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THE “NEW NORMAL” TERMINOLOGY: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY INTO TERM VARIATION IN COVID-19-RELATED EU LEGISLATIVE TEXTS

This paper provides a contrastive analysis of COVID-19-related EU legislative texts with emphasis on term variants. The analysis carried out on a parallel corpus consisting of English and Croatian texts has identified multiple examples of variation of predominately multi-word terms at several levels. These include orthographic and grammatical variants, unit shifts and denominative variants creating different meanings. The findings support other contemporary studies into variation within specialized language, highlighting the importance of studying variation to gain understanding about the dynamics of domain knowledge. By focusing on variation in a parallel corpus, conclusions are drawn about the prevalence of variation in a newer EU official language, as opposed to English as the draft text of EU legislation.

1. Introduction

While it was only after the World Health Organization had reported on several cases of pneumonia in Wuhan that we learned about COVID-19, soon after that one could hardly remember what life was like before the pandemic. It affected all spheres of human life and language was no exception. Our everyday communi-

cation experienced the introduction of many COVID-slang terms, some of which represent neologisms (e.g. *Covidiot*), and some well-known denominations with acquired new meanings (e.g. *pobrisati*[1]). Indeed, whenever possible, neologisms are created to designate the new reality of EU law (Šarčević 2015: 188). Soon after the virus spread to other countries, the situation demanded action from the authorities, both health and industry-related. The European Commission, for instance, set out the European coordinated response to counter the economic impact of Covid-19.[2] What followed were regulations, communications, Council decisions and reports related to the regulation of COVID-related issues at the EU level. Not only did these issues concern public health, they also included many other areas, e.g. budget, competition, consumers. As a result, these documents brought about new terms representing pandemic-related concepts (e.g. *booster dose),* which were first rendered in English and then translated into other official languages. Despite the fact that the principle of EU multilingualism calls for "the equal treatment of all official languages" within the EU (Sosoni 2018: 180), in reality "the English version is a de facto original" (Biel et al 2018a: 251) from which a text is translated into other languages. This seeming paradox is rooted in the fact that the motto "united in diversity" is inapplicable in situations where we have one procedural language. The dominant practice thus consists of drafting a document in one language (usually English) and translating it into other official languages. The English of the draft version, however, is different from the standard British English in that it is mostly created by non-native speakers of English (Wagner et al. 2002: 70), which leaves traces both in the language of the source and target text. It is thus not surprising that the official languages, though highly standardized and specialized, sometimes demonstrate creativity resulting in variation (Bratanić and Lončar 2015: 216), even an uncontrolled one.

Before investigating variation in the translations of COVID-19-related EU legislative documents, it is important to consider the multiple intertextual dimensions of EU legal translation (cf. Robertson 2015: 40–44; Biel 2019: 33–36), which are

[1] In standard Croatian, the verb refers to the action of cleaning something while wiping it (https://hjp.znanje.hr/index.php?show=search, accessed 18 July 2023), while during the COVID-19 pandemic it acquired the meaning of testing someone for COVID and is now used in informal communication (https://jezik.hr/koronavirus/?slovo=p, accessed 18 July 2023).

[2] COVID-19: Commission sets out European coordinated response to counter the economic impact of the Coronavirus*. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_459 (accessed 13 January 2023).

especially relevant for EU legal terminology (Biel and Koźbiał 2020: 70). These include multilingual concordance, that is consistency of an EU text with other language versions, consistency, i.e. continuity with the previous legal texts in the same official language, and textual fit with other national texts of the same domain. While it is a well-known fact that one term in EU law should always represent the same concept, we encounter opposite trends, not only due to the infiltration of generic legal concepts into EU law, but also due to the emergence of new concepts, which very often, as noted above, call for urgent creation of denominations in all language versions, thus sometimes resulting in multiple renderings. It goes without saying that this impairs the principle of continuity, especially its external dimension assumed by consistency with previously adopted and translated domain-related EU legal texts. The ambitious principle of textual fit, on the other hand, brings about insecurities as to the choice of translation strategy; calling for a balancing act between domestication and foreignization (cf. Venuti 1995: 20). The dilemma in turn affects the degree of terminological variation and inconsistency, which can sometimes be very high, especially in the case of Croatian (Bajčić and Dobrić Basaneže 2020: 5). As previously suggested, in earlier Croatian EU legal texts there was a tendency to use the domesticated variant, due to language purification policy and lack of centralized terminology authorities (Bajčić 2009: 222). However, localisms should be substituted with internationalisms, if they impair the correct transmission of the legal message, since legal translation is instrumental and should "achieve the same range of functions as an original text" (Nord 2018: 50).

The aim of our study is thus to detect these variants and their effect upon legal communication in English and Croatian versions of COVID19-related EU legal documents. It is expected that the study will reveal both synonymous variants and variants of different meanings resulting not only from "inadequate usage of legal terms" (Bajčić and Martinović 2018: 220), but also from the "genre, source and target asymmetries, complexity of a semantic field, low termness and microdiachronic shifts" (Biel and Koźbiał 2020: 69).

