Phraseological units in English-Spanish legal dictionaries: a comparative study

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Abstract A bilingual general language or specialized dictionary that addresses translation needs should include phraseological information. However, there is still no consensus as to the type of combinatorial information that should be included, where it should be placed, or how it should be classified. Not surprisingly, there are almost as many approaches to phraseology and phraseological units as authors or types of study. In this paper, some of the most representative legal English-Spanish dictionaries are described in order to evaluate their potential usefulness for translators who need to produce a target language text. The comparison of these dictionaries is based on the headword *vista* ['trial', 'hearing']. Our results concluded that a legal dictionary for translators should provide various ways of accessing phraseological units as well as a classification of phraseological information within each entry for a more effective retrieval of information. Finally, the dictionary should include a short description of the unit so that users are better able to understand its meaning and usage in different contexts as well as its potential contextualized correspondences in the target language and culture.

Keywords legal dictionary, phraseological unit, translation

1 Introduction

Approximately 80 % of the words in discourse are chosen according to the co-selection principle rather than for purely syntactic or grammatical reasons (Sinclair 2000: 197). Thus, the analysis of how words co-select or combine with other words is a crucial focus of study for any linguist and particularly for translators who wish to create a text that has the same meaning as the source language text, and which fits seamlessly into the target language text system and culture.

Phraseology is of paramount importance for lexicographers, and has a central role in monolingual and bilingual general language dictionaries. Terminographers also agree that phraseological information in terminographic resources is extremely important, and even more so for legal purposes:

> Dictionaries that provide help in communicative and cognitive situations are important information tools in today's society, in particular when two different languages and legal systems are involved. (Nielsen 2015: 111)

Nevertheless, few specialized resources actually contain word combinations (L'Homme/Leroyer 2009: 260). It goes without saying that those resources that do include them are frequently not consistent in their treatment of phraseological units (Montero-Martínez/Buendía-Castro 2012). Fortunately, this situation is gradually improving and the representation of phraseological units in specialized dictionaries is becoming increasingly frequent. There are now new ways of collecting and organizing data. These processes are enhanced by the use of corpus analysis tools that enable lexicographers and terminographers to extract a greater variety of information.

In this paper, some of the most representative English-Spanish legal dictionaries are described and compared. The focus is on how they represent, describe, and classify phraseological units and on their potential usefulness for translators. The entry analyzed in these resources is that of the headword *vista* ['hearing', 'trial'], and the user context envisioned is that of a translator who wishes to translate a Spanish legal text into English.

Our analysis focuses on both collocations and compounds. Our approach to collocations integrates insights from both the semantically-based approach and the frequency-oriented approach to collocations. The semantically-based approach (Mel'čuk et al. 1984–1999, Hausmann 1989, Benson et al. 1986, 2009) conceives collocations as mainly binary units with a semantically-autonomous base and a semantically-dependent collocate. In contrast, the frequency-oriented approach to collocation (Sinclair et al. 1970/2004) conceives collocations as statistically significant co-occurrences of two or more words.

In line with semantically-based approaches, what distinguishes a combination such as *eat meat* from *drop the meat* is the following: (i) the definition of *meat* (the flesh of an animal when it is used for food); (ii) the arguments allowed by *eat* (to put or take food into the mouth, chew it, and swallow it[1]). In this sense, *meat*, as an edible food, can appear with a verb of ingestion (*eat*), whose second argument is something that can be eaten, i. e. *food.* However, the definition of *meat* makes no reference to verbs such as *drop*. Therefore, *drop the meat* is a free combination, whereas *eat the meat* is a collocation.

In addition, our approach also includes a certain degree of compositionality in that each lexical unit in a collocation retains its meaning. As such, for example, in the collocation *monopolize a market*, both *monopolize* and *market* maintain their respective meanings. Nonetheless, they are not free combinations since the verb is imposed by the meaning of the noun, and at the same time, the verb selects its arguments. Finally, in order for a multi-word unit to be a collocation, it should also have a high frequency in texts that activate the same pragmatic context or situation.

Therefore, in our study, a collocation is a combination of two or more words. The most common typology in English is the following (Mendoza et al. 2013: 19): (i) verb + noun (direct object); (ii) noun or adjective + noun; (iii) noun + of + noun; (iv) adverb + adjective; (v) verb + adjective; (vi) verb + in + noun; and (vii) verb + noun (subject). In Spanish, collocations are most frequently formed by the following structures (Mendoza et al. 2013: 19): (i) verb + noun (direct object); (ii) noun + adjective or noun; (iii) noun + *de* + noun; (iv) adverb + adjective; (v) verb + adverb; (vi) verb + preposition + noun; and (vii) verb + noun (subject).

