of the public out there, making sure that they're crystal clear in their understanding. Because I think a lot of the pressure that the system is under at the moment arises from misperceptions or miscomprehensions like that. (Ó Ruairc)

Although there is a recognition of a problem in term implantation, there is no research done into this or into the corpus in general.

Tá cúpla deacracht mhór a bhaineann leis an gCoiste Téarmaíochta. Ar an chéad dul síos níl go leor acu ann, an dara rud is dócha níl aon saotharlann ann, níl duine ar bith ag obair ar *observatory* nó aon rud don teanga agus an tríú rud ansin an ghné seo atá dinimiciúil, rud, tá síorathrú ann, tá síorghluaiseacht sa bhrí atá sa téarma agus tharla nach bhfuil an chéad dá phíosa sin ann bheadh sé an-deacair acu aon rud a chumadh láithreach bonn agus bheith ag bogadh leis. Baineann [an fhadhb] sin leis an réimse acadúil ach níl sé chomh deacair sin don ghnáthshaol ar bhealach agus b'fhéidir gur ann atá an ról acu dáiríre.<sup>209</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

The fact that there are no implantation studies or research into term use means, in the view of some commentators, that there are gaps in the terminology or even that the work of the Terminology Committee lacks authority.

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<sup>208</sup> ‘Even if we talk about someone older than me, in their fifties, sixties or so, who didn’t go to university... They don’t understand basic terms. I was talking to someone in her seventies a few days ago... She was applying for a job and I said I didn’t think she had any chance because she didn’t have the qualifications [‘cáilíochtaí’]. And she didn’t understand the word ‘cáilíochtaí’, she understood by it that she’s a nice person or that she’s good or something. And it didn’t occur to her that it meant diplomas or degrees and so on. That’s a basic term that anyone with education would be using. And she didn’t really understand it.’

<sup>209</sup> ‘There’s a few problems with the Terminology Committee. In the first place there aren’t enough of them, in the second place probably there’s no observatory, no-one is working on an observatory or anything for the language and the third thing then this dynamic aspect, it’s constantly changing, there’s constant movement in the meaning of the term and because the first two parts aren’t there it would be very difficult for them to create anything instantly and move with it. That problem relates to the academic context but it’s not that difficult for everyday life in a way and maybe that’s where their role is really.’

Terminology in Irish is not corpus-based and I would feel that by now certain aspects of the terminology work should be corpus-based. And that terminology in a domain should not be just developed in response to people asking for certain terms, because you can arrive at a situation, and the legacy data in our terminology database bears this out, you can have a very skewed domain balance when you're just responding to requests rather than developing for the needs of a language. (Nic Pháidín)

Ach nuair nach bhfuil siad ag faire ar an teanga ansin tá sé deacair a rá go bhfuil údarás ar bith acu. Ta údarás acu i ngeall go bhfuil saineolas acu agus go bhfuil siad á dhéanamh le tamall agus mar sin dó agus tá meas ag daoine orthu ach ní fhéadfaí a rá go bhfuil siad bunaithe ar aon chorpas nó go bhfuil sé bunaithe ar úsáid. Caithfidh tú a fháil amach cén úsáid atá ann agus ansin caithfidh tú a rá, bhuel tá an úsáid ann ach níl sé go maith, mar sin níl muid ag dul a' glacadh leis. Tá an úsáid chomh coitianta sin nach maith linn é ach go bhfuil muid ag dul á bhreacadh síos mar sin féin agus caithfidh muid a rá ní mholann muid é ach.. Agus ansin d'fhéadfaí a rá, tá na daoine á rá sin agus tá sé contráilte ar fad, nó tá míthuiscint ag an bpobal ar an rud ansin. Ach níl an t-údarás acu chuige sin.<sup>210</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

There is also a need to make the resources available to translators and other language users and to ensure that they use a high standard.

Céim eile atá tábhachtach san obair seo, ceapaim, ná cabhrú leis na daoine atá amuigh ansin agus go dteastaíonn uathu an téarmaíocht chaighdeánach nua-aimseartha atá ceaptha go heolaíochtúil a úsáid, cabhrú leosan tríd an ábhar a chur ar fáil dóibh agus a chinntiú go bhfuiltear ag cabhrú leo ar feadh an ama.<sup>211</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Feicim seo san obair a dhéanann na mic léinn agus san obair a dhéanann aistritheoirí, go mbaineann siad úsáid as téarmaí sa chomhthéacs mhícheart. Bíonn siad an-trína chéile faoin réimse saoil, an comhthéacs lena mbaineann sé. Agus is deacair bheith ina dhiaidh sin orthu mar tá na liostaí téarmaíochta agus na foinsí téarmaíochta atá againn an-lom. Tugtar foclóirí orthu ach ní foclóirí iad sa chiall is cruinne den fhocal, ní dóigh liom.<sup>212</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

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<sup>210</sup> 'But when they're not observing the language it's hard to say that they have any authority. They have authority because they have expertise and because they've been doing it for a while and so on, and people respect them, but it couldn't be said that they're based on any corpus or based on usage. You have to find out what usage is and then you have to say, well the usage is there but it's not good, so we won't accept it. Or the usage is so common that we don't like it but we're going to put it down anyway though we don't recommend it.. And they could say, people say this and it's entirely wrong, or there's a popular misunderstanding about this. But they don't have the authority for that.'

<sup>211</sup> 'Another important step in this work, I think, is to help the people who are out there and who want to use the standard modern terminology that has been created scientifically, to help them by making the material available and ensuring that they're being helped.'

<sup>212</sup> 'I see this in the work done by the students and in the work done by translators, that they use terms in the wrong context. They're very mixed-up about the domain, the context to which it belongs. And it's

### 3.3. What are the opportunities?

Interviewees mentioned many opportunities for term planning for Irish. These can be broadly divided into four strands. Many suggestions centred around potential *research* work and harnessing goodwill in third level institutions (corpus-based work; implantation studies; research on extant terms; development of new areas; a permanent dictionary project). A second group was about *attitudinal change* (fostering pride in the language; publication of terms; discussion in the media and inclusion of stakeholders). *Innovation* is the third theme (broadening the basis of the Terminology Committee; a language helpline; development of innovative technology). Fourthly, some suggestions were for structural change (a language academy; creation of a single agency; new university departments). These themes are examined below.

There is an awareness of goodwill towards terminology work, mentioned in in the section beginning on page 146, and of the opportunity to harness this knowledge and to foster discussion.

What's becoming clear to me is that there are many people out there who are very keenly interested in these issues. But it's not their full time job. And they really want to be involved in some way in for example the official standard review but also terminology work, and want to contribute their tuppence worth. And of course you can't have every person, and promise your opinion will be counted in this thing, but some way to get people involved in it, be it blogs or online chats and things like that. (Ó Ruairc)

That's one of the great advantages or gifts that third level has to offer, this time to dedicate research into areas that when we're at the coalface working away at the statutory instruments you would have people in the third level making new discoveries and coming back and saying well actually these are developments in software translation or terminological planning for example. Or the whole discourse is shifting to another level completely. And I think it would be important to have both informal but also formal planned discussions by means of seminars, conferences, things like that. Maybe a standing conference, a regular thing, on this area that the State system and the third level can – it's very interesting. A number of people at third level have actually begun to talk in these terms and said that this whole dynamic these courses has begun to generate has made them realise the importance of cementing the relationships in some way between the State system and planning. It's not to say that these agents weren't talking to each other in the past, but I don't think it's – the

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hard to hold it against them because the term lists and the term resources we have are very bare. They're called dictionaries but they aren't dictionaries in the strictest sense of the word, I think.'

underpin of those times was maybe good enough for those times, it's not sufficient now. (Ó Ruairc)

The need for implantation studies is also an opportunity.

