

# **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON TERMINOLOGY AND TRANSLATION ASSISTANCE**

## **INTRODUCTORY REPORT**

Venue : ARLEQUIN Area

### **Schedule:**

Tuesday 18	10:30-12:00	Welcome in English, French and German
	15:30-17:00	Welcome in English, French and Spanish
Wednesday 19	10:30-12:00	Welcome in English, French and Portuguese
	15:30-17:00	Welcome in English, French and Scandinavian
Thursday 20	10:30-12:00	Welcome in English, French and German
	15:30-17:00	Welcome in English, French and Spanish
Friday 21	10:30-12:00	Welcome in English, French and Dutch

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Technical Committee on Terminology and Translation Assistance (CTERM) plays an eminently interlinking part in the organisation of PIARC. It collaborates directly with the experts of the other technical Committees, in order to keep up-to-date the terminological works of reference of the Association (namely the Dictionary and the Lexicon), and with the National Committees of PIARC, in order to facilitate the dissemination of the technical terminology in languages other than French and English.

The recent technological developments in the field of terminology and translation assistance are important; PIARC takes advantage of that and has made its terminological resources freely available on the internet.

At the 2007 World Road Congress, the Committee does not have a formal meeting, but organises for delegates demonstrations of the use of the PIARC dictionary on the Internet. On this occasion, the Committee will also reveal the back-up support of the reference works, with more than forty collaborators.

The contributions which follow originate from members of CTERM. The content indicates that the composition of this Committee is varied; the competence of members ranges from that of a professional translator-interpreter to road engineer also including a terminologist and managers; the languages represented within the Committee were, for the period 2004-2007: German, English, Spanish, French, Hungarian, Dutch and Portuguese.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE REPORT**

René Gemme, Canada  
Annelies Glander, Austria  
Per Morten Lund, Norway

Marie Pastol, PIARC (General Secretariat)  
Patrice Retour, France  
Daniël Verfaillie, Belgium

### **1. EVERYONE SPEAKS WELL OF THE BRIDGE WHICH CARRIES HIM (SAFE) OVER**

“Everyone speaks well of the bridge which carries him (safe) over“ says an English proverb dating back to 1678 when travelling was a dangerous adventure associated with bad roads and frightening crossings. The expert wisdom of the Golden Age of road construction, when Rome had conquered her empire<sup>1</sup> on well designed, exquisitely built and meticulously serviced roads had been completely lost and so had all the technical terminology that had permitted a smooth operation across borders.

It is thanks to PIARC’s expert knowledge and ambitious efforts that roads are becoming ever more user friendly, safe and weatherproof, bridges are no longer frightening, and, with a little bit of good luck and the necessary technical know-how, even tunnels will lose their alarming aspects and become the motorist’s (reliable) best friends.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of the largest expansion, under Emperor Trajan, the Roman Empire covered, broadly speaking, the areas around the Mediterranean, Gallia, large parts of Britannia, and the areas around the Black Sea.

And, wisely, PIARC did not only document latest achievements in this field but also documented the respective terminology, initiated and supervised the translation of reports and undertook to initiate the elaboration of a terminology database. In the same way as information on road design, maintenance, repair and service were stored, the respective terminology was and is filtered from the documents and processed by CTERM, a Committee specially set up for that purpose and entrusted with the collection and verification of the extensive and varied vocabulary and the preparation of definitions so as to avoid ambiguity and prevent any incorrect and thus misleading attribution.

When ancient Rome constructed roads – or had them constructed – all instructions, plans and specifications were in Latin. Only a Roman citizen was permitted to join the expert team, irrespective of the language of the country in which the construction took place. They all spoke Latin, and so did the soldiers who supervised ongoing work. It was one of the rare occasions in the history of humankind where no translation whatsoever was required.

### **Does road construction require translation nowadays?**

Everyone speaks English or thinks he or she does. In our technology-oriented world English has become the magic wand of communication. The Congress you are attending is in no way an exception to the rule. However, how can we be sure that Congress participants speak of the same thing? That the meetings will not end in a way similar to the construction of the Tower of Babel – a superb project doomed to fail because those assembled spoke in different tongues and thus could not agree on the design and method of construction?

