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LEGAL TERMINOLOGY WORK FOR LOCAL-ONLY MINORITIES: THE EXAMPLE OF GERMAN IN SOUTH TYROL

The paper outlines the challenges of doing legal terminology work in Italian and German to support the development of a local-only minority language (South Tyrolean German) and to foster communication with other German-speaking countries. The target groups of terminology – legal experts, language mediators and the public – have different needs and expectations that were addressed in the Information System for Legal Terminology *bistro* by exploiting specific terminological data categories, by seeking a compromise when drafting definitions and by implementing technical functions.

1. Introduction

Developing and sharing legal terminology in minority languages is a crucial step to implement minority rights. It contributes to the non-discrimination of minority language speakers (European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, Art. 7(2)) when dealing with the government, the public administration and the judiciary. For example, statutory provisions allowing the use of a minority language in court might remain ineffective if the civil and criminal terminology needed for court proceedings is not available or not known. A shared stock of legal terms in the minority language is therefore a prerequisite to ensure that society may function smoothly both in the majority language and in a given

minority language (Mattila 2018: 121). It also helps to ensure legal certainty for minority language communities (Sandrini 2014: 144).

South Tyrol is a multilingual province in Northern Italy where over 300,000 citizens – almost 70% of the local population – are native speakers of German (ASTAT 2021: 15). German is a co-official language at a regional level, next to Italian.¹ The 1972 Statute of Autonomy (Presidential Decree No. 670/1972) provides that the German-speaking population shall have the right to use their language in all realms of public life. The ensuing linguistic regime is one of complete institutional bilingualism. This creates the need for South Tyrolean German legal terminology in many subdomains (e.g. administrative law, criminal law). Given that the applicable legal system is the Italian one and considering the system-boundness of legal language (see Section 2), the existing terminology in other German-speaking countries cannot be adopted *en bloc*. Dedicated terminology work and legal comparison are required.

The aim of terminology work in South Tyrol is twofold (Ralli and Andreatta 2018: 13). First, it enables to enact established language rights and minority protection. Since South Tyrol has thriving cultural, political and commercial relations with other German-speaking countries (ASTAT 2022: 127, 428), the second aim of terminology work is to support smooth communication and exchanges with these countries (see Section 4).

The results of terminology work are published in the Information System for Legal Terminology *bistro* (Ralli and Andreatta 2018): <https://bistro.eurac.edu/>. It is managed by the Institute for Applied Linguistics of Eurac Research. In August 2022, *bistro* published over 13,500 terminological entries. The entries contain synonyms and variants designating the respective concept in Italy, their equivalents in the German-speaking legal systems, definitions for each legal system with their sources (if available), as well as contexts of use – or at least a source indication – for each designation. Information on designations that have been officially validated (standardised) or are recommended for use in South Tyrol is also present, to support a consistent use of the minority language.

¹ The Rhaeto-Romance language Ladin, spoken by about 20,000 citizens in two Dolomitic valleys, is also officially recognised for local institutional communication. We will not deal further with Ladin in this paper as it is a unique minority language (see Section 2).

Legal terminology work typically has three target user groups: legal experts, the public and language mediators (Sandrini 2014: 144). The latter group consists first and foremost of translators and interpreters. The law affects citizens in uncountable situations of daily life: from birth to death, from education to work, from buying a house to quarrelling with a neighbour. Therefore, terminology in the legal domain is not merely useful for lawmakers, judges, lawyers, administrators and other legal professionals or for language mediators. It concerns everyone.

The three target groups have different needs and expectations that terminology work seeks to satisfy with necessary compromises. *bistro* is used a lot by local administrative staff (Chiocchetti and Stanizzi 2022: 83). According to research on the provincial administration, over 20% of staff have a degree in law (De Camillis 2021: 212) and can be considered part of the first user group. The same research has shown that most translation work within the local administration is not done by professional language mediators but by bilingual employees (De Camillis 2021: 306). These can be considered non-professional translators (Antonini et al. 2017: 7) and therefore part of the second group. In addition, staff working in the media in bilingual regions also often need to understand or draft texts in two languages or engage in non-professional translation. The same applies to the general public.