Dá mbeadh dóigh ar bith go bhféadfaí staidéar a dhéanamh ar na focail atá in úsáid anois, agus cén dóigh gur tharla sé go bhfuil siad in úsáid, seachas na cinn nach bhfuil in úsáid.<sup>213</sup> (Delap)

I also think that it would be wonderful to have more researchers out examining implantation. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Well this is very important academic work and it would require researchers, whether they be students or terminologists... Obviously we would like very much to have more information of this kind but we certainly at the moment can't do it ourselves... We have so much practical work to be done that we're still trying to catch up with that backlog. It does seem like a very worthwhile area of academic research, and I do mention it when I'm talking in the universities. To try and inspire people to think about the area, to research the area, to go out collecting terms in some of the very few subject fields which might be still extant. I certainly make those suggestions. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

As I say, I try and raise awareness when I go to the universities, I can't force them to do anything. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

Research into traditional terminology or terminology being created *in vivo* is mentioned several times. This is an opportunity for the Terminology Committee or for other groups.

Tá focail nua ann atá á gcumadh chomh maith, agus ba cheart iad a thaifead agus iad a thomhas agus más maith le daoine iad ba cheart iad a úsáid ansin. Ach níl aon mheicníocht ann chuige sin faoi láthair.<sup>214</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

Tá téarmaí atá cumtha ag an bpobal fós... tá téarmaí ag daoine agus níl siad ar taifead agus á meas ag duine ar bith. Tá sé sin ar fad de dhíth dáiríre. Agus bheifeá ábalta téarmaí a dhéanamh ar bhealach i bhfad níos éifeachtúla dá mbeadh a fhios agat cad

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<sup>213</sup> 'If there was any way a study could be done of the words that are in use now, and how it came about that they're in use, rather than the ones that aren't.'

<sup>214</sup> 'There are new words that are being made up as well, and they should be recorded and measured and if people like them they should be used then. But there's no mechanism for that at present.'

chuige a nglacadh daoine le téarmaí faoi leith agus nach nglacadh le téarmaí eile.<sup>215</sup>  
(Ó hIfearnáin)

Well one thing that I would really like to see happening is to have researchers go out into the Gaeltacht and search for extant terms in – I think there aren't many fields left, but I would say fishing for instance and all sorts of weather-related material. I think there's probably a certain amount left and perhaps some trades and perhaps, I'm not sure about farming, how much is left but it would be worth people going out and researching... I just think that it would be important to try and gather whatever could be gathered. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

FNG: Well I think somehow or other if we could find an easily applicable model where you can have top-down and bottom-up approaches working together it would be very good. I just feel that either on its own creates certain difficulties.

ÚB: What do you mean bottom-up, in this case?

FNG: Well let's just say for instance that you collect, you build a corpus of all the newspapers and gather all the terms and then we'll have all the material for, let's say, politics or something. And maybe also go round and talk to relevant people living in the Gaeltacht and say what do you call [this]... Involving users would be helpful because sometimes it takes a certain amount of debate for parties to see things from the other's perspective. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

An rud seo faoi cheapadh *in vivo* nó *in vitro*, tá ceist faoi sin, admhaím, b'fhéarr go mór na téarmaí Nua-Ghaeilge seo go dtagadh siad chun cinn de bharr obair daoine...<sup>216</sup>  
(Mac Lochlainn)

...Because it's legacy data it's not corpus based and I think that that's an area for development in the future. (Nic Pháidín)

A related suggestion is to develop new areas and domains of terminology.

I think the structures should be looked at, I think we should develop domains that have been poorly developed because they weren't required in education, and we're doing sports, but I think probably health and all that area is another one, and the whole environment, there are so many. (Nic Pháidín)

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<sup>215</sup> 'There are still terms that are made up by the public... people have terms and they're not recorded or evaluated by anyone. That's all needed really. And you could make terms in a much more effective way if you knew why people accept some terms and not others.'

<sup>216</sup> 'This thing about *in vivo* or *in vitro* term creation, I admit there's a question about that, it would be much better if these new Irish terms were coming forward because of people's work...'

Existing term resources could be enhanced.

I suppose it's better to look at the positives. A lot has been achieved but because of my own increasing awareness of other possibilities for term elaboration, concept elaboration and for enhancing the material we already have, I would like to see a lot more work being done now that we have a substantial collection in the database so, again, that has to do with resources. (Ní Ghallchobhair 2010)

A continuous dictionary project is also mentioned as something that should be maintained.

Séard atá de dhíth is dóigh liom ná an togra foclóra a choinneáil ar siúl ar feadh an ama agus bheinn ag rá go mbeadh sé sin níos tábhachtaí ná an Coiste Téarmaíochta... Dá mba rud é go raibh buntogra leanúnach foclóra ar siúl sa tír seachas an rud atá ann faoi láthair, go bhfuil siad chun an rud seo a fhoilsiú i gceann trí bliana agus ansin níl a fhios agam céard atá le tarlú. Dá mbeadh foclóirí buana fostaithe ag eagrás éigin Stáit, cuma liom cé hiad, bheadh céim mhór chun tosaigh againn ansin, go mbeadh daoine ag plé leis an fhoclóir. Agus tá taighde de dhíth fosta ar chúrsaí foclóra agus tá muid ag cailliúint go leor den fhoclóir go fóill, agus níl aon chúis againn lena chailliúint. Bíonn daoine ag rá go bhfuil an saol ag athrú agus go bhfuil muid ag déanamh dearmad de rudaí agus mar sin de ach níl ansin ach leithscéal dáiríre.<sup>217</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

The second strand of opportunities is about attitudinal change.

One problem faced by users of Irish-language terminology is a lack of context for terms. Science terms, for example, are not often used outside school textbooks; there are no specialised journals in the area. Very few examples of technical Irish can be found online and there is no online corpus of contemporary Irish with suitable search tools. This lack of context is particularly troublesome since many users of Irish are not native speakers. It is felt that there are few fora in which scientific terminology is used, and that this could be rectified with the use of a publication such as *An tEolaí*, which was a scientific journal for young people.

Chomh maith leis sin b'fhéidir, sé an trua nach bhfuil tuilleadh rudaí ann leis an téarmaíocht a chur i gcúrsaíocht... An bhfuil An tEolaí ann i gcónaí? Tá a fhios agat an rud beag sin a chuirí amach. Bhí sé go maith mar is réimse saoil é sin nach mbíonn faoi thrácht go rómhínic sa Ghaeilge, cúrsaí eolaíochta agus mar sin dó. Bhí sin go maith. Ba mhaith liom sin a bheith ann, agus mar a deirim ba mhaith liom b'fhéidir foclóirí de chineál eile b'fhéidir a bheith ann, rud a chuideodh le daoine an téarmaíocht a úsáid

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<sup>217</sup> 'What is needed I think is to keep the dictionary project going continuously and I'd say that that's more important than the Terminology Committee... If there were a permanent dictionary project in this country rather than what we have at present, that they're going to publish this thing in three years and then I don't know what's going to happen. If some state agency, I don't care which, had a permanent lexicographer, that would be a big step forward that people would be dealing with the dictionary, and research is needed too on the lexicon and we're losing a lot of the lexicon still, and there's no reason to lose it. People say that the world is changing and that we're forgetting things and so on but that's only an excuse really.'

go slachtmhar. Sílim go mba mhór an cuidiú é sin agus sin an rud a dhéanfainse cibé.<sup>218</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

I think looking at the wider organisation in terms of Foras na Gaeilge one of the things it needs to do more of is to try and disseminate, embed terminology. (Ó Briain)

Involvement of stakeholders is seen as a positive way of fostering attitudinal change; through discussion in the media and at public talks, for example.