In order to investigate our hypothesis, we resort to a parallel corpus, attempting to fill a gap in the still underresearched variation of terms[3] and especially multi-word terms in EU legal translation based on parallel corpora. Multi-word

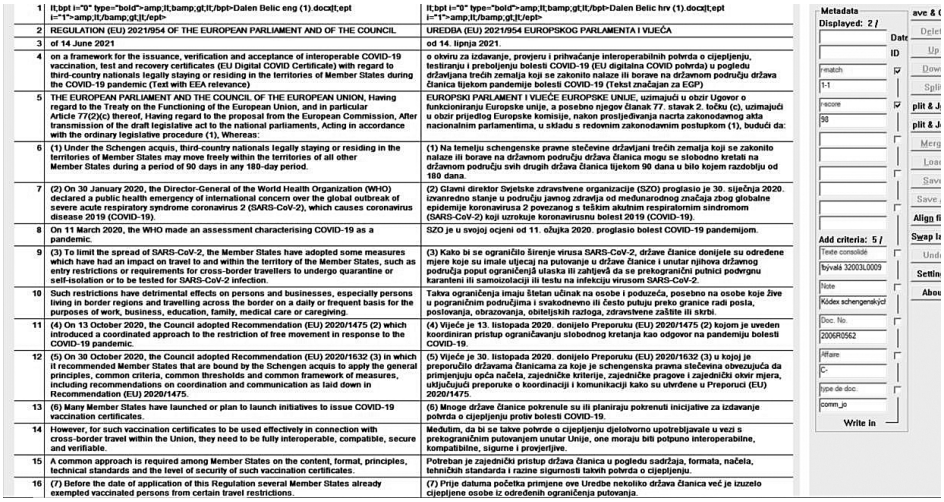
[3] A term or designation is a representation of a concept by a sign which denotes it (ISO 1087-1:2000).

terms are specific terminological units formed by terms which either as nodes or collocates are combined with other lexical units (Biel 2012: 227). Existing scarce investigations into variation include Vigier and Sánchez Ramos's study (2017) based on an English-Spanish parallel corpus of CJEU judgments focusing on translations of the names of English and Spanish criminal courts and revealing a preference for a foreignising strategy and variation. Similarly, the study conducted by Prieto Ramos and Guzmán (2018) looks into the translation of the term *due process* into Spanish within the context of the EU, the UN and the WTO, and again shows a tendency towards variation of Spanish terms, which is later confirmed by another study into terminological innovation and harmonization at international organizations (Prieto Ramos and Morales Moreno 2019). In addition, there are domain-related parallel corpus studies focusing both on terminological and phraseological variation in EU legal translation (Biel et al. 2018a, 2018b; Sosoni 2018; Dobrić Basaneže 2018), all confirming inconsistencies and variants in the rendering of both terms and phraseological units in national languages. Sosoni (2018: 201), for instance, suggests that EU translators favour literal equivalents, calques and borrowings over functional equivalents, but also observes discrepancies in meaning. Biel et al. (2018a, 2018b) study collocations of terms in EU competition law and suggest that there is high variation both at the level of phraseology and terminology, thus especially drawing attention to "denominative variation" (Biel 2018a: 270) as an undesirable phenomenon in legal language. Finally, the study by Dobrić Basaneže (2018) examines binomial expressions in a parallel corpus, again suggesting that some national languages dispose of more variants than the others, which in the case of formulaic expressions, might bring their phraseological status into question. The studies depicted above are related to our study in terms of methodology and EU legal translation, but they focus on domains other than COVID-19. Studies examining coronavirus language are mostly monolingual and concentrate on COVID-slangs (e.g. Jozić et al. 2020; Blagus Bartolec 2020), while excluding the EU legal discourse in which different variants of COVID-19-related terms might lead to serious repercussions. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to accentuate the importance of contrastive terminology work not only for the purpose of detecting term variants, but also to unveil their detrimental effect on uniform application and interpretation of EU law in 27 Member States.

2. Corpus and methodology

This study is based on a parallel corpus of COVID-19-related EU legislative texts consisting of English and Croatian texts. Each corpus consists of 41 documents: 15 regulations, 8 communications, 6 Commission implementing decisions/regulations, 4 Commission/Council decisions, 3 reports, 3 recommendations, 1 notice and the Joint European Roadmap with guidelines on EU passenger rights during COVID crisis. The lexicon size of the English corpus (EnCovid) is 257,971 words, with the number of tokens at 311,815. The Croatian corpus (HrCovid), on the other hand, includes 231,854 words, hence, 288,038 tokens. The documents were downloaded from the Eur-Lex website[4] which contains a non-exhaustive list of documents related to the EU response to the pandemic. Given the fact that the EU adopted a wide range of measures in many domains, the documents concern public health, agriculture, budget, competition, consumers, customs, digital single market, economic and monetary affairs, employment and social policy, enterprise, external relations, external trade, food safety, human rights, internal market, justice, freedom and security, maritime affairs, research and innovation, regional policy, taxation, and transport. The documents in one language were saved in a .doc format, thus enabling us to get two .doc formats of the legal documents in two languages ordered in the same way. The two .doc documents were then uploaded to AlignFactory, a software which enabled us to create one .tmx file with parallel versions (see Figure 1).