To be a master of one's trade, in modern terminology "an expert in the subject matter" is one thing, to succeed in passing on one's knowledge and make oneself understood quite another. In order to catch the attention of a reader or the ear of an audience you need not only to speak their language smoothly, you must above all use the correct terminology; know the exact meaning of a term. Experience has shown that very often misunderstandings become repetitive and tend to unnecessarily prolong discussions at international meetings. To quote three examples:

- The concepts of "safety audit" and "safety inspection" brought about a genuine dialogue of the deaf. How could such a misunderstanding occur? It is most unlikely that it should be attributable to ignorance as regards the two concepts; it is in all probability to be explained by a confusion of terminology.
- Landscape "permeability", although easily translatable as it comes from Latin, should not be considered as generally comprehensive. It does not refer to noise barriers made of glass so that the landscape becomes visible, nor to the use of material that does not block precipitation. It refers to the ability of animals to move across the landscape when the required wild life crossing structures are provided.
- The haphazard use of ice point, frost point, dew point and thaw point can also be quite confusing since the instructions of when to measure these values for once seem to deviate between British and French or German meteorologists ... a foreseeable source of diverging technical information. When winter maintenance is at stake and it must be decided when to start de-icing services the operator should know at which "point"...

One of the latest “hits” in road construction is the so called “forgiving road”. Unless this “godsend” is furnished together with a sound and convincing explanation) it will cause more problems (in terms of costs) than benefits.

Incidentally, at one of the most recent meetings of a TC the participants had a heated debate on whether the result expected of this Congress would be an output or an outcome?

Engineers, technicians, architects, designers have breathtaking ideas, produce most attractive plans. They need to be able to express themselves in such a way that the colleague in the international arena can understand and thus be convinced of the advantages offered. So very often an excellent contribution in terms of design and technical know how, a genuine progress in technology, is not given due attention because the person presenting it is at war with the language the paper is presented in but has refused to have it properly translated beforehand.

Much of the reluctance on the part of national road administrations to have a new technology adopted and realised in situ is due to poor presentation. The convincing benefits are not transmitted successfully in the language of the reader or listener. Quite besides pure linguistic aspirations a text written for an administrator needs to be written in administrative language and not in technical mysteries. Normally, a technical text must attract the interest and assure the comprehension of a technician, and will certainly do so. However, a technological text which is to be understood by an administrator needs to be couched in terms he or she understands, can cope with.

Translational action attempts to master what is called *skopos*.

The academic definition of *skopos* reads: “Focusing on the purpose of translation as the most decisive factor the *skopos* theory emphasises the role of the translator as an expert in translational action and regards the source text no longer as a “sacred original” ...but as a mere offer of information whose role in the action is to be decided by the translator, depending on the expectations and needs of the target readers”<sup>2</sup>.

So what does a translator need in order to render good quality?

- A sound knowledge of the mother tongue and of the other language.
- Experience in the possibly different cultures the mother tongue and the other language fall into.
- Access to bibliographical documentation and reliable terminology databases.
- The possibility of consulting the author of a text or any expert in the subject matter so as to obtain details required for a smooth understanding or answers to open questions, unclear formulations, etc.

The translator can (and should!) only translate a text he or she understands. Experience has shown that whenever a translator queries a text it almost invariably turns out to be a “fishy” text, that something is wrong with the statement as given.

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<sup>2</sup> Hans J.Vermeer: Skizzen zu einer Geschichte der Translation, IKO Verlag 1992

While there will always be a need for professional translation there is progress in the language abilities of young people. And with the increase of multiple language families where children learn two or even three languages while growing up with parents from different countries they will not only master studying in more than one language, they will also be able to create a text in different languages. But they will need the respective technology. PIARC had offered this technology to members only for many years but – meeting the demands of modern times – has made its terminology databases accessible to the public free of charge a short while ago. This should in all modesty be considered an essential event in the history of road construction, the beginning of professional globalisation, the start of a new era in technological co-operation.

## **2. IMPORTANCE OF GOOD LINGUISTIC TOOLS FOR AN ENGINEER**

In the first years of my career, I worked as a bridge-builder engineer.. The great majority of the bridges that I built were small ones, but sometimes it was necessary to design large ones. Personal experience is then not enough ; knowledge of the work of others becomes necessary. During one`s career, when involved in building bridges of significant size, it is crucial to be able to understand diagrams as well as descriptions, particularly in a field as technical as that of bridges; if not properly understood, dramatic errors can be made, whether it is with regard to design or to construction. There are examples of serious accidents caused by a poor understanding of written data. There is thus a real need to have good tools to translate and understand the significance of unknown or dubious words and expressions.