Compounds are often defined as "one word (in the sense of lexeme) that is made up of two other words (in the sense of a lexeme)" (Bauer 1988: 65). That means that they designate a single concept. As such, Sager underlines that the meaning of a compound is independent of its components: "A compound is a combination of two or more words into a new syntagmatic unit with a new meaning independent of the constituent parts." (Sager 1997: 34)

In line with this, Sager (1997: 34–35) identifies the following characteristics of compounds: (i) when there are two elements in a compound, the first element normally determines the second, which is the *nucleus* (e. g. *water load*, *canal bed*, *damp course*); (ii) compounds can be inserted into other combinations for new compounds (e. g. *rock-type flood*); (iii) depending on the nature of the nucleus, there is a difference between compounds that can designate ob-

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[1]   The definitions of 'meat' and 'eat' come from *Cambridge Dictionary Online:* <http://dictionary.cambridge. org/> [12.02.2015].

jects (e. g. *concrete breaker*), processes (e. g. *concrete casting*), and/or properties (e. g. *concrete stability*).

As a result, nominal compounds in English are either noun + noun or adjective + noun combinations. Since collocations can have a similar structure, it is often difficult to differentiate them from compounds:

> We are not aware of any broadly agreed standard for distinguishing noun-noun and adjective-noun collocations from multiword terms. And often not the classification of the phenomena, but the additional lexical and terminological description is what really matters. (Heid 2001: 791)

In this regard, some authors question whether a distinction between collocations and compounds is even necessary. Within this scenario, Meyer and Mackintosh coin the term *phraseme* to refer to both collocations and compounds:[2]

> [...] [W]e will take phrasemes to include both collocations and compounds. We realize that these are different, in that normally a compound designates a single concept while a collocation does not. However, compounds and collocations are both realizations of terminological word combinations. Furthermore, they share important relations to the conceptual structure of domains. (Meyer/Mackintosh 1996: 3)

2 Legal language as a sublanguage

Legal language in all language-cultures is a sublanguage with very specific syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic features (Tiersma 1999: 15–133). This is only natural because its subject matter is codified in legal terms or designations of specialized knowledge concepts, which are linked to national legal systems, generally based on civil law or common law. In most countries, legal systems generally fall into one of these two categories. The main difference between the two systems is that in common law countries, case law – in the form of published judicial opinions – is of primary importance, whereas in civil law systems, codified statutes predominate.

Legal documents often use grammatical structures that are typical of the field and rarely found elsewhere. Such structures include redundancy, formulaic (often archaic) expressions, foreign words and Latinisms, syntactic discontinuity, impersonal and passive constructions, nominalization, and complex sentences (Hiltunen 2012, Williams 2004: 112–115).

Such documents are issued in legal contexts that codify speech acts (e. g. assertive, commissive, directive, declarative, etc.) (Trosberg 1991: 71–85). Examples of directive speech acts include EU regulations, which are established so that the receivers will take a particular action. Contracts or promissory notes are commissive speech acts that commit the text sender to a future course of action. The content, form, and structure of legal documents thus reflect a message emitted by a text sender to a group of receivers or addressees.

Accordingly, legal translation is a subtype of LSP translation, which entails cross-linguistic communication in legal contexts. As Biel (2008: 22) states: "In contrast to other types of LSP translation, such as medicine, science or technology, legal translation tends to involve more culture-specific than universal components."

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[2]   We distinguish between compounds and collocations and refer to both as phraseological units.

Although to a certain extent, the relation between content and form is present in other specialized texts as well, it is even more prevalent for texts in the legal domain since legal language is the result of a social contract and can be regarded as system-bound (Mattila 2006: 9). In fact, in contrast to science and technology, legal *realia* are not concrete objects (e. g. machines, microscopic organisms, geological formations, etc.), but rather perceptions of sociocultural reality and events. Thus, the various ways that a person can unlawfully take something from someone else, infringe a contract, or be responsible for damage caused to another person, can be variously perceived and codified in different legal systems. This makes it difficult to establish correspondences between terms in these legal systems, especially when the systems are not closely related.

