# Summary

*Deutsche Bundesbank and Banca d'Italia.*

*The Encyclopaedic Knowledge Shared in a Socio-Professional Community of Speakers.*

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## Abstract

The focus of this work is the extraction of specific technicisms (It.: *tecnicismi specifici*) of economics and finance as a special language from *CorBank*, a manual bilingual comparable corpus. It contains four speeches in Italian (sub-corpus *CorBankIT*) and four in German (sub-corpus *CorBankDE*) held by the presidents of Banca d'Italia and Deutsche Bundesbank in their annual press conferences. After a corpus-based analysis from which frequency lists originated, terms were extracted and gathered into the *GlosBank* glossary. Subsequently, the termontographic method was applied, as introduced by Rita Temmerman and Koen Kerremans from the *Centrum voor Vaktaal en Communicatie* (CVC) at *Erasmushogeschool* in Brussels.

The primary aim of this master's thesis was finding traces of Encyclopaedic Knowledge (EK) shared by the two sub-corpora. As *signifiers* (terms) are linked to their *signified* (concepts) in a biunivocal relationship – as affirmed by linguist Ferdinand de Saussure – terms apparently function as signals to identify their conceptual counterpart and that those concepts may build the Encyclopaedic Knowledge of an individual. Thereby, terms are highly suggestive of acting as traces of Encyclopaedic Knowledge that may be found in *CorBank* and ultimately in the minds of the speakers.

As applied here, the termontographic method leads to two termontographic maps named *BankMapIT* and *BankMapDE* which appear suitable for a comparison to observe shared concepts in the analysed socio-professional community – this being the primary purpose of the research. The peculiarity of this method could reside in the fact that a two-dimensional presentation of the term (a term and its equivalent) may be overcome in favour of a three-dimensional one: a term can be observed in its relationship to others. The whole analysis was also conducted in the perspective of conference interpreting. As repeatedly shown among practitioners, interpreters tend to be third parties in an interaction among individuals belonging to socio-professional communities that could prove to be different from theirs. Thereby, a tendency to encyclopaedic asymmetry between an interpreter and a speaker is strongly suggested and could only be bridged through preliminary preparation.

## Theory

The focus of this work is Encyclopaedic Knowledge (EK) postulated by Umberto Eco (1996). EK is a mechanism which registers and stores our experience of the world in our mind. During communication, the words of speakers trigger our EK, which provides us with extralinguistic factors in order to complete the message at hand (Eco 1979). Receivers hear a message and *cooperate* with it to accomplish its meaning, as they complete it with encyclopaedic elements. This interaction between a text and its receiver is named *interpretive cooperation* (Ibid.). While part of a message is expressed by linguistic code and is only accessible through language knowledge, expressions are also composed of specialistic concepts which require specific training or of *unsaid* elements. These factors are *taken for granted* or *implicit* within the boundaries of a socio-professional community – thus respecting linguistic economy. However, they may not be fully intelligible for people who do not belong to said communities. Therefore, these factors lean on prior knowledge, on shared premises. Hence the need to postulate EK, which goes far beyond utterance encoding and decoding.

## Method

To achieve the research objective, a five-step procedure was followed as a result of the application of the termontographic method presented by Temmerman et al., combined with corpus-based analysis.

For the corpus-based analysis of speeches, the *manual bilingual comparable* corpus *CorBank* was generated as a collection of two sub-corpora *CorBankDE* and *CorBankIT*. Each sub-corpus was composed of four speeches by President Jens Weidmann of Deutsche Bundesbank and President Ignazio Visco of Banca d'Italia, respectively. The speeches were held during the central banks' yearly press conferences on the results of the fiscal years 2017-2020. In the first step, speeches were selected, and in the second, corpora were built. As a third step, a quantitative analysis of both sub-corpora was performed. *CorBankIT* is composed of ±37 000 tokens, *CorBankDE* of ± 15 000. This difference could be explained through lexical and morphological conciseness of German compared to Italian. Subsequently, frequency lists and N-Grams (N=2,3,4) were extracted from both sub-corpora through AntConc and read through Microsoft Excel, to identify potential candidate terms for a glossary named *GlosBank*. As a fourth step, a precise workflow described in Diagram 1 (p. 91 of the PDF file) was undertaken to select terms to insert into *GlosBank*. Firstly, we investigated whether a term was a specific technicism. In case of a positive answer, its absolute frequency was looked at. If frequency was high, the term was inserted. In case of a frequency of 1 (a hapax legomenon), if the term was a milestone of economics, it was inserted, otherwise it was discarded. Not all eligible terms were eventually inserted, only up to ±40, to adapt to the constraints of a manual procedure. The part in German was analysed first to perform a passive translation of terms and concepts instead of an active translation, to make use of a naturally better command of the author's native language. Terms were translated from German into Italian mainly through IATE glossary and parallel corpus Eur-Lex. Most importantly, the translation hypothesis was confirmed searching *CorBankIT* for an exact match. The fifth step was the construction of *BankMapDE* and *BankMapIT* based on *GlosBank* glossary. An interactive version was completed with term definitions and translations in the other language. They can be visualized at: https://www.riccardobravi.com/corbank-v1/ (Password: 2021CB). They were also inserted into the PDF sent for evaluation.