I was the Director of a project for a large bridge having to span a river in the extreme north of my country, Tanaelv, on the border between Norway and Finland. Although the two countries have a common border, their official languages are completely different. There is practically no common word. In a labour market which is becoming more international each day , it is also important that consultants and contractors can communicate properly , even if they are of different nationalities. We called upon a Finnish team to commission the projects of this bridge. It was a question of building what one names in Norwegian a *skråstagbro*. In Finnish, one speaks about *vinoköysisilta* (in English cable stayed bridge, in French *pont à haubans*). The project meetings took much time. Every word had to pass through an interpreter, and we had to check everyone`s understanding . I learnt by chance the existence of a small dictionary published by the NVF (Nordic Road Association) dealing with bridges. It was written in four languages: Finnish, Swedish, German and English. Since Swedish and Norwegian are two closely related languages, I could be sure to be understood thanks to this dictionary: we had the same understanding of various concepts. It is particularly important when evaluating the critical factors of a job.

This dictionary is now one component of the terminology service provided by PIARC, open to all on Internet. This service offers not only translations of isolated terms, but gives also definitions and descriptions. Progressively, photographs and diagrams will be added. This kind of tool makes it possible to put into practice the experience gained in other countries. We will be able to teach each other and, furthermore, ensure that we understand our partners without any ambiguity when designing and constructing roads that cross international borders. PIARC`s terminology project is a project exactly in line with the objectives of PIARC.

### 3. THE TECHNICAL DICTIONARY OF ROAD TERMS: A TERMINOLOGIST'S PERSPECTIVE

Do you know what a hard strip is, or a creep test? Would you know how to say these words in French or Portuguese? This is what comparative terminology is about, which is defined as “The study, in relation to a given subject field, of terms designating a specialized concept in two or more languages, with a view to determining their equivalence.”

Closely related to lexicology that records and defines general language words in a dictionary, terminology collates, classifies and defines concepts of a given field in a glossary or vocabulary such as the Technical Dictionary of Road Terms.

Compiled with input from engineers of several countries, the TDRT has been a reference source in the field of road terminology for years. This terminological publication in its practical format covers 16 themes and 39 sub-themes and includes 1600 entries of road terminology, some with definitions. The Dictionary's thematic approach, bilingual classification system and alphabetical French-English/English-French indexes make it easy to consult. Illustrations at the end of the publication, an added feature especially for the uninitiated, complement some of the definitions for a complete understanding of the concepts, an essential element in terminology.

When preparing a publication, the terminologist has recourse to a number of tools, one of which is a subject-field breakdown. This is a graphical representation of a concept network<sup>3</sup> in the form of a tree. It includes the concepts that belong to a given field and illustrates the relationship between them.