Accordingly, a bilingual entry in a legal dictionary can only be regarded as adequate if there is as complete a description as possible of the macro- and micro-context in which the term appears. This description informs the reader how the term is used and the degree to which it can be regarded as an equivalent to a given term within another legal system. Evidently, the equivalent target language term or terms should also appear with as much contextual information as possible, which facilitates mapping relations between the source and target language systems and cultures. Only then the translator can be able to judge which correspondence should be used in the target text.

3 Phraseology in legal English-Spanish dictionaries: description

When searching for legal equivalents, apart from the wide range of electronic tools available (such as Google or discussion forums), translators continue to use both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries as the first port of call. Monolingual legal dictionaries provide definitions of legal concepts that form a conceptual network of a legal system in one language, whereas bilingual legal dictionaries provide target language equivalents of source language legal concepts (Biel 2008: 27–28). In this paper we concentrate on the usefulness of bilingual legal dictionaries for translators.

As previously mentioned, specialized dictionaries that include phraseological information differ considerably in the way that they list phraseological units and represent them in entries. This section provides an overview of how phraseology is treated in some of the most representative English-Spanish legal dictionaries. The entries in these dictionaries frequently do not include definitions since it is assumed that users already know the meaning of the word or have previously looked it up in a monolingual dictionary. Generally speaking, these dictionaries are bidirectional, i. e. they allow searches from the source language to the target language (e. g. English-Spanish) and from the target language to the source language (e. g. Spanish-English).

The headword *vista* [ˈhearing', 'trial'] is used as an example to describe and compare this set of legal resources. The dictionaries analyzed are the following:

- *Diccionario de Términos Jurídicos = A Dictionary of Legal Terms: inglés español, Spanish-English* (Alcaraz-Varó et al. 2012);
- *Legal Dictionary English-Spanish – Spanish-English* (Kaplan 2008);
- *Diccionario Bilingüe de Términos Legales inglés-español, español-inglés = Bilingual Dictionary of Legal Terms English-Spanish, Spanish-English* (Ramos-Bossini et al. 2008);
- *Nuevo Diccionario de Derecho y Relaciones Internacionales (inglés-español-español-inglés) — New Dictionary of Law and International Relations (English-Spanish-Spanish-English)* (Muñiz-Castro 2003).

Apart from describing the main characteristics of the micro- and macrostructure of each terminographic resource, we analyze how each one deals with the following: (i) the kinds of phraseological units encoded; (ii) the types of phraseological information offered; and (iii) the location of phraseological units within the micro- or macrostructure of the dictionary. The positive and negative aspects of each resource are highlighted with a view to designing a terminological entry for legal translators that combines the good points of these dictionaries and avoids their drawbacks.

One of the main limitations of these dictionaries is that they have no electronic version and can only be consulted in book form. Generally speaking, specialized dictionaries in general are reluctant to provide electronic versions of their resources for copyright reasons. This considerably limits access to information since searches are only possible from the base term (i. e. the noun), and this means that searches are more time-consuming. In addition, there is the risk of not including the most recent concepts or new senses because of the length of the publishing process.

3.1 Diccionario de Términos Jurídicos (DTJ)

The *Diccionario de Términos Jurídicos. A Dictionary of Legal Terms (inglés-español, Spanish-English)* (Alcaraz-Varó et al. 2012),[3] henceforth DTJ, is an English-Spanish bilingual dictionary of legal terms.[4] Although the introduction of the dictionary does not specify the exact number of lemmas contained, it clearly states that the 11th edition doubles the number in the first issue, and that it has added about 300 lemmas compared to the 10th edition.

The DTJ targets translators, students, and professionals of the various branches of economics, business, and law, along with journalists and entrepreneurs. It includes both American and British English variants. For its compilation, a large number of specialized texts from numerous resources were consulted for searching and validating examples and definitions.[5]

The DTJ has two sections: (i) English-Spanish; (ii) Spanish-English. The reason for this is that some of the terms or phrases that are single units or multi-word units, either in English or Spanish, are translated as a paraphrase in the other language. Most of the lemmas in the dictionary are simple or compound lexical units although there are some syntactic or periphrastic units, especially in the Spanish-English part. The dictionary is organized alphabetically.

As stated in its introduction, the dictionary includes three kinds of lexical units: (i) *technical units*, considered to be the simplest because of their monosemic nature (e. g. *bribery*); (ii) *semi-technical units*, regarded as the most complex since they are composed of general words which have acquired specialized meaning when used in the field of law (e. g. *vista*); (iii) *general terms* used in the specialized field, but which do not present special difficulties (e. g. *agency*).