[4] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/content/news/Covid19.html (accessed 7 March 2022).



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2	REGULATION (EU) 2021/954 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL	UREDBA (EU) 2021/954 EUROPSKOG PARLAMENTA I VIJEĆA
3	of 14 June 2021	od 14. lipnja 2021.
4	on a framework for the issuance, verification and acceptance of interoperable COVID-19 vaccination, test and recovery certificates (EU Digital COVID Certificate) with regard to third-country nationals legally staying or residing in the territories of Member States during the COVID-19 pandemic (Text with EEA relevance)	o okviru za izdavanje, provjeru i prihvaćanje interoperabilnih potvrda o cijepljenju, testiranju i preboljenju bolesti COVID-19 (EU digitalna COVID potvrda) u pogledu državljana trećih zemalja koji se zakonito nalaze ili borave na državnom području država članica tijekom pandemije bolesti COVID-19 (Tekst značajan za EGP)
5	THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 77(2)(c) thereof, Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission, After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments, Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure (1), Whereas:	EUROPSKI PARLAMENT I VIJEĆE EUROPSKE UNIJE, uzimajući u obzir Ugovor o funkcioniranju Europske unije, a posebno njegov članak 77. stavak 2. točku (c), uzimajući u obzir prijedlog Europske komisije, nakon prosljeđivanja nacrta zakonodavnog akta nacionalnim parlamentima, u skladu s redovnim zakonodavnim postupkom (1), budući da:
6	(1) Under the Schengen acquis, third-country nationals legally staying or residing in the territories of Member States may move freely within the territories of all other Member States during a period of 90 days in any 180-day period.	(1) Na temelju schengenske pravne stečevine državljani trećih zemalja koji se zakonito nalaze ili borave na državnom području država članica mogu se slobodno kretati na državnom području svih drugih država članica tijekom 90 dana u bilo kojem razdoblju od 180 dana.
7	(2) On 30 January 2020, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a public health emergency of international concern over the global outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).	(2) Glavni direktor Svjetske zdravstvene organizacije (SZO) proglasio je 30. siječnja 2020. izvanredno stanje u području javnog zdravlja od međunarodnog značaja zbog globalne epidemije koronavirusa 2 povezanog s teškim akutnim respiratornim sindromom (SARS-CoV-2) koji uzrokuje koronavirusnu bolest 2019 (COVID-19).
8	On 11 March 2020, the WHO made an assessment characterising COVID-19 as a pandemic.	SZO je u svojoj oceni od 11. ožujka 2020. proglasio bolest COVID-19 pandemijom.
9	(3) To limit the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the Member States have adopted some measures which have had an impact on travel to and within the territory of the Member States, such as entry restrictions or requirements for cross-border travellers to undergo quarantine or self-isolation or to be tested for SARS-CoV-2 infection.	(3) Kako bi se ograničilo širenje virusa SARS-CoV-2, države članice donijele su određene mjere koje su imale učinci na putovanje u države članice i unutar njihova državnog područja poput ograničenja ulaska ili zahtjevâ da se prekogranični putnici podvrgnu karanteni ili samoizolaciji ili testu na infekciju virusom SARS-CoV-2.
10	Such restrictions have detrimental effects on persons and businesses, especially persons living in border regions and travelling across the border on a daily or frequent basis for the purposes of work, business, education, family, medical care or caregiving.	Takva ograničenja imaju štetan učinak na osobe i poduzeća, posebno na osobe koje žive u pograničnim područjima i svakodnevno ili često putuju preko granice radi posla, poslovanja, obrazovanja, obiteljskih razloga, zdravstvene zaštite ili skrbi.
11	(4) On 13 October 2020, the Council adopted Recommendation (EU) 2020/1475 (2) which introduced a coordinated approach to the restriction of free movement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.	(4) Vijeće je 13. listopada 2020. donijelo Preporuku (EU) 2020/1475 (2) kojom je uveden koordiniran pristup ograničavanju slobodnog kretanja kao odgovor na pandemiju bolesti COVID-19.
12	(5) On 30 October 2020, the Council adopted Recommendation (EU) 2020/1632 (3) in which it recommended Member States that are bound by the Schengen acquis to apply the general principles, common criteria, common thresholds and common framework of measures, including recommendations on coordination and communication as laid down in Recommendation (EU) 2020/1475.	(5) Vijeće je 30. listopada 2020. donijelo Preporuku (EU) 2020/1632 (3) u kojoj je preporučilo državama članicama za koje je schengenska pravna stečevina obvezujuća da primjenjuju opća načela, zajedničke kriterije, zajedničke pragove i zajednički okvir mjera, uključujući preporuke o koordinaciji i komunikaciji kako su utvrđene u Preporuci (EU) 2020/1475.
13	(6) Many Member States have launched or plan to launch initiatives to issue COVID-19 vaccination certificates.	(6) Mnoge države članice pokrenule su ili planiraju pokrenuti inicijative za izdavanje potvrda o cijepljenju protiv bolesti COVID-19.
14	However, for such vaccination certificates to be used effectively in connection with cross-border travel within the Union, they need to be fully interoperable, compatible, secure and verifiable.	Međutim, da bi se takve potvrde o cijepljenju djelotvorno upotrebljavale u vezi s prekograničnim putovanjem unutar Unije, one moraju biti potpuno interoperabilne, kompatibilne, sigurne i provjerljive.
15	A common approach is required among Member States on the content, format, principles, technical standards and the level of security of such vaccination certificates.	Potreban je zajednički pristup država članica u pogledu sadržaja, formata, načela, tehničkih standarda i razine sigurnosti takvih potvrda o cijepljenju.
16	(7) Before the date of application of this Regulation several Member States already exempted vaccinated persons from certain travel restrictions.	(7) Prije datuma početka primjene ove Uredbe nekoliko država članica već je izuzelo cijepljene osobe iz određenih ograničenja putovanja.