2. Background

Minority languages are “languages that are [...] traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State’s population and [are] different from the official language(s) of that State” (European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, Art. 1(a)). According to Edwards (2007: 459–460), some minority languages are unique to a state, i.e. they are spoken only within the borders of one state. Others are non-unique and spoken in more than one state by a minority of their citizens. The last group consists of languages spoken by a minority in one state but by the majority in one or more other states. These are ‘local-only’ minority languages. The latter is the situation of German in South Tyrol, being the na-

tive language of a minority in Italy but at the same time an official and majority language in Austria, Germany and Switzerland.

Unlike unique and non-unique minority language speakers, German speakers in South Tyrol may take advantage of language development occurring within the majority communities in most specialised domains (e.g. technology, medicine). However, local-only minority languages face the need to develop legal terminology for government, administration and justice. Every legal system has its own specific set of rules and conceptual structures. Legal terminology expresses such specificities and is therefore always bound to a specific legal system (Gambaro and Sacco 2018: 7; Cao 2007: 23–24).

Even legal systems using the same language (e.g. the Austrian and German ones) will have different legal conceptualisations and terminologies (Gambaro and Sacco 2018: 8; Sandrini 2014: 144; Cao 2007: 33). To name just some examples, Austrians obtain the right to vote at the age of 16, Germans two years later. An apprentice is called *Auszubildender* in Germany and *Lehrling* in Austria. The same term may also designate different concepts. A *Befreiungsschein* in Germany is a document exempting an insured person from paying prescription or medical fees. In Austria, the same term refers to a document that allows foreigners to work in any federal state (Muhr 2019: 127). Terminology work highlights such differences and therefore supports international communication.

A method used in legal terminology work to identify differences between concepts is legal comparison. It consists in contrastively analysing two or more legal systems to find similarities and differences. When the comparison concerns specific legal concepts in different legal systems, for example ‘active suffrage’, it is called *microcomparison* (Ajani, Francavilla and Pasa 2018: 4; Zweigert and Kötz 1998: 4–5).

From a terminological point of view, microcomparison allows to determine the meaning of a legal concept within a specific legal system and (sub)domain of law and to compare concepts from distinct systems. According to Arntz et al. (2021: 145), two concepts from different legal systems can be considered equivalent when their conceptual characteristics fully match. Due to the system-boundness of legal language, however, full conceptual equivalence between concepts from different legal systems is rare. Therefore, the main aim of microcomparison is

to identify a good level of correspondence and comparability between legal concepts (Arntz, Picht and Schmitz 2021: 162–170).

3. Challenging features of legal terminology

Features of legal terminology that may pose challenges to different user groups are the strong relation of legal language with general language, polysemy across legal subdomains and denominative variation in legal terminology. These are particularly challenging for language mediators and even more so for citizens with limited domain knowledge (Mattila 2018: 127).

Legal language is a special language that strongly interacts with general language (Gualdo and Telve 2021: 411). Specialised legal meaning is often attributed to general language words (Gualdo and Telve 2021: 420; Mattila 2018: 127), which represents a challenge for lay people (Sander 2004: 2). For example, *fatto* ('fact') in Italian has a different meaning in general and legal language. In general language, it refers to any event or phenomenon that has happened (Istituto della Enciclopedia Treccani 2022: 404). In legal language, it is an event with legal relevance and that has legal effects in the specific legal system (Torrente and Schlesinger 2013: 196) and thus has a much more restricted meaning. Conversely, legal terminology is often used in general language, not necessarily with its correct meaning. For example, the Italian concept *reato* implies that it is an offence punishable under criminal law (*diritto penale* in Italian). Unlawful acts punishable under civil or administrative law are called *illecito*. Using *reato penale*, as happens in general language and the media (Gualdo and Telve 2021: 423), is a pleonasm that reveals ignorance of the legal meaning.