The DTJ gives a detailed description of each lemma by including a wide variety of combinations associated with the lemma. For example, *vista* has a total of 12 combinations (cf. table 1). First, different meanings of the lemma are designated by using a subscript (i. e. $vista_1$:

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3   This dictionary is in its 11th edition. The first issue was published in 1993.

4   Other bilingual dictionaries compiled by this research team are Alcaraz-Varó (2006a, 2006b); Alcaraz-Varó/Castro-Calvín (2007); Alcaraz-Varó/Hughes (2008); Campos-Pardillos/Alcaraz-Varó (2002); Castro-Calvín/Alcaraz-Varó (2003); and Mateo-Martínez/Alcaraz-Varó (2003).

5   There are more than 50 different dictionaries and other reference material used for the elaboration of the entries. For a complete description of all the works used, cf. Alcaraz-Varó et al. (2012).

'sight, vision, view'; *vista₂*: 'hearing, trial, trial proper'). As shown in table 1, the grammatical category of the headword is given, followed by the various translations of the headword and the legal subdomain to which they belong.

The dictionary specifies 18 legal domains: administrative law (ADMIN), business law (BSNSS), civil law (CIVIL), community law (EURO), company law (COMP LAW), constitutional law (CONST), criminal law (CRIM), economics (ECO), employment law (EMPLOY), family law (FAM), insurance (INSCE), intellectual property law (INTEL PROP), international law (INTNL), general terms (GENE), procedural law (PROC), public health (PUBLIC HEALTH), successions (SUC), and taxation (TAX). The translations are separated by commas when they are regarded as synonymous, and by a semicolon, when they refer to different senses. Usage examples are provided after the symbol ◊ (e. g. '*Se celebra la vista con participación de los testigos*'). Entries in the DTJ also include cross-references to other lemmas headed by "S", which stands for *see* in the Spanish-English section, and headed by "V", which stands for *véase* ['see'] in the English-Spanish section. Finally, the various possible combinations with the headword are listed.

Word combinations are highlighted in bold typeface. The information displayed for each combination has the same structure as the information provided for the headword (i. e. domain and translation of the phraseological unit, usage examples, and cross-references to other word combinations).

Tab. 1: Entry for the headword vista *in the DTJ (Alcaraz-Varó et al. 2012)*

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vista₁ *n:* GEN sight, vision, view. [Exp: **vista₂** (GEN hearing, trial, trial proper ◊ *Se celebre la vista con participación de los testigos; S. juicio*), **vista, a la** (BSNSS at/on sight, at call, on demand, on/upon presentation, upon presentment), **vista completa** (PROC full hearing), **vista de aduanas** (BSNSS customs inspector, collector of a port/the customs; S. *administrador de aduanas*), **vista de la causa** (PROC trial, public proceedings in a trial, public hearing), **vista del recurso** (PROC hearing of an appeal); **vista oral** (PROC public hearing, trial proper), **vista preliminar** (PROC pretrial/preliminary hearing/review), **vista pública** (PROC public hearing; S. *vista de la causa*), **vistilla** (PROC preliminary hearing; court appearance; *approx* plea and direction hearing; S. *vista oral*), **visto/-a₁** (GEN seen; S. *ver*), **visto/-a₂** (PROC having regard to, in view of ◊ *Visto el informe presentado, la comisión accedió a lo solicitado; S. considerando, resultando*), **visto bueno** (GEN approval, O.K., countersignature ◊ *Dio su visto bueno para que se practicara la prueba; S. aprobación, anuencia, aquiescencia, aceptación, conformidad, consentimiento, beneplácito*), **visto para sentencia** (PROC *approx* the matter is now ready for judgment, both parties have now rested their cases; judge's announcement that the trial is at an end and judgment will follow in due course), **visto que** (GEN seeing that, considering that; whereas: S. *visto*)].

The fact that the DTJ mainly focuses on compounds of the type noun + noun, noun + adjective (in Spanish), adjective + noun (in English), noun + preposition + noun (e. g. *vista completa*, *vista de aduana*, *vista de la causa*, *vista del recurso*, *vista oral*, *vista preliminar*, *vista pública*), and considerably less on collocations of the type verb + noun/noun + verb, signifies that users may find it difficult to retrieve the verb that the term co-occurs with. Consequently, if users consult the dictionary to identify which actions can be performed within the context of a trial (e. g. 'conduct', 'hold'; 'ask for', 'call for', 'demand'; 'attend') or to find the right Spanish terms for these actions, they will be disappointed.