Figure 1. .tmx file created by AlignFactory

The versions were sentence-aligned and some segments had to be corrected manually. The .tmx file was then uploaded to Sketch Engine, which recognizes such formats as parallel corpora. Since, according to Biel, key words represent an essential or basic concept of the text (2012: 228), we first extracted a list of multi-word terms from the English corpus based on the Keywords function. We decided to exclude multi-word terms that are not related to COVID-19 or health issues in general, thus creating our own list of COVID-19 multi-word terms (see Table 1) in English and used them as queries for parallel concordances (see Figure 2).

Table 1. Most frequent pandemic-related multi-word terms in the English COVID-corpus

Pandemic-related multi-word terms	Frequency in the English corpus
medicinal product	862.69
COVID-19 pandemic	849.86
recovery and resilience plan	779.31
medical devices	631.78
COVID-19 outbreak	580.47
public health emergency	522.75
COVID-19 crisis	500.3
vaccination certificate	327.12

REACT-EU resources	269.39
rapid antigen test	259.77

Our list of multi-word terms, however, also includes some units which might be identified as collocations in phraseological research (e.g. *crisis repair, issuance of certificates, epidemiological situation, restrictive measures*, etc.), but we decided to include them in our contrastive analysis not only because they were listed as potential multi-word terms in Sketch Engine, but because most of them are also present in the IATE terminology database. Likewise, we are aware of the fact that the boundary between a term and a phraseme is often blurred in legal language (Biel 2012: 227). Therefore, the unit *company limited by shares* can in legal phraseology either be classified as a collocation or a more specific term of the term *company* (Biel 2014:38). Furthermore, although it is sometimes "difficult to differentiate between terminological phrases and freely constructed phrases" (Cabré 1999: 86), we believe that the terminological status of lexical units is subject field dependent (L'Homme 2020). Although it seems that the more extended the term becomes, the more difficult it is to classify it as a term, thus suggesting that some units from our list might better be referred to as "term-forming patterns" (Biel 2014) or, more generally, "extended units of meaning" (Sinclair 2004), it is not the purpose of this paper to dissect these differences. For this reason, we refer to all units from our list as multi-word terms, regardless of the fact that some of those units "are governed by the same rules that combine free phrases" (L'Homme 2020: 86). Furthermore, since Sketch Engine sometimes fails to identify the full form of multi-word terms, based on our linguistic intuition, we also decided to focus on the concordances of some terms, which enabled us to include their full rendering in our list.

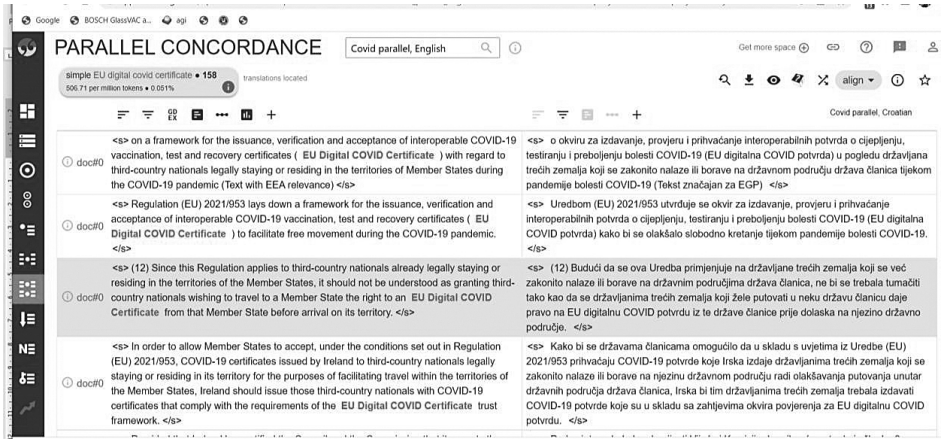

Figure 2. Parallel concordances of the term *EU Digital COVID Certificate*

The final step included the creation of the list of equivalent terms in Croatian, noting all the variants (see Supplement). The meaning of variants was then investigated and compared with the recommended equivalents offered by the IATE EU terminology database.