Bhíodh an clár sin ann ar RnaG, Leagan Cainte, is rud bunúsach go leor a bhí ann ach b'fhéidir gur cheart don Choiste Téarmaíochta nó cibé dream a bheith ag smaoinemh ar bhealach nuálach, bhí clár ag an BBC 'Balderdash and Piffle' nó rud éigin mar sin agus bhíodh, is bealach iontach samhlaíoch a bhí ann le *etymology* agus a leithéid a chur trasna. B'fhéidir go bhfuil oscailt éigin ansin, ach cinnte caithfear an droichead a thógáil idir cumadh na dtéarmaí agus iad a chur in úsáid... Rud éigin a chur ar siúl a bheadh urraithe ag an Choiste Téarmaíochta a bheadh *interactive* agus a bheadh ar fáil don phobal i gcoitinne. Níl freagra na ceiste agam dáiríre ach go bhfuil géarghá le teacht ar bhealach. Má chuireann tú oiread stró ort féin teacht ar na téarmaí, agus téarmaí maithe a chumadh, ba cheart duit dul giota beag níos faide lena chinntiú go mbaintear úsáid as na téarmaí sin, ach níl freagra na ceiste agam. Is ábhar machnaimh atá ann.<sup>219</sup> (Delap)

Discussions which take place during the course of talks and workshops on terminology work inevitably uncover interesting attitudes. The example mentioned above, 'rampa' (*en* ramp) came up at several of these, and participants were surprised to learn about the extent of everyday loanwords in Irish as well as other languages. Another discussion related to assigning new meanings to traditional words: an example cited was 'aerach' in the context of homosexuality. When it was pointed out that the same process had taken place with the English word 'gay', and that the word 'aerach' was actually recommended to us in this context by representatives of the gay community, the attitude began to change. Public talks are a very valuable way of enabling such

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<sup>218</sup> 'As well as that maybe, it's a pity there aren't more things to put terminology in use... Is An t-Eolaí [The Scientist] still around? You remember that little thing that used to be put out. It was good because that's a domain that isn't discussed too often in Irish, science and so on. That was good. I'd like it if there were that, and as I say I'd like there to be maybe other kinds of dictionaries, that would help people to use terminology well. I think that'd be a great help and that's what I'd do anyway.'

<sup>219</sup> 'That programme used to be on RnaG [Raidió na Gaeltachta], *Leagan Cainte* ['turn of phrase'], it was pretty basic but maybe the Terminology Committee or whatever group should be thinking about an innovative way, the BBC had a programme 'Balderdash and Piffle' or something like that and it was a really imaginative way to transmit etymology and the like. Maybe there's some opening there, but certainly the bridge has to be built between term creation and putting them in use... To put on something sponsored by the Terminology Committee that would be interactive and that would be available to the public in general. I don't know the answer really but that there's a real need to find a way. If you take so much trouble to find the terms, and to create good terms, you should go a little bit further to ensure that they'll be used, but I don't know the answer. It's something to think about.'



debate and of awareness-raising about the language and about terminological processes. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

An example of a social project in the Basque country is seen as a good example of stakeholder involvement.

DÓB: One of the issues is... the potential benefits in terms of raising awareness of the language and increasing commitment in the Irish language community to the language and to using terminology, authentic Irish-language terminology as distinct from peppering one's speech with the English terminology, is to see what can be done to do what people in the Basque country spoke about at a seminar recently about seeing terminology as a social project involving the entire language community both in terms of involving speakers of the language and schools and so on in making recommendations and new terms, particularly terms for things that they might be interested in, social networking for example. It strikes me as one that might be useful.

ÚB: That could be very interesting.

DÓB: And also then as a way of embedding the terms, having that sort of consultative, for want of a better phrase, process as a way of involving the language community in creating the terms and then embedding those terms once they've been agreed in the language community. It might be sensible if we were involved in doing this... I think it's one of the issues that's flagged obliquely in the strategy, the twenty year strategy for Irish. (Ó Briain)

The involvement of users such as legal translators could also be done by broadening the basis of the Terminology Committee.

[In the new unit] what we'll be [doing] – short of perhaps a legal amalgamation we'll be looking for a way of integrating the work of translating statutory instruments and legislation and the work of producing new terminology. So that they work seamlessly together. It might be a practical administrative responsibility, a delegation of some of the work in terms of making recommendations and in terms of preparing material for submission to the Coiste Téarmaíochta in the same way as DCU does some of that without DCU formally being amalgamated into Foras na Gaeilge. In the longer term I think it makes an awful lot of sense to have one unit dealing with legal translation and terminology and whether that can be brought about in terms of a simple administrative amalgamation or amalgamation of the administrative units involved depends on the future of Foras na Gaeilge, which is a North-South body, so those functions wouldn't be interfered with lightly. (Ó Briain)

In the longer term I think we need to find a way of involving people who are working as translators in the legislative translation and in other translation areas to be directly involved in the work of producing terminology as well and have direct lines of communication and reporting into the Coiste Téarmaíochta. (Ó Briain)

The media could also be more involved in term creation or discussion.

B'fhéidir gur cheart go mbeadh páirt níos mó againn i gcumadh téarmaí. Tá na meáin Ghaeilge chomh tábhachtach sin maidir le craobhscaoileadh gur cheart go mbeadh dóigh éigin agus *input* éigin againn i gcumadh na dtéarmaí ach b'fhéidir gur ceist ama é sin fosta agus nach mbíonn an t-am ag daoine. Ach níor mhiste go mbeadh iriseoir b'fhéidir nó *input* éigin tar éis don Choiste Téarmaíochta ceann a chumadh b'fhéidir nár mhiste é a fhaomhadh leis na meáin fosta.<sup>220</sup> (Delap)

So I think work needs to be done in more structured interaction with users, more representation of users maybe in the Coiste Téarmaíochta... I know they do work with people in the media but I'm not quite sure of the balance there – I don't know because I'm not directly involved. But I would be interested in looking at the balance there as to how that works, and how, I suspect, there's very little follow-up after term creation about the take-up and usage, and I think that area needs to be developed on an academic level and maybe with involvement from the Coiste. Collaboration between the Coiste and universities should go beyond mere representation there. Aspects like implantation should be topics of postgraduate research. (Nic Pháidín, with addition)

Interviewees, in general, felt a need to change attitudes to terminology issues in a dramatic, positive way.

I think for me reflecting on this as a relatively new entrant to this area, it's about changing the way we think. Rather than any new insights or massive new developments. I think in terms of IT and all the rest of it we're very much up there and ahead of the pack. It's about how we approach these issues, how we think about them, and as we all know to get people to change the way they think is a massive challenge. (Ó Ruairc)

Irish translation (and the related terminology) is seen as a growing business, despite the current economic situation.

It's one of the dichotomies that where the rest of the economy as a whole is going down the tubes or at any rate going through a severe crisis. We're beginning to recover from it now but the opportunities for Irish language planning and work are actually expanding. And if we can continue to – that's our little mini stimulus package if you like in the Irish language sphere – continue to bring that forwards and help people to realise that... And not just in the public sphere but also in the private sphere. That you can become a freelance translator. It's difficult for those companies at the moment but I daresay that as my unit's work kicks off for example and other areas develop that as soon as two or three years' time that situation hopefully will have stabilised itself. (Ó Ruairc)

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<sup>220</sup> 'Maybe we should have a greater part in term creation. The Irish language media are so important in broadcasting that there should be some way for us to have some input in term creation, but maybe it's a time question too and people don't have time. But it might do no harm to have a journalist maybe or some input after the Terminology Committee's created one, it wouldn't hurt to run it past the media too.'

There is the challenge of encouraging young people to research the area.