The DTJ also includes adverbial phrases ("locuciones adverbiales") such as *a la vista* and conjunctions ("locuciones conjuntivas") of the type *visto que*. Although these phrases are helpful, their inclusion does not give the dictionary added value since such combinations can easily be found in general language repositories.

The most positive aspect of the DTJ is the number of combinations provided. The accuracy and reliability of the translations in this dictionary are reflected in its number of editions, which are the result of many years of work and revision. The translations of the combinations are either direct (e. g. *vista oral* – 'public hearing'), or explicative when the same concept is not lexicalized in the same way in the other language (e. g. *visto para sentencia – the matter is now ready for judgment, both parties have now rested their cases; judge's announcement that the trial is at an end and judgment will follow in due course*). It is thus a veritable treasure house of information for legal translators.

3.2 The Legal Dictionary

The *Legal Dictionary English-Spanish – Spanish-English* (3ʳᵈ edition), compiled by Kaplan (2008), has over 100,000 entries and more than 135,000 equivalents in all areas of law. The targeted user groups are lawyers, translators, and anyone working in English and Spanish law. The author does not provide any further information concerning the micro- and macrostructure of the dictionary because as stated in the preface, its format is "straightforward and naturally intuitive". Users merely need to look up a term and obtain the Spanish or English equivalent.

Although the author states that this resource enhances searches, thus saving time and effort, it bears a greater resemblance to a bilingual glossary of terms in English and Spanish (cf. table 2). As can be observed, all the terms related to *vista* are given in bold type, followed by their gender (for common nouns) and English equivalents. When there are various equivalents for a noun or noun phrase, they are separated by commas and without any specification of differences in meaning or usage. For example, *vista* can either refer to vision/sight, or, within the more specialized context of law, to a trial or hearing. The entry for *vista* in this dictionary merely lists the possible equivalents for this term without any discrimination between meanings (i. e. **vista** *f – vision, hearing, trial, sight, view, look*).

Tab. 2: Entry of the headword vista *in Kaplan (2008)*

vista *f* – vision, hearing, trial, sight, view, look
vista *m* – customs official
vista, a la – at sight, in sight
vista administrativa – administrative hearing
vista completa – full hearing
vista de, a – in the presence of, in view of, in consideration of
vista de aduana – customs inspector
vista de causa probable – probable cause hearing
vista de, en – in view of
vista disciplinaria – disciplinary hearing
vista informal – informal hearing
vista preliminar – preliminary hearing
vistas *f* – meeting

vistazo *m* – glance
visto *adj* – seen, awaiting sentence or resolution, closed, decided, unoriginal, clear
visto bueno – approval
visto para sentencia – ready for judgement
visto que – in view of the fact that, since
visto y aprobado – seen and approved

Like the DTJ (cf. 3.1), Kaplan (2008) mainly focuses on compounds of the type noun + noun, noun + adjective (in Spanish), adjective + noun (in English), and noun + preposition + noun. It also has very few verb + noun/noun + verb, adverbial phrases, and conjunctions. In contrast to the DTJ, Kaplan (2008) does not specify differences in meaning when lemmas are polysemous or classify them in legal subdomains. Furthermore, it does not provide usage examples or cross-references.

Still another problem is that Kaplan (2008) includes various general language phraseological units, and even lists them in different lines as though their meaning was not the same (i. e. "**vista de, a** – in the presence of, in view of, in consideration of"; "**vista de, en** – in view of"). In addition, it omits frequent collocations in the legal subdomain (e. g. *vista oral, vista pública, vistilla, vista de la causa*), which do appear in the DTJ (cf. 3.1), and which are essential combinations for the headword *vista*. Finally, regarding the quality of the translations offered, in many cases, only a word-by-word translation is provided without the inclusion of any synonyms or equivalents.

3.3 The Diccionario Bilingüe de Términos Legales– Bilingual Dictionary of Legal Terms

The *Diccionario Bilingüe de Términos Legales (inglés-español/español-inglés) – Bilingual Dictionary of Legal Terms (English-Spanish/Spanish-English)* (5th edition) (Ramos-Bossini et al. 2008) contains about 20,000 entries in Spanish and English. Targeted user groups are legal practitioners, translators, and anyone interested in law. In the introduction, no explanation is given of the organization of the macro- and microstructure of entries. The authors only highlight that the dictionary provides a short definition of those terms that could pose difficulty from the perspective of comparative law. In this third edition, the dictionary also includes an annex of the most widely used legal forms and documents in Spanish and English, which could be helpful to users.