3. Results and analysis

The above list of most frequent multi-word terms in the corpus suggests their keyness, that is, their indication of the conceptual foundation of COVID-19-related terminology within the context of EU law. This analysis focuses mostly on multi-word terms. As the main type of phraseological unit in specialized discourse, multi-word terms are frequently used to illustrate specialized term variation (León Araúz and Cabezas García 2020: 212–214). As can be concluded from the corpus, the EU mostly dealt with the shortage of *medicinal products* related to *COVID-19 pandemic* and *public health emergencies*. Additionally, the plan for recovery from COVID 2020 crisis was also in focus, given that the term *recovery and resilience plan* is also one of the most frequent multi-word term in EnCovid. The solution was predicted in the form of *REACT-EU resources*, the aim of which was to provide assistance in the repair of *COVID-19 crisis*. Finally, *rapid antigen tests* and *vaccination certificates* were needed in order to enable the economy to function without maximizing the risks of further spread of the

virus. The conceptual foundation of these terms for the EU COVID-19-related legal documents can also be confirmed by their productivity and potential to build extended multi-word terms or to enter into coordination with other terms (see Table 2). The terms *medicinal product* and *medical devices* are thus very often coordinated and occur in the context of public health emergency, which in turn often occurs with the term *major event*.

Table 2. Extended two-word terms

Two-word terms	**Three-word terms**	**Four-word terms**
public health	public health measures public health crisis	
antigen test	rapid antigen test	SARS-CoV2 rapid antigen COVID-19 rapid antigen test

The contrastive analysis of parallel concordances illustrates that the majority of terms are rendered through different variants in HrCovid (see Supplement for the complete list). The variants sometimes reveal "class shifts" (Catford 1965: 75–82 cited in Munday et al. 2022: 82), where one part of speech in English is expressed through a different one in Croatian, or "unit shifts" (ibid.), where a multi-word term from EnCovid is expressed through a clause in HrCovid (see Table 3). As a matter of fact, English multi-word terms are often translated as clauses into Croatian, as evidenced from other examples from our corpus. Such shifts contribute to the preservation of target language patterns, although they are sometimes non-obligatory, hence, they result from translators' idiosyncrasies (e.g. *variant of concern – zabrinjavajuća varijanta; varijanta koja izaziva zabrinutost*).

Table 3. Variants displaying class or unit shifts

English term	Variants displaying class shifts	Variants displaying units shifts
variant of concern	zabrinjavajuća varijanta koronavirusa	varijanta koja izaziva zabrinutost
coronavirus disease	koronavirusna bolest	bolest prouzročena koronavirusom
travel-related quarantine	/	karantena ili samoizolacija povezana s putovanjem / u slučaju putovanja
single-dose primary course	/	primarno cijepljenje koje se sastoji od jedne doze

two-dose primary series	/	primarno cijepljenje koje se sastoji od dvije doze

Idiosyncrasies in turn also result in a mixture of translation strategies and reflect the dilemma of the translator(s) between foreignization and domestication. This is evident in terms which contain foreign constituents introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Croatian term used to express the virus is problematic, since, although the Croatian language prefers to use the umbrella term for the foreign concept in question (in this case *bolest*) before introducing the borrowing, the productivity of the term *COVID-19* and the length of the multi-word terms brings this practice into question.

Therefore, domesticated variants introducing the constituent *bolest* into the multi-word term are contested by the foreignized ones, where the constituent *COVID-19* precedes the noun or is simply omitted:

(1) a) *COVID-19 pandemic* b) *pandemija bolesti COVID-19*

(2) a) *COVID-19 outbreak* b) *izbijanje bolesti COVID-19; izbijanje covida 19*

(3) a) *COVID-19 vaccine* b) *cjepivo protiv bolesti COVID-19*

(4) *COVID 19 certificate* b) *potvrda o cijepljenju osobe protiv bolesti COVID 19; COVID-19 potvrda za domaće potrebe c) nacionalna COVID-19 potvrda*

(5) a) *certificate of recovery from COVID-19* b) *COVID-19 potvrda o preboljenju*

The above Croatian variants all contain the constituent *COVID-19* integrated into Croatian terms without the requirement for semantic or spelling adaptation, but rather for adherence to the grammatical rule of sequence, according to which the English constituent *COVID-19* should always follow the noun it specifies. The latter practice is also confirmed by the term *Delta variant*, which witnesses two variants in HrCovid, one of which follows the common practice in Croatian described above (e.g. *varijanta Delta*) and one of which prefers the foreignizing approach, where the foreign constituent precedes the noun, but in this case also violates the rules of Croatian orthography and renders the name of the virus variant with small letters (e.g. *delta varijanta*).