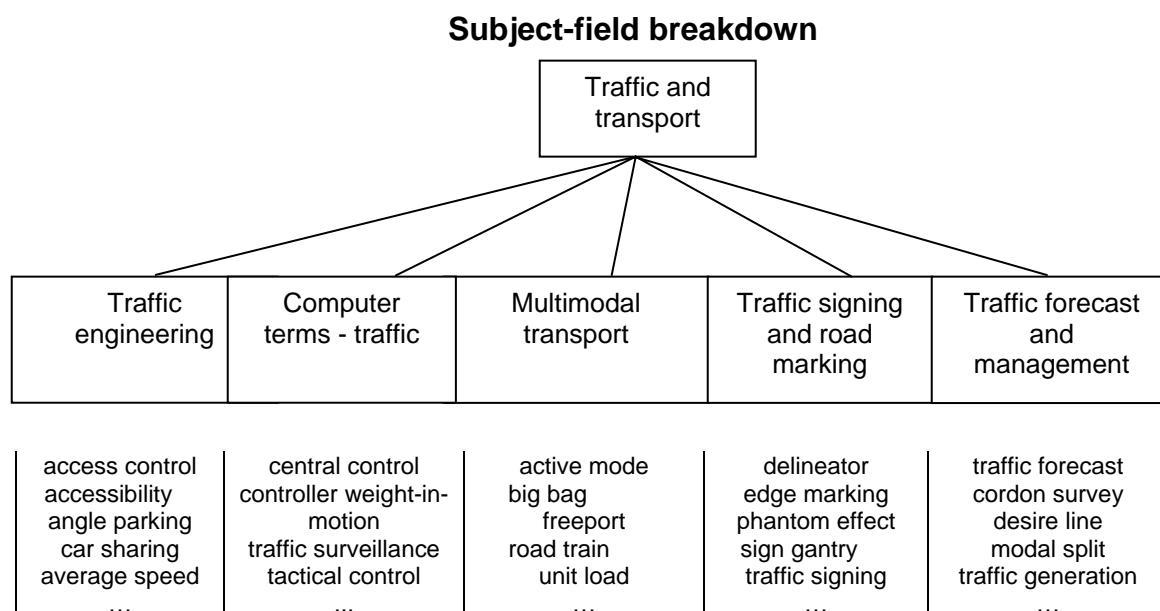


Fig. 1 Partial subject-field breakdown – theme III of the PIARC Dictionary.

<sup>3</sup> Concept network: A set of concepts and their designations that are inter-related and belong to the same subject field.

Among other things, the subject-field breakdown:

- organizes and structures the field under study;
- classifies the concepts;
- provides an overview of the concepts being dealt with;
- reveals missing concepts;
- facilitates decision-making with regard to whether or not a term belongs to the field under study<sup>4</sup>;
- facilitates writing consistent definitions for related concepts.

The subject-field breakdown is extremely useful for classifying concepts, which makes writing consistent definitions much easier. While organizing the concepts into categories, the terminologist will determine the relationship between them and where to place them in the tree. The category (or sub-field) that the concept belongs to is usually used as the anchor word<sup>5</sup> in the term's definition. The other elements of the definition provide the characteristics that distinguish the concept from other terms of the same category. In the following examples, the terminologist will use the same anchor word, *operation*, to define the terms *soil stabilization*, *soil improvement* and *cut and fill*.

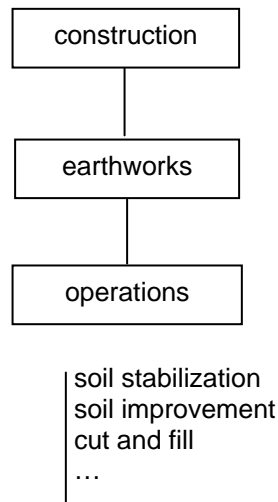


Fig. 2 Partial breakdown of the *Construction* sub-field (theme X)

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<sup>4</sup> In PIARC's case, belonging to the PIARC Dictionary or the PIARC Lexicon on Road and Traffic Engineering.

<sup>5</sup> Anchor word: The term with which a terminological definition begins, and which designates the concept that is broader than the one being defined, thus showing the latter's relative position in a concept system.



Examples from the PIARC Dictionary:

*soil stabilization* : An operation which significantly changes (generally in the medium or long term) the characteristics of the soil in a way that renders it stable, particularly with respect to the action of water and frost; it gives a permanent strength that can be measured by methods typical of solid materials.

*soil improvement* : An operation which improves the physical properties of a soil - such as natural moisture content, plasticity, moisture and frost susceptibility, and compactibility - by the addition of a binder. The quantity of binder added is, however, insufficient to induce significant permanent hardening.

*cut and fill* : ~~Earthworks~~ An operation during which materials are removed from one zone and transported to be used as fill in a nearby or other zone.

Because the subject-field breakdown suggests the existence of missing terms, it ensures an exhaustive base list. For example, in contrast with the term *hard landscaping*, the term *soft landscaping* might complete the base list and be recommended for addition in the Dictionary.

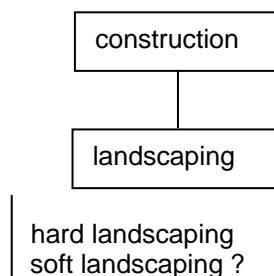


Fig. 3 Branch of the Construction sub-theme (theme X)

Over the years, terminology has developed work processes and tools to ensure a coherent classification of the base list as well as its exhaustiveness. An accurate base list in turn ensures consistency in the definitions of a terminological publication. The combined expertise of road terminology specialists and language experts would be a recipe for success in refining an already well-conceived publication.

#### **4. PIARC DICTIONARY AND LEXICON DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE DURBAN CONGRESS (2003)**

The availability of the PIARC Technical Dictionary of Road Terms and the PIARC Lexicon of Road and Traffic Engineering in an electronic form is certainly a major stride forward towards a common terminology that is understood by road and transport professionals all over the world.