As shown in table 3, the dictionary does not offer any classification of phraseological units within the microstructure of entries. The various combinations are merely listed in alphabetical order, highlighted in bold, and separated by "||". Equivalents of the same phraseological unit are separated by a semicolon without any specification of meaning or usage. In addition, when the lemma is the last or middle word of the combination, a slash is displayed so that users can infer that they must place the lemma where the corresponding slash appears. However, when the lemma heads the multi-word unit, no slashes are displayed. The user is thus forced to guess where the lemma should go (e. g. *de aduanas, del recurso, oral, preliminar* or *pública*). Although this may be evident to native speakers, it is somewhat less obvious to non-native speakers.

Inconsistencies were also observed in this resource. More specifically, the dictionary seems to only include the specialized meaning within the legal field, because, unlike the other

two dictionaries, only the meaning of *vista* in its sense of trial is displayed. However, oddly enough, it then goes on to list combinations where *vista* is understood in its sense of *sight* ("a la – At sight").

Tab. 3: Entry of the headword vista *in Ramos-Bossini et al. (2008)*

Vista Trial; hearing; oral proceeding before a judge; court proceeding ordering a response from one of the parties; (document containing) legal opinion; customs officer. || **a la** – At sight. || **a – de** In the presence of. || **completa** Full hearing. || **de aduanas** Customs official. || **del recurso**   Hearing of the appeal. || **en – de** Considering; whereas. || **oral** Court hearing. || **preliminar**   Preliminary hearing. || **pública** Public hearing.
Visto adv. Considering; whereas. Formula with various legal meanings: (1) that a decision will not be taken in a case; (2) that all evidence has been heard; (3) that an appeal on cassation has been accepted; (4) that the judge has finished reviewing a matter; (5) in written judgments, the part preceding the "whereas" clauses which lists the precepts and facts on which a decision is based. || **bueno** Approval; seen and approved. || **el fondo de la cuestión** Having examined the basis of the case. || **para sentencia** Case which has been heard and is ready for judge's sentence. || **y considerando** Whereas. (preamble to introductory clause in an official document).

In the same way as Kaplan (2008) and in contrast to the DTJ, no usage examples or cross-references are included. Similarly, Ramos-Bossini et al. (2008) also focuses on phraseological units in the form of compound nouns and less on verbs. Finally, the number of combinations included within each entry is quite small, which signifies that the user may not be able to find a frequent combination such as *vista de la causa*.

3.4 Nuevo Diccionario de Derecho y Relaciones Internacionales– New Dictionary of Law and International Relations

The *Nuevo Diccionario de Derecho y Relaciones Internacionales (inglés-español-español-inglés) – New Dictionary of Law and International Relations (English-Spanish-Spanish-English)* (Muñiz-Castro 2003) stems from the compilation of the terminological data bank, IBEROTERM, which in 2003 had more than one million terms in Spanish with equivalences in English, French, and German. It is aimed at economic practitioners, translators, and students. It includes about 42,000 entries in English and Spanish. As stated in the introduction, it focuses on law and international relations, and more specifically, on the essential vocabulary of these fields. It thus excludes general words that are used in these fields but which do not have a specialized meaning.

Entries are in alphabetical order and headed by a headword. As shown in table 4, the various combinations in each entry appear in bold type and are organized alphabetically. As can be seen, *vista* is considered to be polysemous (in the same way as in the DTJ and Kaplan 2008). As such, each of its senses is given separately (*vista*$_1$, *vista*$_2$). When the first element of a combination does not have a specialized meaning, it is easily identifiable, since after the headword, a colon is provided (this is the case for *vista*$_2$). In contrast, as shown in table 4, *vista*$_1$ is regarded as specialized, and thus is not followed by a colon. In each case, the headword is replaced by this symbol (~) to avoid repetition. After the combination is offered, the field in which it is used is highlighted, followed by the translation(s) of the combination.

The dictionary comprises ten fields, namely, DER for law and public administration, POL for politics, DIP for diplomacy, COOP for international cooperation, CON for international conferences, COM-E for electronic commerce, TRAD for international treaties, ORG for international institutions, TRIB for international courts, and BEL for armed conflicts. As reflected in the description, this resource does not provide definitions, explanations, or usage examples in context.