And that we will have got the message out to young people that they would be opting to do these course. It wouldn't be just a matter for lecturers in universities, that they'll be entering the system already thinking 'I want to be a translator' or 'I want to work in the area of language planning', 'I want to work in the area of terminological planning'.  
(Ó Ruairc)

There is a larger issue in attitudinal change, the problem of influencing people to accept and use terminology. One interviewee mentioned the role of 'language managers' in this.

Agus an rud a bheadh go maith dáiríre dá mbeifeá ag iarraidh cúrsaí téarmaí agus cúrsaí Gaeilge trí chéile a dhaingniú in aon phobal ná dul i bhfeidhm ar dhaoine a bhfuil an phróifíl sin [mar bhainisteoirí teanga] acu agus a bhfuil daoine sásta aithris a dhéanamh orthu. Tá mé cinnte mar shampla má théann tú siar ag an raidió ansin, ag Casla agus... má bhíonn tú istigh sa seomra nuachta ansin, tá daoine áirithe ansin a chuireas stop le téarmaí faoi leith nó le mí-úsáid áirithe Béarla as a gcleachtas féin. Beidh siad féin ag seachaint na rudaí seo, agus beidh daoine ag déanamh aithris orthu... Agus is bainisteoirí iad sin. Bainisteoirí teanga iad.<sup>221</sup> (Ó hIfeárnáin)

I dteangacha beaga nuair nach bhfuil an pobal féin, go háirithe pobal na Gaeltachta, nuair nach bhfuil siad ag smaoineamh gurbh fhiú dóibh féin a bheith ag cumadh rudaí, b'fhéarr leo an focal Béarla a úsáid, tá fadhb ansin. Feictear dom, dá bhféadfaí an meon sin a athrú, dá bhféadfaí feacht an phobail a fheabhsú le dul i bhfeidhm orthu sa gcaoi is go mbeadh siad mórtasach agus muiníneach, dá mbeadh muid ag an bpointe sin, b'fhéidir nach mbeadh aon ghá le coiste téarmaíochta *per se*. Bheadh i gcónaí gá le téarmeolaithe a bhaileodh na téarmaí, a dhéanfadh taifead orthu, a scaipfeadh iad, nó a leithéide sin. Ach mar a deir mé go dtí go mbeidh an pobal sách muiníneach agus mórtasach agus tógtha faoi chúrsaí teanga, is dóigh liom go bhfuil gá le coiste de chineál éigin.<sup>222</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

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<sup>221</sup> 'And what would be good really if you wanted to strengthen terms and Irish in general in a community is to influence those who have that profile [as language managers] and who people are prepared to copy. I'm sure for example if you go to the radio station in Casla, if you're in the newsroom there are certain people that stop particular terms or particular misuses of English in their own usage. They're avoiding these things, and people will copy them. And they're managers. They're language managers.'

<sup>222</sup> 'In small languages when the public itself, particularly the Gaeltacht community, when they're not thinking that it would be worthwhile for them to be making things up themselves, they'd rather use the English, there's a problem there. I think that, if we could change that attitude, if we could improve the public's awareness and influence them so that they'd be proud and confident, if we were at that point, maybe there'd be no need for a Terminology Committee *per se*. You'd always need terminologists to collect terms, to record them, to disseminate them, and the like, but as I say, until the public is confident enough and proud enough and enthused about language matters, I think there's a need for a committee of some sort.'

Tugaim faoi deara go minic go bhfuil téarmaí, saintéarmaí ar eolas ag daoine i ngan fhios dóibh féin, gur chuala siad áit éigin é agus mar sin de agus tá sé istigh sa mheabhair áit éigin acu ansin ach go bhfuil leisce orthu é a úsáid agus ní bhaineann siad úsáid as ar an ábhar go gceapfaidh daoine go bhfuil nóiseans acu nó rud éigin is dóigh liom. Níl sé tíriúil go leor nó rud éigin. Ach ansin nuair a chluineann siad neart daoine eile á úsáid ansin go dtosaíonn siad á úsáid agus bhí sé ar eolas acu pé scéal é. Agus dá bhféadfaí dul i bhfeidhm ar dhaoine mórán ar an dóigh sin is dóigh liom, sin an áit a bheadh sé.<sup>223</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

Tá sé go breá ag díograiseoirí teanga a bheith ag rá gur féidir an Ghaeilge a úsáid in aon réim ar bith agus gur cheart go mbeadh sé ar fáil in aon réim ar bith. Tá an ceart acu ach ag an am céanna tá níos mó de dhíth ná an ráiteas, caithfidh tú an rud a thógáil agus a chur ar fáil agus caithfidh an pobal glacadh leis go bhfuil sé nádúrtha go mbeadh siad ag baint úsáid as an nGaeilge sna réimeanna seo a bhí teoranta go dtí seo, nach raibh oscailte ach ag an mBéarla. Agus is athrú sa phobal atá de dhíth chuige sin.<sup>224</sup> (Ó hIfearnáin)

The third strand of opportunities is for new ideas and innovations.

A proposed solution to the problem of assisting language users is a well-advertised helpline, or a network for journalists, either for general language or for terminology. Although there is a language advice service, Freagra, it is almost unknown even within the Irish-language community (for example, Focal editorial staff were not aware of its existence).

The other area that could be developed and should be developed is a helpline, a language helpline for general language queries, because this does not exist really in any meaningful form and even the media, even TG4 has to go off and make an arrangement with a private company. So people in the media working twenty-four seven or anybody else, there is no place to go, and several of the general language queries wind up, become, or come in the door as terminology queries, which is unfortunate for everybody because they are not, obviously, that. (Nic Pháidín)

ÚB: Mar sin dá mbeadh áis éigin ann mar sin, go bhféadfaí an fón a ardú.

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<sup>223</sup> 'I often notice that people know specialised terms unbeknownst to themselves, that they heard it somewhere and so on and it's in there somewhere but that they're slow to use it and they don't use it because people might think that they have notions or something. It's not local [?x] enough or something. And then when they hear it said by lots of other people, they start using it and they knew it all along. And if it were possible to influence people like that, that's where it'd be.'

<sup>224</sup> 'It's all very well for language enthusiasts to say that Irish can be used in any area and that it should be available in any area. They're right but at the same time more is needed than the statement, you have to build the thing and make it available and the public has to accept that's it's natural to use Irish in these areas that until now were limited to English. And you need a change in the community for that.'

BD: Sea, ach tuigim go mbeadh drogall orthu rud a chumadh ar an toirt ar eagla go mbeadh sé as dáta nó nach mbeadh sé ceart *really*.<sup>225</sup> (Delap)

ÚB: Meas tú, iriseoirí eile, an bhfuil an córas scaoilte céanna ann, nó an bhfuil dreamanna eile a bhfuil córas acu?

BD: Ní dóigh liom é, déarfainn go mbeadh siad ag faire ar a chéile agus cibé rud a bhíonn ag RnaG, cibé rud a bhíonn ag TG4 agus a leithéid sílim, agus téann siad isteach go Focal leis an rud...

ÚB: An mbíonn aon phlé idir iriseoirí i dtaobh an scéil? Idir sibhse agus RnaG mar shampla?

BD: Ní bhíonn. Sin an rud a déarfainn, tá sé scaoilte go leor agus níl aon chóras leagtha síos.

ÚB: Dá mbeadh aon líonra mar sin ann, an mbeadh sé iomarcach nó...

BD: Bhuel bheadh sé úsáideach.<sup>226</sup> (Delap)

There is a general-language advice service called Freagra, accessible by phone or e-mail, which was established a few years ago and to which most LGP and proofing requests to the Terminology Committee are now redirected. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

The need for a well-advertised language helpline is reinforced by the frequency of general language queries to the Terminology Committee.