The same designation may have different meanings – and translations – according to the legal subdomain. *Atto* indicates a document in administrative law and an action in criminal law. While the first is translated with *Urkunde* in German, the second is translated with *Rechtshandlung*. Another example is *Vertrag* in German. It is used in EU law to designate a treaty and in civil law to indicate a contract. In Italian, it would not be possible to use the same designation. An international treaty is a *trattato*, while an agreement between two or more parties

to establish, regulate or extinguish a legal relationship about their assets (Italian Civil Code, Art. 1321) is a *contratto*.

A further challenging feature of legal language is the presence of synonyms and variants. One source of synonymy are Latin terms (Mattila 2018: 130). These may be used along expressions in the national language, such as *ex tunc* (retroactive), which occurs along with *retroattivo* in Italian and *rückwirkend* in German. English is a more recent source of synonyms. For example, while Italian legislation uses *lavoro agile*, most newspaper articles and even work contracts use ‘smart working’ to designate the new form of working according to Law No. 81/2017 that enables employees to choose their workplaces and working hours more freely.

Acronyms and initialisms are additional sources of denominative variation (Freixa 2022: 401). Examples are *GmbH* for *Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung* in German and *s.r.l.* for *società a responsabilità limitata* in Italian (limited liability company). Some have more than one full form, like *PG* which can stand for *procuratore generale* (public prosecutor) or *polizia giudiziaria* (criminal police). A request received by Eurac Research in 2020 proves that these compact designations may be a challenge for the public. The Association of South Tyrolean Municipalities asked for an export of over 500 legal acronyms and initialisms with their full forms from the terminological collection available at Eurac Research in order to integrate these data as mouseover information in their municipal websites.

There are other short forms next to acronyms and initialisms. Italian in particular tends to shorten long noun compounds to avoid excessive denominative repetition (Freixa 2022: 407). For example, *contratto collettivo nazionale di lavoro* (national collective bargaining agreement) becomes *CCNL* but also *contratto collettivo nazionale* or *contratto nazionale di lavoro*. In many texts also *contratto nazionale*, *contratto collettivo* and even *contratto* will refer to the same concept, even though these are actually hypernyms.

All these features may lead non-experts astray when trying to make sense of texts or translate them. Legal experts will generally have no problem in grasping the meaning of *ex tunc*, that *lavoro agile* and ‘smart working’ are synonyms in Italy and that both *contratto nazionale* as well as *contratto collettivo* are likely

to refer to the national collective bargaining agreement. However, language mediators and the public might lack the necessary domain competence. Terminological databases collect all designations referring to the same concept in one entry, so that all short forms are clearly associated with their full forms and all designations relate to the same definition. This helps language mediators to make sense of potentially obscure short forms and synonyms and to decide which designations to use in the target language when there is more than one. Moreover, language mediators may profit also from information on hypernyms and hyponyms – given in *bistro* via links to related entries – that may be used in texts for stylistic variation. Terminological databases also classify entries based on their subdomain. This kind of information helps disambiguate homonymous and polysemous terms like *atto* or *Vetrag*.

When one or more designations for the same concept tend to have a restricted use (e.g. legislation, handbooks, newspapers), in *bistro* a specification is added. For example, the synonyms *agenzia di somministrazione di lavoro* and *agenzia generalista*, a certified agency that supplies labour force, are labelled as being used in legislation vs in handbooks and newspapers respectively. All designations, including short forms, are searchable so that the conceptual entry is accessible also without knowing the most used designation or to users struggling with an acronym.

4. The pluricentric nature of German

German is a pluricentric language (Clyne 1991: 1). It is an official language in more than one country at the national or regional level and has consequently developed different standard varieties (Ammon, Bickel and Lenz 2016: XXXIX). The main differences between the standard varieties used in Austria, Germany and Switzerland but also Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the German-speaking Community in Belgium and South Tyrol concern to a limited degree orthography (e.g. the letter ‘ß’ is not used in the Swiss standard variety) and grammar (e.g. *Kataster*, cadastre, is a masculine word according to the Austrian standard, while it can also be neuter in Germany’s standard variety) and to a major degree pronunciation and lexis (e.g. ‘January’ is called *Jänner* in Austria and Switzer-

land but *Januar* in Germany) (Ammon, Bickel and Lenz 2016: XLI). A distinguishing feature of the standard German variety used in South Tyrol derives from the contact with Italian that led to lexical variants in gastronomy and legal terminology (Ammon, Bickel and Lenz 2016: LX).