Tab. 4: Entry of the headword vista *in Muñiz-Castro (2003)*

vista₁ *n* DER trial; ~ **de aduanas** DER customs inspector; ~ **de una causa** DER trial, TRIB hearing; ~ **imparcial** DER fair hearing; ~ **preliminary** DER preliminary hearing; **causa** ~ **y resuelta** DER case heard and concluded; **desde el punto de** ~ **administrativo** POL administratively; **intercambio de puntos de** ~ CON exchange of views; **lista de causas no listas para** ~ DER reserve calendar; **lista de causas para** ~ **con jurado** DER jury calendar; **orden de traer los autos a la** ~ DER order to show cause
vista₂: a primera ~ *loc* DER prima facie
visto: ~ **bueno** *n* DER approval; ~ **bueno** POL countersignature; **caso** ~ **y resuelto** DER case heard and concluded

Muñiz-Castro (2003) tends to include a wide variety of combinations for each headword with some inconsistencies. For instance, as shown in table 4, the combinations *desde el punto de vista administrativo* and *intercambio de puntos de vista* refer to the general meaning of *vista* rather than to its specialized sense of *trial*. Therefore, these combinations should have been included within the lemma of *vista₂*. Similarly to the other resources, all the combinations within each entry are nominal, and no verbal collocations are included. As such, the user would not have any way of knowing the verbs most likely to combine with a given noun.

3.5 Practical application to real legal translation contexts

The translation process can be divided into three phases, namely, *preparation*, *translation*, and *revision* (Tarp 2007: 241):
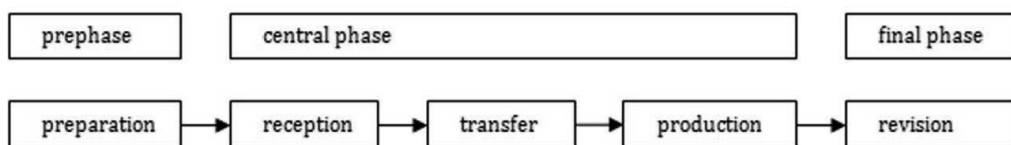

Fig. 1: The translation process

The translation phase is the central part of the process and focuses on the understanding of the source language text and on the translation of the knowledge structures encoded in its terminology. It is at this stage that translators require both monolingual and bilingual solutions, which can be in the form of explanations and/or potential translation correspondences.

This section describes three examples of these dictionary entries and their potential usefulness for translation purposes. More specifically, three short fragments of Spanish legal texts are proposed for translation into English with a special focus on the term *vista* in the source text.

(1) […] el Tribunal podrá decidir la **suspensión de la vista** durante un breve período si los representantes de las partes desean […].[6]

Quite often, the first action that a translator performs is to consult a specialized legal dictionary in order to find the translation of a source language term, in this case *vista*. The DTJ gives 'hearing' 'trial' and 'trial proper' as translation equivalents. Kaplan (2008) makes no distinction between the general language and specialized meanings of this term and includes 'vision', 'hearing', 'trial', 'sight', 'view' and 'look' as possible equivalents.

Ramos-Bossini et al. (2008) include 'trial', 'hearing', 'oral proceeding before a judge', 'court proceeding ordering a response from one of the parties', 'legal opinion', and 'customs officer'. Since there are significant differences between a proceeding, an opinion, and a customs officer, this rather heterogeneous list might lead to a certain degree of confusion.

Finally, Muñiz-Castro (2003) only offers 'trial' as an equivalent for 'vista'. What can be inferred from this is that these bilingual legal dictionaries include no information regarding differences between equivalents or the level of specificity of each correspondence. In addition, many bilingual dictionaries, such as Kaplan (2008), do not provide a way of dealing with polysemy since they do not distinguish between the different senses of a term.

It is thus the translator's job to choose the correct sense. For this reason, translators will be obliged to perform more operations in order to be able to ascertain which correspondence is the best fit for the target text. Regarding *suspensión*, which is the nominalization of the verb *suspender*, none of the dictionaries includes this collocation despite the fact that this verb and verb form are frequently used with *vista*.

(2) […] con motivo del procedimiento ante el Tribunal de Primera Instancia. – Que se fije una fecha para la celebración de la **vista oral**, si ello se considerara necesario.[7]

In example (2), although *vista oral* is one of the most frequent combinations of *vista*, Kaplan (2008) and Muñiz Castro (2003) do not include this multi-word unit. The DTJ provides 'public hearing' and 'trial proper' as equivalents in English, and Ramos-Bossini et al. (2008) 'court hearing'. Since these correspondences are not exactly the same and cannot always be used in exactly the same contexts, this could lead users to select the wrong translation if they do not have the appropriate background knowledge. This highlights the fact that differences between equivalents should be provided in dictionaries.