Amanna, ní raibh ann ach rudaí ginearálta – comhairle á lorg faoi ainmneacha ar thithe, nó faoi fhoclaíocht ar leac thuama, nó faoi theachtaireachtaí ar chártaí nó ar chuirí, agus sin fáth a mbíonn an-chuid rudaí ar na liostaí nach téarmaí iad ar chor ar bith ach gur iarratais iad ar shoiléiriú foclaíochta nó litrithe nó gramadaí.<sup>227</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Technological innovation is another opportunity, tied to Irish economic development.

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<sup>225</sup> 'ÚB: So if there were a service like that, that you could lift the phone.

BD: Yes, but I understand that they'd be reluctant to make something up on the spot in case it'd be out of date or that it wouldn't really be right.'

<sup>226</sup> 'ÚB: Do you think, other journalists, is it the same loose system, or are there other groups with a system?

BD: I don't think so, I'd say they'd be looking at each other and whatever Raidió na Gaeltachta has, whatever TG4 has and so on I think, and they go into Focal with the thing...

ÚB: Is there any discussion between journalists about things? Between you and RnaG for example?

BD: There isn't. That's what I'd say, it's quite loose and there's no system set out.

ÚB: If there were a network like that, would it be excessive or...

BD: Well it would be useful.'

<sup>227</sup> 'At times, the enquiries concerned just general things – advice about names for houses, or about wording for a tombstone, or about messages for cards or invitations, and that's why there are many entries on our lists that aren't terms at all but requests for clarification of wording, spelling or grammar.'

So as to how I would like it to look... that we'll at least be able to dedicate our energies and our resources exclusively to the planning of terminology, the generation thereof and the provision to the public in all its manifestations. And that we would continue to be at the forefront of the use of technology and the influence of technology on developments in the area of terminology. In discussions with other agencies in other countries it's very clear to me that they are looking to Irish as an exemplar and a pioneer in this area and that would tie in with a broader understanding of where we want to go in our economic development. An innovation society and if that's understood properly (as one book by Finbarr Bradley makes clear) it's very much rooted in the *acmhainní dúchasacha*, the native resources. Economic development is a global thing but innovation that fits into that is very much a native and a local thing and that's a paradox that if it's understood correctly can very much work to our advantage. (Ó Ruairc)

The fourth strand of opportunities is for structural change.

The idea of a language academy was mentioned.

Ar an méid atá ann – an oidhreacht atá againn faoi láthair agus go bhféadfainn mo rogha rud a dhéanamh? Bhuel bheinn fós ag ceapadh go mb'fhiú go mór acadamh lárnach a bheith ann agus na réimsí sin ar fad a bheith ceangailte.<sup>228</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Cheapfainn féin gurbh é an rud a bhí ag teastáil an uair sin [1922] ná acadamh agus tá a leithéid d'acadamh, sílim, sa tSlóivéin áit a bhfuil na réimsí gaolmhara ar fad taobh istigh den aon eagraíocht amháin, is é sin go mbeadh dream amháin ag plé le foclóireacht, dream eile ag plé le téarmaíocht, dream eile ag plé le canúineolaíocht, dream eile ag plé le foghraíocht, agus go mbeadh siad ar fad ag obair as lámha a chéile agus go mbeadh mórfhlean ann, mórfhlean straitéiseach faoi thaighde faoi staid na teanga, agus taighde comparáideach maidir le teangacha eile a bhfuil cosúlachtaí áirithe acu le chéile, dea-chleachtas a bhunú bunaithe ar na cinn is rathúla, agus ansin san áit a mbeadh sé ag teastáil, na daoine a chur á n-oiliúint, áit a mbeadh oiliúint ar fáil. Agus plean straitéiseach a leagan amach ansin ó thaobh tosaíochtaí, cad iad na réimsí is tábhachtaí, mar ar ndóigh, más cigire scoile tú, is iad na réimsí is tábhachtaí duitse ná an Ardteist. Mar sin, sin an fáth ar bhealach gur fhorbair rudaí mar a d'fhorbair siad anseo. Ach dá mba rud é gur acadamh stáit a bunaíodh, áit a mbeadh go leor glórtha éagsúla, ní gá gur mar sin a d'fhorbrófaí. Ach níl muid i 1922 agus ní thig linn an méid a rinneadh a dhíothú.<sup>229</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

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<sup>228</sup> 'With what there is – the heritage we have now and that I could do what I wanted? Well I'd still think that a central academy would be very worthwhile with all those areas connected.'

<sup>229</sup> 'I'd say that what was needed back then [1922] was an academy, and I think there's an academy like that in Slovenia where all the different areas are inside one organisation, with one group dealing with lexicography, one group with terminology, another with dialectology, another with pronunciation, and all of them working together. And that there would be a general plan, a general strategic plan about research on the state of the language, and comparative research about other related languages, to

A related idea is the creation of a single agency to look at terminology.

What I'd like to see is a single formal agency... that would look at terminology overall... obviously the ideal would be that you have a single agency, you wouldn't have your four different units. And I'm not talking necessarily about all being coalesced into one single agency, but certainly a forum, an entity of some description, that will take all the experts. (Ó Ruairc)

So I hope that's answering your question in as clear a way as possible in terms of where I want us to go in terms of the single agency, the single forum, that the dynamic is not influenced at all by arguments over ownership and responsibility. (Ó Ruairc)

There is also the opportunity to develop language (and terminology) research at universities, with a language unit in each university.

Agus an rud eile a dhéanfainn ná rannóg teanga cheart a bhunú i ngach ollscoil, áit go mbeidís ag díriú ar staid na teanga sa lá atá inniu ann, ar shaothrú na teanga. Is dóigh an t-aon díriú a rinne siad ná go raibh teaglann ann agus go raibh daoine ag foghlaim cén chaoi leis an teanga a labhairt ach ní raibh éinne ag machnamh ar cén fáth go bhfuil an teanga á labhairt mar seo, agus ní raibh aon chaint ar – bhuel tá caint air anois ar deireadh - ar phleanáil teanga agus ar shochtheangeolaíocht, ach ba chóir go mbeadh sé sin ag tarlú i ngach ollscoil agus institiúid tríú leibhéal freisin, agus go mbeadh daoine, go leor daoine ar do nós féin ag fás aníos agus ag machnamh agus ag dul amach agus ag éisteacht leis an bpobal agus ag éisteacht leis na meáin agus ag éisteacht le hoiliúnóirí agus féachaint cén áit a bhfuil na dúshláin agus céard ba chóir dúinn a dhéanamh faoi. Agus ansin taighde a dhéanamh. Taobh istigh de réimse na téarmeolaíochta féin tá an oiread sin rudaí a bhféadfaí taighde a dhéanamh orthu, an oiread sin rudaí, agus níor chuir aon ollscoil aon spéis ann go dtí anois.<sup>230</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

Universities also have a role in training translators, where a skills deficit exists.

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establish good practice based on the most successful, and then where it's needed, to have people trained, where training is available. And to lay out a strategic plan for priorities, what are the most important domains. Because of course if you're a school inspector, the Leaving Certificate is the most important area for you. So that's why things developed as they did here, in a way. But if a state academy had been established, where there would be a lot of different voices, that wouldn't necessarily have happened. But we're not in 1922 and we can't go back on what's been done.'

<sup>230</sup> 'And another thing I'd do is to found a proper language department in each university, where they'd be focusing on the state of the language today, probably the only focusing they did is that there was a language laboratory and that people were learning how to speak the language but no-one was thinking about why the language is being spoken like this, and there was no discussion about – well it's being spoken about now, language planning and sociolinguistics but that should be happening in every university and third level institution too, and people, lots of people like you should be coming up and thinking and going out and listening to the people and listening to the media and listening to educators and seeing where the challenges are and what we should be doing about it. And then to do the research. Within the area of terminology itself there are so many things that could be researched, so many things, and no university has taken any interest till now.'