But these useful communication and technology transfer aids would soon lose much of their value if they were not regularly updated to reflect the continuing developments in road and road-related technologies.

Furthermore, the promotion of technology exchange and transfer that is facilitated by the existence of a common terminology can be strengthened by translating the basic versions of the Dictionary and Lexicon into other languages than English and French – the two official languages in PIARC.

PIARC CTERM has developed a tool and a procedure for the continuous updating, upgrading and translation of its terminology data base. The procedure is presented hereafter, together with the results achieved for the PIARC Dictionary and Lexicon since the Durban congress.

#### 4.1. Procedure

In the past, the preparation of a new “hard copy” edition of the Dictionary and Lexicon was long and tedious work for a small Commission on Terminology. It took this Commission seven years to prepare the seventh edition of the Dictionary from the sixth, and nine years to prepare the second edition of the Lexicon from the first.

In 1999, PIARC ordered a French software company to develop a computer programme to make both the Dictionary and the Lexicon available in electronic form. This was the start of the “PIARC Terminology” project that is still continuing today. The first result was the release of a CD-ROM of the same name in November 2000, which contained mainly the seventh edition of the Dictionary and the second edition of the Lexicon.

After installing the programme and the terminology data files on the hard disk of his/her computer, the user was able to download updates of the basic versions of the Dictionary and Lexicon and translations into other languages than English and French from PIARC’s web site as they became available. The frequency of the updates was approximately annual. By the time of the Durban congress, it could be said that the process had turned from **cyclical** to **“semi-continuous”**.

The next step, which was taken after the Durban Congress, was the transition from the CD-ROM to on-line consultation, updating and translation. For this purpose, appropriate Internet software was developed from September 2003 with similar functions as those on the CD-ROM but allowing easier addition, amendment and deletion of terms, definitions and illustrations.

After preliminary testing by the chairman of and the team coordinator of CTERM, and after training sessions for and further testing by all the members of CTERM, the software was put on line in February 2005 and became fully operational in October of that year.

The updating and translation process for the terminology data base works mainly through **editors**, who may choose to work either on line (using a password received from the PIARC General Secretariat) or off line (on files in Excel format exported by the administrator of the data base in the appropriate presentation in columns corresponding to the specific data fields).

There are several types of editor:

- for the basic (French and English) versions of the Dictionary and Lexicon, “terminology correspondents” are appointed in all technical committees of PIARC. It is their task to collect terminology proposals from their committees within their specific fields of competence;
- for translations into other languages than French and English, “corresponding members” are appointed within CTERM by the various national committees of PIARC. They have full authority and responsibility for their translations;
- finally, the members of CTERM themselves are entitled to make proposals for the French and English and may be authorized by their national committees to prepare translations into their respective languages as well.

Four members of CTERM (one per strategic theme selected by PIARC for the present inter-Congress period) communicate as “liaison agents” with the terminology correspondents to encourage them in their task and to facilitate the exchange of terminology data between CTERM and the technical committees. After preliminary checking and commenting, they forward the contributions received to the team coordinator within CTERM.

This coordinator checks all the proposals to avoid any redundancies or duplications and converts them into a columned format while adding a suggestion for inclusion in the Dictionary and Lexicon, inclusion in the Lexicon only, or rejection. He then circulates the list to all the members of CTERM for comments. After processing their comments, he prepares a discussion in the CTERM plenary meeting only for the terms whose difficulties could be not solved by e-mail. The list as approved by CTERM after discussion is returned to the relevant technical committee for final comments and validation.

In the end, the validated terms and definitions are put on line by administrator of the data base.

Translations into other languages need not be checked and discussed in CTERM, as the corresponding members and their national committees are deemed to be competent for terminology in their own languages.

The fact that contributions and translations may be received and/or approved at any time between two PIARC congresses – and not just before or after a congress, or on an annual basis – makes the updating and translating of the PIARC Dictionary and Lexicon a **continuous** process.

## 4.2. Results – Updating

Looking back at the period between the Durban and the forthcoming Paris congress, the contributions received from the technical committees can be considered as rather poor. Only three out of the eighteen technical committees of PIARC actually provided CTERM with proposals for discussion and validation:

- TC1.3 on Performance of Road Administrations;
- TC2.1 on Sustainable Development;
- TC3.3 on Tunnel Operation.