Other inconspicuous examples include grammatical variants, especially the ones with different prepositions (e.g. *pripravnost za/na krizu; brzi antigenski test na/za…; testiranje na/za…).* The foreignizing method seems to be a plausible choice with longer multi-word terms, in which the addition of another constituent might bring the legibility of the text into question. It thus seems appropriate to render the term *COVID-19 certificate for domestic purposes* word-for-word in Croatian (e.g. *COVID-19 potvrda za domaće potrebe*), instead of opting for an explication (e.g. **potvrda o cijepljenju, testiranju ili preboljenju bolesti COVID-19 za domaće potrebe*). The tendency towards the nominal style in English, however, also affects the readability of Croatian texts, especially where multi-word terms are joined with a possessive noun (e.g. *date of the holder's first positive NAAT test*), making the Croatian equivalent too vague, for it is not clear whether the foreign term (in this case *NAAT*) refers to the noun preceding it or to the noun which follows (e.g. *datum prvog pozitivnog rezultata testa NAAT nositelja*).

3.1. Initialisms

Initialisms, abbreviations and acronyms also tend to represent terms, which "appear to be simple, but upon further examination turn out to be complex" (Cabré 1999: 86). Our list only includes terms rendered through initialisms, i.e. "units made up of the combination of the initials of a longer expression" (Cabré 1999: 86). Examined contrastively, they reveal a mixed approach, especially in the Croatian variants, which either omit the initialism altogether (e.g. *Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) – Mehanizam za oporavak i otpornost*); opt for a mixed approach using the full rendering and the English initialism or the English initialism only (e.g. *Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative (CRII) – Investicijska inicijativa kao odgovor na koronavirus (CRII) or CRII; Medical Devices Shortages Steering Group (MDSSG) – upravljačka skupina za nestašice medicinskih proizvoda (MDSSG) or MDSSG*), even when the English text contains the full rendering. A case in point is the term *EU DCC*, which stands for *the EU Digital COVID Certificate,* but is in all concordances translated using a full rendering, although the English text refers to the concept exclusively through an initialism. Furthermore, although the IATE database sometimes advises to use the Croatian

initialism (*RADTs – BAT*), HrCovid reveals the opposite trend (e.g. *rapid antigen tests (RADTs) – brzi antigenski testovi (RADT-i*).

3.2. Variants for *health*

As noted above, the variants rendering one and the same term in English sometimes differ in the sense that one of them is more explicative that the other (e.g. *crisis repair – uklanjanje posljedica krize; sanacija krize; recovered person – oporavljeni; osoba koja je preboljela bolest; public health emergency – javnozdravstvena mjera; mjera u području javnog zdravlja*). However, the explicative variants sometimes produce a shift in meaning, which would go unnoticed had the term been rendered via a modifier and a noun. This is the case with multi-word terms containing the constituent *health*.

In English, the word *health* refers to the "condition of the body and the degree to which it is free from illness, or the state of being well,"[5] which is in Croatian covered by the term *zdravlje*. *Health*, however, is polysemous and its other meaning includes "services and jobs that exist to take care of people's health"[6] which would in Croatian be included in the conceptualization of the term *zdravstvo*. The adjective which refers to the terms in Croatian, however, is polysemous; therefore, we can use the adjective *zdravstveni* to talk both about the state of being well and the services and institutions which take care of people's health (Hudeček and Mihaljević 2012: 18). This distinction comes to the foreground when the term variants include both equivalents where *health* is translated by means of an adjective (e.g. *public health measure – javnozdravstvena mjera*) and the explicative ones in which it is rendered through a noun in Croatian (e.g. *public health measure – mjere javnog zdravstva; mjere u području javnog zdravlja*). Since the aim of the measure is to protect the health of people and put an end to the pandemic, the term *health* should not have been translated as *zdravstvo*. This is also confirmed by the IATE database since none of the three equivalents of *public health measure* contains the constituent *zdravstvo*; instead, the term in Croatian either uses a pre-modifiable adjective (e.g. *javnozdravstvena mjera*), or is explicative and refers to the measures affecting the state of being well (e.g.

[5] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/health (accessed 7 December 2022).
[6] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/health (accessed 7 December 2022).

mjere u području javnog zdravlja) or to the ones protecting it (e.g. *mjere zaštite javnog zdravlja*). Similarly, the term *public health emergency* displays only one variant in HrCovid, again rendered explicatively by referring to the measures in the area of public health (e.g. *mjere u području javnog zdravlja*) and thus using the correct Croatian term. A similar case in point can also be confirmed by the term *health-related measures*, in Croatian rendered through two variants, *mjere povezane sa zdravstvom* and *zdravstvene mjere*, where the first explicative translation again incorrectly refers to the services and institutions protecting people's health.

This trend, where variants produce different meanings, can also be detected in some other examples from the corpus.

3.3. Variants for *booster dose*

The term *booster dose*, for instance, reveals five variants in HrCovid, four of which refer to *docjepljivanje* (e.g. *doza docjepljivanja, doze za docjepljivanje, docjepljivanje*), although the IATE database warns that a *booster dose* should not be used interchangeably with the term *booster vaccination*, which is the equivalent of the above Croatian variants. Furthermore, although IATE's advice is to translate *booster dose* either as *dodatna doza cjepiva* or simply *dodatna doza*, there are only four concordances in HrCovid which adhere thereto. What is more, the term *additional dose* from EnCovid is in HrCovid translated as *dodatna doza*, an equivalent which IATE lists for the English term *booster dose*. It thus seems that two different concepts represented by the English terms *booster dose* and *additional dose*, are in HrCovid wrongly included in the conceptualization of the single term *dodatna doza*, although it is clear that the Croatian equivalent is not polysemous and thus only matches the meaning of the English term *booster dose*. The term *additional dose*, on the other hand, is, as advised by IATE, to be translated as *dopunska doza cjepiva*, an equivalent non-existent in HrCovid.