(3) La Corte de Lima inaugura esta mañana la sala laboral que conocerá los juicios orales con la nueva Ley Procesal de Trabajo (NLPT), con lo que se iniciará también la primera audiencia de oralidad, todo un cambio trascendental para la justicia en la capital, afirmó el presidente de este tribunal, Omar Toledo Tor]ibio. – ¿En qué consiste la audiencia de **vista de causa** programada para hoy?[8]

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[6]   <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:069:0013:0033:ES:PDF> [12.02.2015].

[7]   <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:297:0027:0028:ES:PDF> [12.02.2015].

[8]   <http://www.elperuano.pe/Edicion/noticia-empiezan-las-audiencias-orales-laborales-lima-1429.aspx#. VWRiXPntmko> [12.02.2015].

Example (3) is from a Peruvian newspaper. In this case, *vista de causa* is not in any of the dictionaries. The DTJ includes *vista de la causa;* Kaplan (2008) offers *vista de causa probable*; Muñiz-Castro (2003) gives *vista de una causa*; and Ramos-Bossini et al. (2008) do not include it. This is evidently a problem because users would have to decide whether *vista de causa* is a variant of one of the terms that do appear. However, this decision is not an easy one because of the lack of systematicity and normalization in legal dictionaries and their insensitivity to diatopic or geographic variants.

4 Conclusions

Thanks to the availability of large corpora and lexical analysis tools, it is increasingly frequent for dictionaries of all types to include phraseological information in their entries. Nevertheless, at the same time, there is still no systematic treatment of such information. The decision to include a phraseological unit as a lemma or as a combination within an entry, the classification of phraseological units, and their description often seem to be entirely random. This article has offered a comparative analysis of how phraseology is dealt with in some of the most representative English-Spanish legal dictionaries.

The four resources described in this study focus on the description and analysis of noun + noun or noun + adjective phraseological units to the exclusion of combinations with verbs, despite the fact that verbs are considered to be the most important category of language (L'Homme 1998). In other words, if users are searching for a verb which combines with *market* (e. g. 'monopolize', 'capture', etc.), they would not be able to find this information in these lexicographic resources. An effective bilingual specialized dictionary should not only contain compound nouns in its entries, but also adjective and verb combinations. In addition, it should provide different ways of accessing information depending on user needs (Bergenholtz/Tarp 2004, 2010).

To this end, it would help if resources were available online since then they would be easier to update with new terms. Electronic resources have no space restrictions and can be designed so that phraseological units can be easily accessed. This is accomplished by performing advanced searches, which could provide access to encyclopedic information as well as documents reflecting the usage of terms as well as their combinatorial patterns in the source language. In addition, these patterns could be linked to the most frequent combinatorial patterns of the equivalent or equivalents in the target language. Such data and mapping relations would help users to make informed decisions about which correspondence to opt for in the target language.

Regarding the description of phraseological units, with the exception of the DTJ, the other resources do not describe them at all. They only provide the translations of the phraseological unit. However, there is little information regarding potential degrees of equivalence or the context in which one equivalent would be preferable to another. In fact, usage notes and usage examples are only provided in the DTJ.

In line with Buendía-Castro/Faber (2014: 231), a dictionary, whether for general or specialized language, should provide a description of phraseological units so that users, and especially translators, can understand their meaning and use. This entails the inclusion of usage notes and examples as well as different types of pragmatic information, which give a description of the context in which the unit should be used.

Finally, the resources analyzed offer limited geographic information. This kind of data is of the utmost importance in legal contexts since each country has its own legal system. Even countries that share the same language have legal systems that differ. This means that diatopic variants proliferate in both Spanish and English.

As far as the classification of phraseological information within an entry is concerned, neither Kaplan (2008) nor Ramos-Bossini et al. (2008) offers any type of classification. Phraseological units in these dictionaries are merely displayed alphabetically. In contrast, the DTJ and Muñiz-Castro (2003) classify entries according to subfields within the specialized domain of law. In our opinion, dictionaries should provide a classification of phraseological units within entries. Users would then be able to retrieve relevant information more quickly and efficiently if the combinations were semantically classified and interrelated.

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