Further contributions are under preparation in Committee 4.1 on Management of Assets and Committee 4.4 on Road Bridges. Committee 4.2 on Road/Vehicle Interaction is organizing itself to make a contribution. And Committee 1.4 on Management of Network Operations is working on a French translation of PIARC's specialized glossary on intelligent transport systems (ITS), with possible feedback to the Dictionary and Lexicon.

Committees 1.2 on Financing Road System Investment, 3.4 on Winter Maintenance, 4.3 on Road Pavements and 4.5 on Earthworks replied that they did not have any proposals for the time being, but it must be added that some of these committees made substantial contributions during the previous inter-Congress period.

One way to increase the number of contributions from technical committees would be for terminology correspondents to rely on glossaries with acronyms and road concepts as recommended in the "Guide for the production of PIARC Technical Committee reports"<sup>6</sup>.

The task of preparing terminology contributions to the PIARC Dictionary and Lexicon may in future also be greatly facilitated by software for the automatic extraction of technical terms from translation memory data bases.

## 4.3. Results – Upgrading

As far as the Dictionary is concerned, the Canadian member of CTERM is adding the Canadian synonyms to both the French and the English version. A similar effort is under way for English synonyms used in Australia and New Zealand.

As for the Lexicon, the chairman and the team coordinator of CTERM spent the summer of 2005 converting the term-to-term format (with a single French term translated by a single English term, and vice versa) into a concept-to-concept format (with a French term and its synonyms, if any, translated into an English term and its synonyms, if any, and vice versa). This effort resulted in reducing the number of entries in the Lexicon from over 17,000 terms to about 14,500 concepts, with the added value of the preferred term for each concept being placed in front – like in the Dictionary.

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<sup>6</sup> Appendix B.1 to section 8 "Publications" of the "PIARC Member Guide 2004-2008", better known as the "Blue Guide"

#### 4.4. Translation into other languages

A translation of the PIARC Dictionary into Serbian was completed in September 2005. Partial Chinese and Vietnamese translations were put on line in 2006. Translations into the Greek, Croatian and Ukrainian language are in progress as well as the updating of the Japanese version.

During the 2003-2007 period, the German- Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking members updated the translation of the Dictionary in their respective languages. The updated translations in those three languages are to be included with the basic French and English versions in a multilingual hard copy edition of the Dictionary, to be published by the forthcoming PIARC world road congress.

Morocco has proposed to translate and/or update the Dictionary into Arabic.

Other language considered for the future is Farsi (for translation).

The translation of both the Dictionary and the Lexicon into Dutch is 100 % complete and includes Belgian synonyms. The Norwegian member of CTERM is taking steps to have the Dictionary translated into Norwegian by the forthcoming congress. The progress of translation into the other Scandinavian languages (Swedish and Danish) remains to be checked by the Swedish and Danish Road Authorities.

The table below reviews the state of progress in January 2007 of the various languages, in terms of the percentages of concepts translated *and available on line*.

Language	Dictionary	Lexicon
Chinese	56 %	
Dutch	100 %	100 %
English	100 %	100 %
French	100 %	100 %
German	63 %	
Greek	8 %	
Hungarian	42 %	
Italian	62 %	
Japanese	61 %	
Portuguese	92 %	
Russian	62 %	
Serbian	97 %	
Spanish	76 %	
Vietnamese	66 %	

URL of the PIARC Terminology database : <http://termino.piarc.org>

## 5. TRANSLATION MEMORY DATABASES

The Committee on Terminology and Assistance to Translation does not have a sole target that would be restricted to developing and updating a multilingual terminological database. CTERM also explores the tools to provide comprehensive assistance for translation in order to propose recommendations relating to their use, and thus facilitate the current tasks of the other bodies of the Association, such as the Technical Committees. The official languages of the Association are French and English, so this part of the report will deal with this specific language pair; however, many observations made for this pair of languages are also relevant for other language combinations.

It is not a simple operation to integrate a very large specific dictionary into translation assistance software in order for this dictionary to have priority rank and to be called for by the software prior to any other dictionary. In fact, most of the automatic translation software available on the market propose options to create and manage a “**personal**” dictionary in which the user can record her/his own term translations, one by one. Nevertheless, it is not possible to introduce some 15,000 lines of the PIARC Lexicon into a “personal” dictionary as, in this case, the suitable data formatting is directly related to grammatical analysis. The members of the Committee have neither the competence nor the time necessary to conduct this task; moreover, this tedious adjustment process for several word pairs (source – target) is different from one software to another and cannot be used again for different software. This is the reason why this procedure had to be abandoned as it would lead, in the long term, to a total dependency on the software owner.