3.4. *COVID-19 pandemic* and *COVID-19 outbreak*

There are some cases, however, when IATE recommends a term whose meaning is contrary to its dictionary definition. As a matter of fact, according to the database the terms *COVID-19 pandemic* and *COVID-19 outbreak* are synonymous, since among the four term equivalents for *COVID-19 outbreak,* the one referring to the pandemic is preferred (e.g. *pandemija bolesti COVID-19*). IATE thus excludes the established lexicographic meaning of *outbreak* as "a sudden appearance of something".[7] Although some term variants from HrCovid do include this meaning (e.g. *izbijanje bolesti COVID-19, izbijanje covida-19, izbijanje epidemije covida-19*), the one referring to the pandemic is most frequent. What is more, equivalents in HrCovid also reveal variation at the orthographic level since the constituent *COVID-19* has three different spellings.

3.5. Variants for *restrictive measures*

Furthermore, the English corpus also contains the term *restrictive measures*, which might be considered an equivalent of one of the Croatian term variants for *lockdown* (e.g. *mjere ograničavanja*); instead, the term is translated either by an internationalism (e.g. *restriktivne mjere*) or by introducing another dimension into its concept, that of quarantine (e.g. *karantenske mjere*). Another degree of vagueness is added to the concept by the IATE database, since the term *restrictive measure* corresponds to the Croatian term *mjere ograničavanja,* though in the context of international relations. Finally, a subtle difference in meaning is present in multi-word terms *single-dose primary course* and *two-dose primary series*, since *series,* unlike the term *course*, which emphasizes the regular number of medical treatments, or in this case vaccines, focuses on the pharmaceutical production of a vaccine. The difference is omitted from HrCovid, since both terms are translated as *cijepljenje*, thus referring to vaccination in general (e.g. *primarno cijepljenje koje se sastoji od jedne/dvije doze*).

[7] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/outbreak (accessed 9 December 2022).

4. Discussion

Although variation is an undesirable phenomenon in EU legal translation, this paper attempts to show that it is very much present in, if not a characteristic of translated EU legislative texts. Variation of predominately multi-word terms can be detected at the level of orthography (e.g. *delta varijanta / varijanta Delta*), which can best be illustrated by the three different spellings for the noun denoting the virus itself (e.g. *COVID-19, covid-19, Covid-19*). Another category includes grammatical variants demonstrating interchangeable use of prepositions, mostly *na* (eng. *on*) and *za* (eng. *for*). Other variants centre around "unit shifts" (Catford 1965: 75–82 cited in Munday et al. 2022: 82), which list one variant rendered as a combination of a pre-modifiable adjective and a noun (e.g. *variant of concern – zabrinjavajuća varijanta virusa*), and the other, expressed as a unit of different rank, usually a clause (e.g. *variant of concern – varijanta koja izaziva zabrinutost*). Finally, there are denominative variants (Freixa 2006: 51 cited in Biel et al. 2018a: 269), which outnumber those terms revealing only one equivalent in HrCovid. These variants are sometimes synonymous (e.g. *COVID-19 crisis – kriza s bolešću COVID-19, kriza prouzročena bolešću COVID-19, kriza uzrokovana bolešću COVID-19*) and result from the asymmetry between the English source and the Croatian target texts.

As nominal style is a typical feature of the English legal language and EU English, nominal compounds are, unsurprisingly, the most productive pattern among the English multi-word terms. Compounding which results from multi-word terms as a word-formation process combining two or more forms (cf. Olsen 2000) however, is not a typical pattern of word formation in Croatian, so that it leads to the adoption of different translation procedures. Usually, these terms are translated through components that are "lexical and semantic equivalents" (Cigan 2018: 104) of their constituents (e.g. *recovery and resilience plan – plan oporavka i otpornosti*), or by means of more explicative equivalents (e.g. *recovery and resilience plan – plan for recovery and resilience; COVID-19 crisis – crisis caused by the disease COVID-19*). Problems arise, however, when denominative variants display different meanings, which can range from close synonyms to the ones resulting in serious repercussions. Therefore, the terms *uklanjanje posljedica krize* (*removal of the consequences of the crisis*) and *sanacija krize*

(*crisis repair*) are close synonyms, in contrast to the third variant *oporavak od krize* (*recovery from crisis*). Regardless of the discrepancies in meaning between these three term variants, they do not significantly affect the transmission of the legal message. On the other hand, although *javnozdravstvena mjera* (eng. *public health measure*), *mjera u području javnog zdravlja* (eng. *measures in the area of public health*) and *mjere zaštite javnog zdravlja* (eng. *measures protecting public health*) can also be considered close synonyms, their fourth variant *mjere javnog zdravstva*, as noted elsewhere in this paper, refers to the institutions protecting human health. Such differences in meaning may impair legal communication, since they sometimes refer to concepts denoted by other terms. The latter was illustrated with the term *booster dose*, whose corresponding Croatian variants might also refer to the English terms *additional dose* and *restrictive measures*, despite the fact that the IATE database warns against their interchangeable use.