What has developed, and the Department's put some funding in in the last couple of years, through the HEA [Higher Education Authority], or conducted with the HEA, is these Masters programmes or maybe modules at primary degree level, looking at things like translation studies, and terminology as part of that, legal translation for example .. So you have some new programmes that have come on stream in the last two or three years in the likes of UCD, UCG for example. I know universities in the North of Ireland have them as well. I think. So they are again very recent creatures. It'll take time for them I suppose to establish clearly their place in the overall fabric of this planning and certainly, coming back to the earlier question about how the relationships and discussions between the likes of my unit and the third level organically have begun to develop in ways that weren't explicitly planned in the past is reflective of this thing that that would impact back. My hope would be that it would be very much a dynamic flux. And it would be at least a two-way traffic, a multi-dynamic traffic that – as my unit's work develops and new needs are identified we'll be able to go back and say, look can you try and incorporate in your programme this this and this to make sure that they would come out. (Ó Ruairc)

In general, it is felt that because long-term planning is now taking place for the language, a discussion can be held about opportunities and change.

The State is now beginning to look twenty years ahead. I know there's different viewpoints as to how that kind of planning – but at least it has begun to do that. And that has changed the whole framework in which the conversation will take place with the State system. At least there's some attempt now to look at the longer picture. We have some idea that people are thinking now about that timeframe. And that I think has made people a little more comfortable and enabled them in a way that they weren't in the past to engage in a structured dialogue. (Ó Ruairc)

### 3.4. What are the threats?

The four threats mentioned are: an overdependence on Focal or perhaps a shallow or superficial use of it; the use of terminology in English; an occasionally negative attitude towards terminology and translation work; and an overdependence on the official sphere.

The use of Focal as a general dictionary has already been mentioned, and this is seen as a threat.

Tá daoine ag éirí rud beag falsa maidir le Focal; an rud atá maith, bíonn daoine rud beag millte b'fhéidir. Agus tá siad ann go minic nach ndéanann siad an machnamh fiú amháin an dteastaíonn téarma anseo. Téann siad go Focal agus úsáideann siad Focal mar a bheadh foclóir ginearálta ann, cé go bhfuil a fhios agam is iomaí rabhadh agus is iomaí fainic a chuirtear. Ach déanann siad sin ar aon nós é...<sup>231</sup> (Mac Lochlainn)

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<sup>231</sup> 'People are getting a little lazy about Focal, people are a little spoiled by a good thing maybe. Sometimes they don't even think about if a term is needed here. They go to Focal and they use Focal like a general dictionary, though I know there are lots of warnings given. But they do it anyway...'



The use of English terminology, even when Irish terms are available, is related to the problem of implantation discussed in the sections beginning on pages 108 and 151 above.

Agus, ar ndóigh tá an fhadhb, más fadhb í, níos measa ná sin ó thaobh glacadh a bheith ag daoine le téarmaí nó gan a bheith agus, ar ndóigh, tá a fhios againn go léir nach nós le muintir na Gaeltachta glacadh le téarmaí nua agus ní dóigh liom gur maith an comhartha é sin ó thaobh teanga ar bith. Má cheapann pobal cainteoirí gurb é an t-aon áit go bhfaigheann siad téarmaí nua ná i dteanga eile agus iad a thabhairt isteach agus iad a úsáid gan iarracht a dhéanamh fiú amháin iad a chur in oiriúint don teanga, ceapaim gur droch-chomhartha é sin, gur comhartha meatha é agus go mb'fhéidir gur comhartha báis é.<sup>232</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Tá daoine sna Gaeltachtaí nach bhfuil sásta glacadh leis na rudaí sin; is fearr leo go mbeifí ag tabhairt 'grants' ar 'deontais' agus na rudaí sin ar fad.<sup>233</sup> (Uíbh Eachach)

Ach an gnó is mó atá againn an scéal a chur i láthair. Amanna – sampla a thabharfainn duit mar shampla, bhí scéal againn tamall ó shin faoi chás 'incest' a bhain le Conamara, agus bhain muid úsáid as an téarma 'ciorrú coil' ach chomh maith leis sin dúirt muid 'nó incest' ar eagla nach dtuigfeadh na daoine. Mar sin caithfidh muid an dá thráth a fhreastal. Is dóigh an gnó is mó atá againn ná an nuacht a chur trasna agus baineann muid úsáid as cibé dóigh a thig linn. É sin ráite tá sé tábhachtach fosta go mbainfí úsáid as téarmaí nuacheaptha Gaeilge mar go mbíonn daoine ag brath ar leithéidí nuacht TG4 le teacht ar na téarmaí sin.<sup>234</sup> (Delap)

[Ní Ghallchobhair comment: Is dóigh nár mhiste a chur san áireamh nach téarma 'nuacheaptha' é 'ciorrú coil' (féach eDIL sv.col: ciarbo ch.ꝥ <Metrical Dindsenchas)]

There is also a related problem of domain renouncement.

Another factor is undoubtedly domain renouncement, as mentioned above, part of which has to do with terms and phrases being forgotten as more modern alternatives are adopted and seen as more fashionable. The term 'ciorrú coil' would fall into this category because it is not a new term at all and appears in the Metrical Dindsenchas

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<sup>232</sup> 'And of course the problem, if it is a problem, is worse than that from the point of view of people accepting or not accepting terms and of course we all know that Gaeltacht people don't tend to accept new terms and I don't think that's a good sign for any language. If a speaker population thinks the only place they'll get new terms is in another language, and brings them in and uses them without any effort to even adapt them to the language. I think that's a bad sign, it's a sign of attrition and it may be a sign of death.'

<sup>233</sup> 'There are people in the Gaeltachts who won't accept those things; they prefer that grants be called 'grants' [in English] and all that.'

<sup>234</sup> 'But our biggest job is to present the story. Sometimes – for example, we had a story a while back about a case of incest in Connemara, and we used the term 'ciorrú coil' but as well as that we said 'or incest' in case people wouldn't understand. So we have to do both jobs. I suppose our biggest job is to transmit the news and we use any means we can. That said it's important too that newly created Irish terms be used because people depend on the like of TG4 news to get those terms.'

(see eDIL s.v. col). The term ‘brionnaigh’ mentioned above, apparently forgotten in the spoken language today, appears in one of Ó Cadhain’s short stories in the form ‘brionnadóireacht’. A native speaker recently reported to me about a friend: *Bhí baby aici anuraidh* [*She had a baby last year*]. While the sentence is an excellent example of English syntax or ‘Béarlachas’, the use of the English term ‘baby’ is part of domain renouncement, because the same speaker is well aware of the Irish term ‘leanbh’. (Ní Ghallchobhair addition)

There is occasionally a negative attitude towards all Irish language work, and this could pose a threat to funding or institutional support.

Ach sílim gur athraigh an t-atmaisféar agus an meon sa Roinn Oideachais in imeacht na mblianta agus ní fhéadfá a rá gur roinn an-Ghaelach í anois agus ní dóigh liom go bhfuil mórán daoine inti ar cás leo an teanga. Mar sin, aon iarratas a rinne muidne sna 1990í agus is léir ó na comhaid go raibh an rud céanna ar bun sna 1980í agus roimhe sin, níor thug an Roinn aon aird orthu.<sup>235</sup> (Ní Ghallchobhair 2007)

...I felt a couple of years ago that the State system was beginning to lose patience with the language. You come across it from time to time in terms of, it manifests itself in that regular news story about the cost of translation. Look at these people who can't [even] agree terms, and now we're spending this money on it and what not. (Ó Ruairc)

An overdependence on the official sphere is discussed in the section beginning on page 151, and this is a threat.

