Legal terminology in Cyprus: Linguistic issues and issues of accessibility

George Floros
University of Cyprus
gfloros@ucy.ac.cy

Abstract

This paper seeks to examine the specific terminological context of Cyprus, as regards legal and administrative terminology. Cyprus presents some noteworthy particularities in relation to both the policy followed by Cypriot Courts of Law and the translation of the country’s legislation from English into Standard Modern Greek (SMG). SMG is the statutory variety that has been adopted in all public domains since 1960 (Independence from British rule). However, the use of English in the Cypriot courts was prolonged for longer than two decades. Moreover, the translation of the legislation into SMG also displays some particularities which are interesting from a sociolinguistic point of view. Specifically, the translated law texts contain terminology which in many cases is different from the standard terminology used in (mainland) Greek law texts, even in cases where there is no ‘obvious’ necessity for differentiation. Most of these cases are calques of the corresponding English terms. This paper will present the aforementioned particularities in legal terminology with the aim to accentuate the terminological dependence of ‘Cypriot’ terminology on English rather than on SMG, in an attempt to argue that ethnic identity issues do not necessarily guide linguistic—and specifically—terminological choices and practice. As a result, some questions arise regarding the positioning of Cypriot terminology internationally, especially as concerns specialized translation from and into Greek within the EU institutions and, consequently, the accessibility of Cypriot nationals to written (translation) or oral (interpreting) texts produced by EU institutions in Greek.

Basic bibliography


**Bio-sketch**

Georgios Floros is Associate Professor in Translation Studies at the Department of English Studies, University of Cyprus. He received a BA from the University of Athens in 1996, and a PhD in translation theory from Saarland University, Germany, in 2001. His research areas include translation and interpreting (theory and methodology), translation ethics, pragmatics, translation pedagogy and terminology.