Also Italian is an official language in different states, i.e. Italy and San Marino, and co-official in Switzerland and in the Vatican State. In addition, it is a recognised minority language in Slovenia and Croatia. Since terminology work in South Tyrol always starts from the Italian legal system, we will not deal further with Italian as a pluricentric language.

South Tyrolean German legal language must express the concepts of the applicable Italian legal system. This means that often ‘neoterms’ or ‘terminological neologisms’ (ISO 1087:2019, cl. 3.4.12) need to be coined. A possibility is using borrowings or translations (Mattila 2018: 131) of Italian designations, e.g. *Familienstandsbescheinigung* for *certificato di stato di famiglia* (a certificate that proves the official composition of one’s family). This is generally not problematic when a concept is unique to the Italian legal system. But what if a (largely) equivalent concept already exists and has already been designated in one or more German-speaking legal systems?

As a general rule, new terms in South Tyrolean German are needed for concepts that are unique to the Italian legal systems or that have no equivalents in the German-speaking legal systems. This certainly supports the use of the minority language in the related legal domains by making the necessary terminology available. At the same time, there is the will to foster international communication and to counter the tendency of the minority language to become regionalised (Sandrini 1998: 408), that is, to increasingly diverge from the language spoken in other German-speaking areas. Given the relatively small number of German speakers in South Tyrol, shared legal terminology is used and adopted whenever possible. This is why terms like *Scheidung* (divorce) or *Arbeitsvertrag* (employment contract) which are known to all German-speaking legal systems are used. However, this is not possible when the conceptual differences are relevant or when the foreign designation may be a source of misunderstanding. In the following paragraphs, we will bring two examples where microcomparison helped determine terminological choices for South Tyrol. In one case, the adop-

tion of a designation already present abroad is favoured. In the other case, the creation of a specific designation is advisable.

When Italy was discussing the introduction of civil partnerships for same-sex couples (*unione civile*) before 2016, some literal translations started being used in the local media next to the German term *eingetragene Lebenspartnerschaft* and the Austrian and Swiss term *eingetragene Partnerschaft*. This was a less than welcome situation: several concurring terms in use, some literal translations that would not favour international communication and two terms from other legal systems.

To help users in this terminological confusion, a microcomparative analysis between the Italian legal concept and the concepts from the German-speaking systems was performed. Today, legislation on this subject has changed both in Germany, where marriage was extended to same-sex couples in 2017, and in Austria, where civil partnerships were extended to different-sex couples in 2019. However, in 2016 the essential characteristics of the Italian, Austrian, German and Swiss concepts matched quite well. In all these countries, civil partnerships were an alternative to marriage, restricted to same-sex couples, which conferred them similar rights and duties to married couples. Considering that the Italian concept was inspired by the German concept (Deputati PD 2016: 1), it seemed advisable to advocate the use of the German term for South Tyrol (Chiocchetti, De Camillis and Stanizzi 2019: 125). It was already well known, similar to the Austrian and Swiss term and definitely more elegant from a linguistic point of view than a literal translation.

The existence of other German-speaking systems supports the development of legal terminology in German as a minority language in South Tyrol by fostering the use of shared terminology. However, using established foreign terminology might not be advisable if it is a potential cause of misunderstandings or conceptual misrepresentation. Microcomparison is an essential step in informing such terminological decisions.

A concept from occupational health and safety may exemplify a situation where conceptual differences suggest that using a foreign term to designate an Italian concept is not always advisable. In Italy, the *responsabile del servizio di prevenzione e protezione* is appointed with a specific role within occupational health

and safety. Art. 2(1f) of Legislative Decree No. 81/2008 defines them as a person who has the necessary skills and qualifications to coordinate the Health and safety committee and is subordinate to the employer. The South Tyrolean German term used in the official translation of the law is *Leiter des Arbeitsschutzdienstes*. Nevertheless, the term *Sicherheitsbeauftragter* is also used occasionally. In Germany, the concept designated by this latter term refers to employees who support the management in implementing measures to prevent accidents at work and occupational diseases on a voluntary basis, without any authority to give instructions. Using this German term to designate the Italian concept might give a wrong impression of the powers and duties of a *responsabile del servizio di prevenzione e protezione* within a company.