In terms of opportunities and threats, European Union status and the Constitutional obligation to translate legislation and the Official Languages Act create demand for official translation, and create demand for new terminology so that's an opportunity. It's also a threat in that we could lose sight of the primary need to make sure that the language remains a spoken, living language, and that's where most of our efforts need to be concentrated. At the end of the day if we're translating all EU legislation and all domestic legislation and there are no speakers, there's no future to that. (Ó Briain)

A threat that I've mentioned earlier would be a failure to produce terminology or a failure to produce sufficient people who can produce terminology and produce sufficient translations and the damage that would do to the reputation of the State and if there was any, if we resiled from the official status that Irish has at European Union level, that would be a substantial blow to morale, particularly if it's clear that

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<sup>235</sup> ‘But I think the atmosphere and the mood in the Department of Education changed over the years and you couldn’t say that it’s a very Irish-oriented department now and I don’t think there are many people there who care about the language. So any request we made in the 1990s – and it’s clear from the files that the same thing was happening in the 1980s and before that – the Department ignored them.’

the decision was taken because the language doesn't have enough people to meet needs. That's a real threat. (Ó Briain)

## **Field Procedures**

### **Data collection**

The information needed was initially sought in the literature published by and about Irish term planning. Data was generated in discussion with interviewees.

As well as staff from the Terminology Committee, Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Foras na Gaeilge and Fiontar, interviews were sought with external commentators who work with Irish-language terminology.

### **Interview methodology**

A list of interviews can be found in Interviewees on page 192.

A short description of the thesis project and an outline of the items for discussion was sent to each interviewee about a week before the interview.

The purpose of the interview and the research aims were explained to interviewees, and they were asked to sign a consent form.

The interviews themselves were semi-structured, based on the list of questions. At the end of the interviews, participants were asked if they had anything else to add, and whether any important details had been omitted.

All interviews were recorded using a small handheld Dictaphone and saved in MP3 format. All interviews were transcribed and a copy of the full transcript kept securely. (This will be made available to external examiners.)

### **Processing of material – coding and analysis**

The interviews were transcribed using F4 software and checked. They were then coded according to the questions using Nvivo software.

Interviewees were asked if they preferred to be interviewed in Irish or English. Some opted to be interviewed in English to avoid the necessity to translate their responses. Interviews conducted in Irish have been translated in footnotes.

The finished report was sent to all interviewees in June 2010 and they were invited to make corrections. Minor corrections were received from Tadhg Ó hÍfearnáin, Caoilfhionn Nic Pháidín, Antain Mac Lochlainn, Vivian Uíbh Eachach and Tomás Ó Ruairc. No corrections were received from Deaglán Ó Briain, and Breandán Delap declared himself satisfied with the report.

Major corrections and about fifty comments were received from Fidelma Ní Ghallchobhair, as well as responses to a list of questions.

A final version of the case report was sent to interviewees in July 2010.

## Schedule of data collection activities

Date	Type	Location	Participant	Length (min)	Language	Record kept	Consent form	Key topics
20.09.07	Interview	Foras na Gaeilge offices	Fidelma Ní Ghallchobhair	110	Irish	Recorded and transcribed	none used	History of Terminology Committee
19.01.10	Interview	Rannóg an Aistriúcháin offices	Vivian Uíbh Eachach	71	Irish	Recorded and transcribed	Full	Work of Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, legal terminology, dissemination of work, internal work systems.
22.01.10	Interview	Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs offices	Deaglán Ó Briain	33	English	Recorded and transcribed	Full	Language planning for Irish, administrative structures, weaknesses of planning work, meaning of standardisation, terms for the EU
26.01.10	Interview	DCU	Antain Mac Lochlainn	43	Irish	Recorded and transcribed	Full	Work of Coiste Téarmaíochta, translator's perspective, training work, idea of standardisation.
29.01.10	Interview	Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs offices	Tomás Ó Ruairc	46	English	Recorded and transcribed	Full	Work of new translation department, coordination of terminology work, terminology training, administrative structures, standardisation
09.02.10	Interview	Foras na Gaeilge offices	Fidelma Ní Ghallchobhair	121	English	Recorded and transcribed	Full	Work of the Terminology Committee, what standardisation means, modernisation and evaluation, coordination of terminology work.

Date	Type	Location	Participant	Length (min)	Language	Record kept	Consent form	Key topics
12.02.10	Interview	TG4, Connemara	Breandán Delap	26	Irish	Recorded and transcribed	Full	Use of terminology by journalists, problems with complicated terms, lack of structure for coordination, problems with implantation.
24.02.10	Interview	DCU	Caoilfhionn Nic Pháidín	61	English	Recorded and transcribed	Full	Terminology planning structures, lexicographic gap, Fiontar's work, evaluation of work.
25.02.10	Interview	UL	Tadhg Ó hIfearnáin	71	Irish	Recorded and transcribed	Full	Problems with Terminology Committee's work/authority, lack of a language observatory, questions of language use, term creation principles.

## Interviewees

Each of the interviewees was asked to give his or her name and a description of his/her position.

**Antain Mac Lochlainn** an t-ainm atá orm agus tá mé i mbun cúrsa dioplóma iarchéime san aistriúchán agus san eagarthóireacht in Ollscoil na hÉireann Maigh Nuad, sa chúigiú bliain de sin; agus rud ar bith a bhaineann le aistriúchán, tagann an téarmaíocht i gceist leis agus tá modúl iomlán sa dara bliain atá tugtha suas don téarmaíocht... Agus chomh maith leis sin tá mé i mo chathaoirleach ar an Choiste Téarmaíochta anois le dhá bhliain nó mar sin.<sup>236</sup>

My name is **Deaglán Ó Briain**, I am a principal in the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, with responsibility for Irish language policy which includes issues in relation to Irish in the European Union, and also oversight of Foras na Gaeilge.

My name is **Tomás Ó Ruairc**, I am the director of translation services in the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, and my areas of work have three strands; the first is a very particular focus on statutory instruments or secondary legislation. For a whole plethora of reasons there's quite a backlog of work too be done there and they have to be translated to get to a situation where we're doing simultaneous publication of those instruments in both English and Irish, or enabling that process. That's a very quick snapshot of that work. The second area is a review of the official standard of the Irish language which was published in the fifties, that's a grammatical standard and has not been reviewed since the first publication, so to oversee that process and have it completed within a timeframe of about one year. And the third area is to look at the State's translation services as a whole and review them with a view to formulating proposals for their coordination or rationalisation as may be deemed necessary. So I have no direct responsibility for terminological approval if you like, but it's a symbiotic relationship obviously, that planning and terminology will impact on my work and the fruits of my work, particularly of the review of the official standard for example, will obviously impact vice versa on that as well.

Note: Tomás Ó Ruairc, in his previous post in Foras na Gaeilge, was responsible for terminology and lexicography policy for four years.

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<sup>236</sup> 'Antain Mac Lochlainn is my name and I'm in charge of a postgraduate diploma course in translation and editing in National University of Ireland Maynooth, in the fifth year of that; and anything to do with translation, terminology is involved, and there's a full module in the second year dedicated to terminology... And as well as that I'm chairman of the Terminology Committee for the last two years or so.'