**The translation memory databases** provide an effective aid to the editor by exploiting the repetitive character of the technical documents and displaying automatically on the screen sentences, segments of texts or expressions previously translated and validated. This kind of tool, combined with a terminological management tool, has great potential when it is based upon a large linguistic corpus, because it then makes it possible to ensure the homogeneity of the phraseology and the terms used by an organisation. In return, it requires a fully operational centralised management to bring real benefit (collection, treatment and validation of the corpora). Lastly, these translation memory databases do not replace the professional translators who keep a hand on the translation. On the other hand, automatic translation software which generates a translation on its own, but is generally far from perfect, needs to be revised later on.

The founding principle of translation memory databases means that it is not necessary to translate again parts of texts already correctly translated in some other documents. Indeed, not only is the  $n^{\text{th}}$  translation of a sentence or an expression highly unlikely to be identical to the preceding translations, but it imposes unnecessary expenditure insofar as the product of this expenditure has been already paid for previously, and is still available.

The Committee on Terminology successfully tested a method for building up a basic translation memory from texts of reports published by PIARC. These reports are indeed published in the two languages (English and French) and in two completely distinct data files. Thus, those PIARC texts files are aligned in a very coarse way, i.e., they are organised so that every page of the report in the target language completely contains the text corresponding exclusively to the same page in the source report. Generally, an alignment procedure which is manually carried out during page-setting preceding the publication, is made paragraph by paragraph; each paragraph in the target language will correspond to one single paragraph of the source language.

There is software devoted to the alignment of text which, in a quasi automatic way, transforms the two original files thus prepared into a single table in which each line is divided into two columns with, in the first column, a sentence of the source language and, in the second one, the corresponding sentence in the target language. The resolution of alignment proposed by the software can be easily modified by the operator. It may be that a sentence is translated into two sentences or, conversely that two sentences are translated into only one.

By creating a basis of texts aligned after extracting from thousands of pages of validated translations of PIARC reports, the Secretariat general of PIARC could use and provide a base of translation memory to the technical Committees and to the translators. This base, accessible by Internet, would not only make it possible to save time, but also harmonise the translations by re-using sentence segments already translated somewhere else.

Such a translation memory database serves not only as a common resource shared between different people, but also in helping to generate candidate terms for a dictionary. Operating a translation memory database is an “extraction” process: whereas in the current literature the term “*chaussée*” is translated as “carriageway”, in the PIARC documents it is generally translated as “pavement”. An automatic analysis of the frequency occurrence of terms (or expressions) in such a large corpus as PIARC reports would reveal that the most frequent translation of “*chaussée*” is, in this context “pavement”. As a second step, the translation memory database can, in return, augment the terminological database.

The time devoted to the creation, establishing on-line, and maintenance of the terminological database of PIARC did not allow the Committee to focus on translation memory database as much as required. It is highly desirable that the next mandate will make important progress in the field of PIARC’s translation memory database.

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- PIARC Technical Dictionary of Road terms–, December 2006, 1 685 concepts – On-line version on: <http://termino.piarc.org>
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## **CONCLUSIONS**

The Committee strongly encourages PIARC to continue its quasi secular activity: the availability for the world road community of a terminology of quality is an appreciable service.

If it were useful for the development of the business application in line of the terminological data base that the Committee had, during the 2004-2007 period, a composition allowing the representation of several languages others that French and English, it is recommended on the other hand that for the next mandate the members of the Committee preferably have as a mother tongue English or French. These two languages are used indeed as reference for the introduction of new terms or of new definitions and no concept can be introduced into the data base if it is not initially introduced into these two languages. But these languages present local particularisms: French of Belgium or Canada, English of the United States or Australia are not respectively identical to the technical languages used in France or United Kingdom. Consequently, the ideal composition of the Committee would be a whole of English- and French-speaking members, preferably at least bilingual, and whose countries of origin would not be only France and United Kingdom.

After opening, at the end of 2006, the Internet site for dictionary consultation in free access, it will be useful to specify by an investigation the suggestions of the Net surfers as for the improvement of the interface of consultation.