Conceptual differences and the use of identical terms for different concepts in various legal systems pose challenges to all three target user groups of terminology in South Tyrol. In a terminological resource that considers different legal systems, it is of paramount importance that each designation be assigned to its legal system. *bistro* uses the data category ‘geographical usage’ in the German part of terminological entries for this purpose. The corresponding picklist contains the labels ‘AT’ for Austria, ‘CH’ for Switzerland, ‘DE’ for Germany, ‘Südtirol’ for South Tyrol. If a designation has been standardised or is recommended for use in South Tyrol, like *eingetragene Partnerschaft*, this is clearly indicated in the entry, thus contributing to fostering a consistent use of legal language within the minority community.

The filter functions implemented in *bistro* (Ralli and Andreatta 2018: 26) allow restricting searches to one or more legal systems and subdomains. This can be useful for citizens interested only in local terminology as well as for legal experts dealing only with one or two of the available legal systems. It is particularly appreciated also by language mediators translating from or into a given legal system and working with specific legal subdomains. A further function allows searching only within the stock of standardised terms for South Tyrol.

Entries like the one for *unione civile* and *responsabile del servizio di prevenzione e protezione* contain informative or comparative legal notes. For example, the note in the first entry explains the changes in German and Austrian legislation that occurred in 2017 and 2019 respectively. The comparative note in the second entry summarises the differences between the Italian concept and the *Sicher-*

heitsbeauftragter in the German legal system. Such information is particularly useful for legal experts but is also an added value for language mediators and the public.

5. Non-homogeneous target groups

Different target groups have diverging needs and expectations related to multilingual legal terminology because they use terminological resources for distinct purposes. Language mediators generally need to understand the meaning of a term, find ready-made translations and check the adequacy of presumed equivalents (Chromá 2014: 130; Nord 2002: 133–34). They expect to find possibly clear definitions (in all languages), examples of use (ideally from real text), abbreviations and acronyms as well as legal phraseology (Durán Muñoz 2012: 144). Legal experts also use terminological resources, including for translation purposes. However, they tend to focus on precise and specialised legal and comparative information. They appreciate information on reliability and last update, definitions or defining contexts, the possibility of selecting a specific (sub)domain and links to reliable and official sources (Peruzzo 2018: 97–99). This applies when they use termbases for translation purposes and even more so for other purposes. While they are generally familiar with definitions and sources in their own legal system and domain of specialisation, legal experts value definitions and clear source indications related to the target legal system(s) as well as to subdomains that are outside their main areas of expertise. For example, they can use target language terms as keywords or definition sources for further comparative searches.

Legal experts and language mediators differ also in terms of the information they could do without. Some legal experts for example wish for linguistic information on the use of loan words and pronunciation (Peruzzo 2018: 100) that are not a priority for language mediators. Conversely, information on language register or legal phraseology is essential for language mediators but probably less so for legal experts – at least in their native language.

The third user group, the public, needs clear explanations of legal concepts, possibly with some background information but also easy access to terminological

entries via designations that may not be used in legislation or handbooks but rather in the media. In minority language regions citizens also look for bilingual information. This might happen, for example, when they are confronted with legal texts in the majority language or with a text in the minority language that contains unknown terminology. Contexts of use of well-defined terms and detailed comparative notes are often not their primary interest.

When catering for different target groups, terminologists must strike a balance between their diverging needs. The contents of the terminological resource must serve different purposes and be useful in diverging user situations at the same time, both communicative (e.g. writing or translating a text) and cognitive (e.g. retrieving information, clarifying conceptual doubts) (Tarp 2017: 123–124).