Is mise **Vivian Uíbh Eachach**, agus táim ag obair i Rannóg an Aistriúcháin ó lár na n-ochtóidí. Táim i mo Phríomh-Aistritheoir le breis is dhá bhliain anuas anois. Tá an Rannóg lonnaithe i dTithe an Oireachtais ó bunaíodh an Stát, agus is iad na príomhchúraimí a bhíonn ar Rannóg an Aistriúcháin ná Tiontú Oifigiúil a sholáthar ar na hAchtanna don Oireachtas agus, chomh maith leis sin, seirbhísí éagsúla a sholáthar do na Tithe, go háirithe an páipéar laethúil gnó a bhíonn ag gach teach, an Seanad agus an Dáil. Agus, chomh maith leis sin, déanann Rannóg an Aistriúcháin bainistiú ar an gCaighdeán Oifigiúil, caighdeán a cheapamar féin agus a d'fhoilsíomar caoga bliain ó shin. Sin iad na bunchúraimí a bhíonn ar Rannóg an Aistriúcháin. Chomh maith leis sin, cuirimid seirbhís aistriúcháin chomhuainigh nó ateangaireachta ar fáil do na Tithe nuair a bhíonn siad ina suí.<sup>237</sup>

Sea, **Breandán Delap**, tá mé fostaithe ag RTÉ agus bíonn muid ag cur seirbhís nuachta ar fáil do TG4, nuacht RTÉ/TG4. Tá mé fostaithe mar chláreagarthóir, sé sin is post bainistíochta atá ann. Ní hé an post is sinsearaí san eagraíocht ach fad is a bhíonn mé ag obair is mé a bhíonn i gceannas ar an chlár nuacht a théann amach ag 7.00 ar TG4 agus an ceann a théann amach ag 5.45 ar RTÉ.<sup>238</sup>

I'm **Caoilfhionn Nic Pháidín**, I'm director of Fiontar, Dublin City University, and the director of the terminology projects currently in Fiontar, both Focal.ie and the Irish-language terminology for IATE. I have had involvement in Irish-language lexicography and Irish-language terminology in my own academic background for a long long time, since the early 1980s. So I had been working in the general area before I came here to Fiontar.

Well my name is **Fidelma Ní Ghallchobhair**, my position is secretary of the Terminology Committee. Responsibilities assigned to that post traditionally were to organise and to serve the committee, basically, to organise the meetings, to provide the paperwork for the people attending the meetings, to look after expenses, to source research material such as, well, traditionally it would have been books of course. To record the decisions made by the

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<sup>237</sup> 'I'm Vivian Uíbh Eachach, and I have been working in Rannóg an Aistriúcháin since the mid-eighties. I'm the Chief Translator for over two years now. The Rannóg is located in the Houses of the Oireachtas (The Irish Parliament) since the foundation of the State and the main duties are to supply an official conversion of the acts of the Oireachtas and to also supply various services to the houses, particularly the daily order of business that both houses have, the Seanad and the Dáil. And as well as that Rannóg an Aistriúcháin manages the Official Standard, a standard we created ourselves which we published fifty years ago. Those are the basic duties of Rannóg an Aistriúcháin. As well as that, we provide interpretation services to the houses when they sit.'

<sup>238</sup> 'Yes, Breandán Delap, I'm employed by RTÉ and we provide a news service to TG4, the RTÉ/TG4 news. I'm employed as a programme editor, so it's a management position. It's not the most senior position in the organisation but while I'm working I'm responsible for the news programme that goes out at 7.00 on TG4 and the one that goes out at 5.45 on RTÉ.'

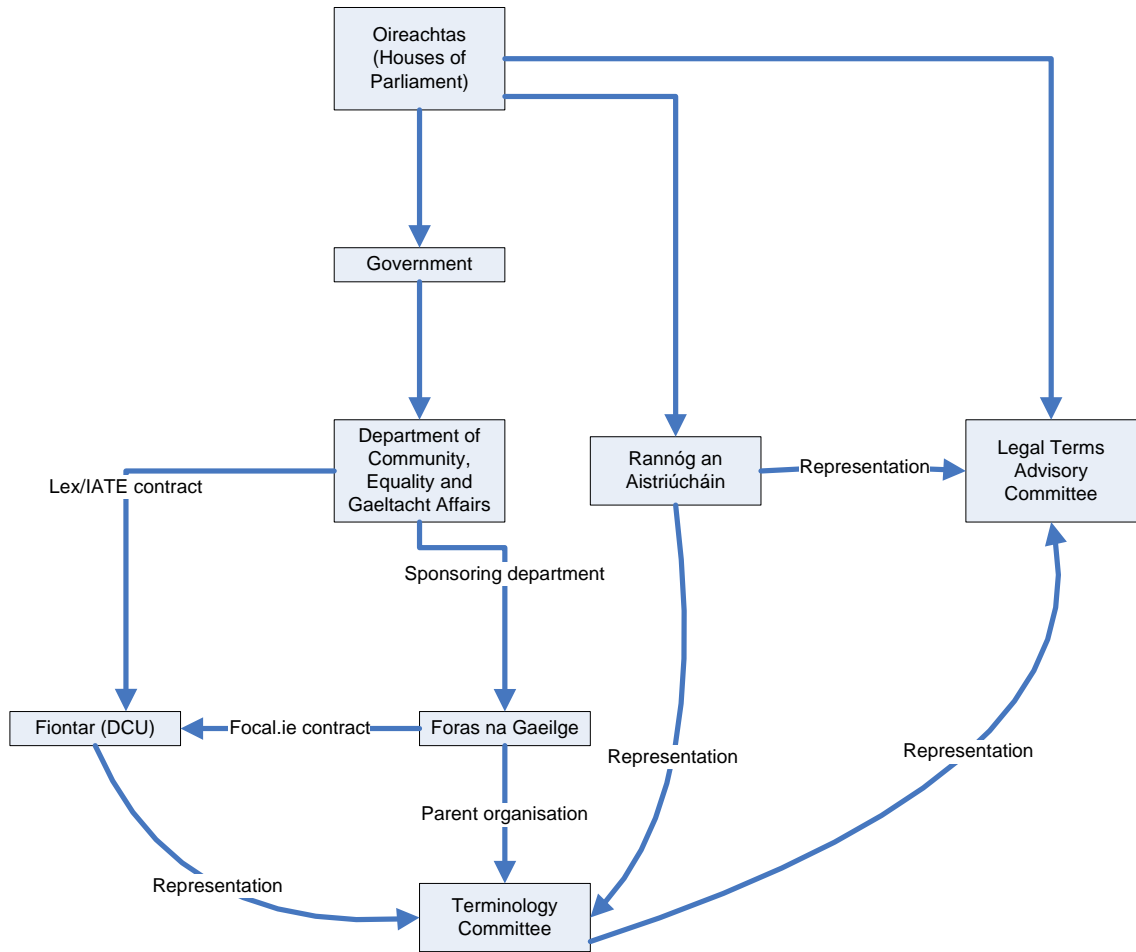
committee, and I suppose to apply any principles established by the committee in the course of their work.

**Tadhg Ó hIfeárnáin**, tá mé ag obair anseo san Ollscoil i Luimneach, is léachtóir sinsearach mé le Gaeilge ag plé le sochtheangeolaíocht den chuid is mó, agus ó thaobh na téarmaíochta de is dócha, ó thaobh na teangeolaíochta agus na sochtheangeolaíochta is mó a bhíonn mé ag plé le cúrsaí téarmaíochta. Tá roinnt mac léinn faoi mo stiúir a bhfuil deacrachtaí téarmaíochta acu ar ndóigh agus bíom ag obair leis an Údarás, le hÚdarás na Gaeltachta agus le heagarthóireacht agus an cineál sin ruda chomh maith.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> ‘Tadhg Ó hIfeárnáin, I’m working here in the University on Limerick, I’m a senior lecturer in Irish dealing with sociolinguistics for the most part, and I suppose from the terminology point of view, I mostly deal with it from the point of view of linguistics and sociolinguistics. I have some students with terminology problems of course and I work with Údarás na Gaeltachta and in editing and that kind of thing as well.’

## Organisational chart of term planning structures



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