Eventually, both maps were compared. The blue terms were inserted manually as nodes of the maps. Term-to-term relations were signalled in English. The red terms are *not shared* by both sub-corpora. All others are. We could conclude that, if some terms are shared, also their linked concepts are. So, parts of Encyclopaedic Knowledge could be highlighted

and proven to be *shared* by both analysed speakers. However, we cannot say that red unshared terms are *unknown* by the speakers. They may have not been pragmatically useful in that context, they may just have been unnecessary for the speakers, so they were not mentioned in utterance.

## Results

The fact that two individuals fully share information from the outset of communication *(ex ante)* appears utopistic. However, sometimes some elements – which are evidently *unshared* among the participants of an interaction – may have to be *shared* to pursue communication, maybe with a short reformulation. Other times, the asymmetry between a speaker's EK and a recipient's EK – or an interpreter's EK, if they are needed – is so wide that strong basic deficiencies hamper communication significantly, as levelling their EK would be too costly. For example, a frequent reformulation of technical concepts could repeatedly disturb an ongoing conference and would put strain on the speaker, because specific technicisms tend to be monoreferential terms with low polysemy and synonymity.

If Conference Interpreting is analysed in these terms, interpreters appear to even out their EK as best they can and at their discretion, levelling them up to the participants' EK during preliminary self-preparation. The aim is understanding what a speaker says and to reformulate the message into another language for the audience to understand. It transpires that an interpreter may be in a condition of *information asymmetry* with the speakers and the audience, who are inevitably more expert thanks to their academic or professional experience, which tends to be different from the one of an interpreter. Furthermore, they are also advantaged in time, because as an interpreter is training both linguistically and technically, economists (or, generally, experts) are thoroughly trained in their selected area of expertise.

## Research motivation

The present research was conducted to further expand on the topic of preliminary preparation for interpreters and on how they apparently need to use language and specialized knowledge for their interpretive and communicative aim. A further aim was investigating on how a method partially relying on software could be applied to identify parts of that specialized knowledge in an effort to gain insight into multi-language communication and interpretation.

Ultimately, this work aims at exploring an additional point of view on which factors may be highly suggestive of leading to a good interpretation and rendition of a message by an interpreter, given that the mere encoding and decoding of utterance may not be fully satisfactory in relation to what determines a reasonable rendition. To be more specific, academic practice in simultaneous and consecutive interpretation has been showing that sheer language decoding may not be sufficient to determine a genuine and sound understanding of a source text: often, a large component of communication appears to be *unsaid,* and numerous specialistic contents and *premises* tend to be *taken for granted* by expert speakers in an aim to achieve language economy, with no impairment at all for a public of experts. However, an interpreter – as a third party in an expert-to-expert interaction and a specialist of language codes and interpretive techniques – may lack specialized *knowledge* which speakers may take for granted or simply drop. Moreover, interpreters might also ignore the key theoretical premises of the speech at hand (i.e., Supply and Demand Model, Inflation mechanisms etc.), thus impairing interpretation. As a result, interpreters seem to need to expand Encyclopaedic Knowledge throughout their professional life, as the reformulation or acquisition of said theoretical premises may be exceedingly difficult if not downright impossible *during* an interpretation as this would hamper language economy strongly.

## Chapter contents

In the first chapter of this work, the research question, and a classification of the *CorBank* corpus are presented. Furthermore, an overview of the economic and financial specialized domain of central banks is proposed.

The three theoretical pillars of the present research are introduced in the second chapter. Firstly, the specialised language of economics is presented as Language for Specific Purposes (LSP). Secondly, Umberto Eco's Semiotics and his postulated Encyclopaedic Knowledge are analysed. Thirdly, the transmission of information among individuals was studied, with a focus on the Encoding/Decoding Model of Communication and on reformulation in case of shared knowledge deficit. Furthermore, interpreters were found to be in a tendential encyclopaedic imbalance with speakers. Experts acquire thorough knowledge of their area of expertise alone, while interpreters have to combine language knowledge and interpretive techniques learnt in their standard university curriculum with further formal or informal study or self-study to reach such a level of knowledge that they can reasonably be expected to understand highly specialised messages.

The third chapter is focused on the adopted methods. On the one hand, the termontographic method was adopted. On the other, the corpus-based analysis was applied.

A qualitative analysis of *CorBank* is introduced in the fourth chapter. It is mainly centred on sociolinguistic variables, and language varieties and use. Moreover, a multi-level analysis is presented: firstly, speech genres and themes were analysed. Secondly, a contrastive analysis of *N-Grams* was performed.

Lastly, the fifth chapter draws the conclusion of the research.

## Short references

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