A challenging compromise concerns the drafting of definitions. Legal experts expect definitions from legal texts or legal handbooks and a reference to the law or article that establishes or defines the concept. Language mediators generally prefer more explanatory definitions (Peruzzo 2018: 102–103). Legal definitions are often not formulated according to terminological principles with the hypernym and essential characteristics (cf. Chiocchetti and Ralli 2009: 103). For all three user groups, succinct terminological definitions might not be sufficient. Further information might therefore be usefully conveyed via (defining) contexts, via the links to related concepts or through added legal, comparative or informative notes.

In *bistro*, for example, the definition of *addetto al servizio di prevenzione e protezione*, an operator that works with the *responsabile* of the Health and safety committee mentioned in Section 4, has been modified with respect to the original definition in Art. 2(1g) of Law No. 81/2008. The legal definition would have been hard to understand for language mediators and the public, as it contains two cross-references to other provisions:

persona in possesso delle capacità e dei requisiti professionali di cui all'articolo 32, facente parte del servizio di cui alla lettera l) [person who has the necessary professional skills and qualifications according to Article 32, which is part of the Service according to point l), *own literal translation*.]

The definition in *bistro* tries to fill the gaps and adds some relevant information, such as the relation with other roles within the occupational health and safety system:

Figura nominata dal datore di lavoro con la capacità ed i requisiti professionali adeguati alla natura dei rischi presenti sul luogo di lavoro e relativi alle attività lavorative, che funge da supporto al servizio di prevenzione e protezione e che collabora con il responsabile del servizio di prevenzione e protezione. [Person – appointed by the employer – with the necessary professional skills and qualifications in relation to the risks present on the workplace, who supports the Health and Safety Committee and cooperates with the Coordinator of the Health and Safety Committee, *own literal translation.*]

Efforts have also been made to respect terminological defining principles whenever possible, that is, to give intensional definitions that state “the immediate superordinate concept and the delimiting characteristic(s)” of the concept (ISO 704: 2022, cl. 3.3). For *bistro* an attempt is always made to give at least the relevant hypernym in definitions. For example, Annex VIII of Law No. 81/2008 does not contain a definition of ‘hearing protection’ but merely a non-exhaustive list. In *bistro*, we have added information that it is a type of personal protective equipment, explained its purpose and finally listed the examples from Annex VIII:

Dispositivo di protezione individuale atto a tutelare in maniera specifica l’udito del lavoratore da eventuali pericoli, come palline e tappi per le orecchie, caschi comprendenti l’apparato auricolare, cuscinetti adattabili ai caschi di protezione per l’industria, cuffie con attacco per ricezione a bassa frequenza. [Personal protective equipment that specifically serves to protect the worker’s hearing from possible hazards, such as ear plugs, helmets with headphones, ear pads that fit into industrial safety helmets, headphones equipped with a low-frequency receiver, *own translation.*]

Definitions are not the only feature in *bistro* that tries to accommodate the needs of different user groups. We have already mentioned some features above, such as making all designations searchable (Section 3) in order to help the public and language mediators who face colloquial or uncommon synonyms and variants. The possibility of filtering results by legal system and subdomain (Sections 3 and 4) is addressed to both legal experts and language mediators. The specifi-

cations on the register or domains of use of a specific designation (Section 3) are particularly aimed at language mediators and the public. A feature mindful of legal experts' needs is the transparent way of handling sources (Ralli and Andreatta 2018: 20–21). *bistro* systematically publishes source indications for all the main text fields, i.e. definitions, contexts, notes and also designations in case no context is available. Legal texts and case-law are referenced according to the customary citation rules of each legal system. Books and other documents receive a short placeholder with year indication that is linked to an entry in a dedicated source database. Users can retrieve full bibliographic information from this database with a click. Internet sources are active links. These features cater for the needs of legal experts but also help language mediators and the public find potentially interesting texts.

A further function primarily aimed at legal experts is the default reduction of contexts. Contexts may be long and of limited interest for them, often also for the public, but language mediators appreciate examples from real text. Interested users can expand each context field while others may leave them reduced to the first line. Finally, *bistro* publishes also a set of legal collocations (Ralli and Andreatta 2018: 20), about 1,500 in Italian and over 1,800 in German. Legal phraseology is particularly useful for language mediators since it is a well-known challenge for this user group (Biel 2014: 182).

6. The changes in technology over time

In the 1990s, bilingual lists of Italian and South Tyrolean German terminology were published only in the Official Gazette of the Region Trentino-South Tyrol. In this way, information was accessible mainly to legal experts. Printed terminological dictionaries were also produced. This allowed editors to publish not just the designations but also definitions and other relevant information. However, printed products had to be limited to specific legal subdomains due to space constraints. In addition, these reference works – generally aimed at language mediators and legal experts – grew rapidly outdated with any legal reform. Today, the evolution of the Internet and greater storage capacities enable online dissemination of terminology, regular updates and a more transparent sharing of

sources of information. In this way, users that were largely excluded previously, such as the public, are also more easily reached.

A first version of *bistro* went online in 2001, a new one in 2016. Technology developments and the desire to provide a more user-friendly tool led to revamping *bistro* while taking into account user requests and suggestions (Kranebitter and Ralli 2022: 103; Ralli and Andreatta 2018: 13–14). Today, *bistro* offers a simple search option where users only need to select the source language and type the term they are looking for. This feature is particularly easy to use for the non-expert public. Advanced search options and the restricted search within the stock of standardised terminology for South Tyrol can be accessed separately right next to the main search bar. These additional functions are aimed specifically at legal experts but also at language mediators working within a given legal subdomain or legal system.

A further new function proved fruitful for all target groups as well as for the terminologists themselves: *bistro's* feedback form (Kranebitter and Ralli 2022: 111–112; Ralli and Andreatta 2018: 30). A feedback button is available next to each designation in the full terminological entry. By clicking on the button, users can send a free text message to the terminology team. A member of the team will answer questions or take action, for example by updating or adding terminological entries. Domain experts also report legal imprecisions (e.g. an incorrect source). Some users report typos. This help is particularly appreciated by terminologists because typos that accidentally affect designations make them hard to search for. Collecting feedback from users is not just a way of involving them in terminology work and catering better for their needs, it also helps terminologists (Kranebitter and Ralli 2022: 115; Dobrina 2010: 93).

7. Conclusions

We have outlined the main challenges of doing legal comparative terminology work in Italian and German to support the development of a local-only minority language, German in South Tyrol, and at the same time foster communication with other German-speaking countries. These challenges relate to some charac-

teristics of legal terminology as well as to the pluricentric nature of German and the system-boundness of legal language.

We have also considered the aspects to be taken into account when publishing terminological data for user groups with different needs and expectations (legal experts, language mediators and the public). Some issues have been addressed by exploiting specific terminological data categories (e.g. geographical usage, notes), by deliberately striking a balance when writing definitions of legal concepts and by implementing dedicated technical features (e.g. expandable contexts, search and filter functions) in the Information System for Legal Terminology *bistro*.

When working with minority languages, it is of paramount importance that terminology reaches its main user groups to support (specialised) language development and ensure a consistent use of terminology. If this was not fostered, communication in the minority language and even legal certainty could be at risk.

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Terminološki rad u pravnom području za lokalne manjine: primjer njemačkoga u Južnom Tirolu

Sažetak

Ovaj rad ocrtava izazove rada na pravnoj terminologiji na talijanskom i njemačkom jeziku kako bi se podržao razvoj lokalnoga manjinskog jezika (južnotirolskoga njemačkog jezika) i istodobno potaknula komunikacija s drugim zemljama njemačkoga govornog područja. Ciljne terminološke skupine, odnosno pravni stručnjaci, jezični posrednici i javnost, imaju različite potrebe i očekivanja na koja se u Informacijskom sustavu za pravno nazivlje *bistro* odgovorilo upotrebom specifičnih terminoloških kategorija podataka, pronalaženjem kompromisa u pisanju definicija te primjenom tehničkih funkcija u *bistro*.

Keywords: legal terminology, terminology users, *bistro*, minority languages, local-only minority

Cljučne riječi: pravna terminologija, terminološki korisnici, *bistro*, manjinski jezici, lokalna manjina