Term databases are recommended sources in institutional translation. We tend to perceive them as reliable sources to which we turn in order to search for "natural equivalents" (Pym 2007: 17), given the fact that the policy of multilingualism in the EU implies that the relation of equivalence goes both from the source text to the target one, and vice versa. Since in practice this equivalence path only moves in one direction, namely, from the source to the target text, what we are presented with in the database is coinciding with directional equivalence. It thus seems that "equivalence is produced from the languages of internationalization to the languages of end-use" (Pym 2007: 17) but, what is natural about it, is that it can also be used "in reverse" (2007: 17).

This contrastive analysis has revealed many term variants in Croatian, demonstrating that the path of equivalence in EU legal translation is not bidirectional. The fact that the English multi-word terms are in Croatian rendered as several "equivalents" clearly confirms this claim and is well illustrated with terms denoting concepts other than the ones presented by the term in the source text. Furthermore, although IATE's list of term variants in Croatian does not match the list extracted from our corpus, the fact that an English term has more variants in Croatian substantiates the unidirectionality of equivalence in EU legal translation. What is more, when one of the term variants is more explicative than the other, thus displaying a non-obligatory shift, this reverse movement again does not function, given the fact that IATE only displays a non-explicative nominal

compound. On the other hand, this tendency of EU translated texts to tolerate so many synonyms and close synonyms, is contrary to the concept of directional equivalence imposed in institutional translation. It even allows a certain degree of creativity, something that institutional translations are often thought to be deprived of (Pym 2017: 17). Therefore, although terminology databases are imposed upon translators by the institutions within which they work, it seems that the role of the institution as the "player" (Holz-Mänttärri 1984: 109) who initiates the translation is not as hegemonic as one tends to think. Nevertheless, translation should be coherent with its source text, which cannot be achieved when term variants display different meanings. In other words, the translation serves "its intended purpose" (Nord 2018: 43), but it does not reassure that the terminological dimension of the text is reliable. Finally, if the data sets for the Croatian language versions are flawed by variation, this affects the quality of machine-produced Croatian translation, as machine tools require predefined data sets amplifying what is dominant (Schneider 2022: 381).

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the contrastive analysis of terms in COVID-19-related EU legal documents has identified several levels of variation. These include orthographic and grammatical variants, unit shifts and denominative variants creating different meanings. These findings are in line with contemporary studies into variation within specialized language (cf. Perruzo 2010; Bajčić 2023), underlining the importance of studying variation especially of multi-word terms to gain understanding about the dynamics of domain knowledge and of the subtle changes affecting terms in EU legislative texts (Bajčić 2023). By focusing on variation in a parallel corpus we were able to gain insight into the prevalence of variation in Croatian as a newer EU official language, as opposed to English as the draft text of EU legislation. This can be attributed, on the one hand, to the fact that the terminology of a newer EU official language is still being developed, and on the other, to the heterogenous and fragmented legal instruments regulating (the still novel occurrence of) Covid-19 pandemic affecting all spheres of private and public life. Although variation in general is not desirable in legislative texts, some variants are more acceptable than others. As a matter of fact, some term

variants, though creating an unbalanced image of translation strategies, do not affect the transmission of the legal message. However, denominative variants producing different meanings may in turn undermine legal certainty. In effect, they result not only in nonequivalence, but also raise doubt about the communicative dimension of the text, which is especially detrimental when communicating rights, obligations and information concerning public health.

The presence of variants in specialized language warrants further research into the specific type of documents that witness more variants. Likewise, exploring the presence of variants in more EU official languages would enable drawing broader conclusions about the correlation of variants and translation strategies, especially with a view to assessing the quality of machine translated texts.

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Nazivlje "novoga normalnog": korpusno uteeljeno istraživanje terminološke varojacije u zakonodavnim tekstovima EU-a u vezi s boklesti COVID-19

Sažetak

Ovaj rad temelji se na kontrastivnoj analizi zakonodavnih tekstova EU-a povezanih s bolešću koronavirusa s ciljem utvrđivanja terminološke varijacije. Analizom provedenom na paralelnom korpusu koji obuhvaća engleske i hrvatske tekstove iz različitih područja prava EU-a obuhvaćenih mjerama za suzbijanje koronavirusa utvrđena je varijacija na ortografskoj i gramatičkoj razini, kao i varijacija u obliku pomaka u jezičnoj jedinici (engl. *unit shifts*) i pomaka u značenju. Rezultati ovoga korpusnog istraživanja o varijaciji u jeziku struke stoga pružaju uvid ne samo u dinamiku specijaliziranoga znanja i nazivlja, već i u učestaliju varijaciju u hrvatskome jeziku kao novijem službenom jeziku EU-a, što može utjecati i na primjenu i tumačenje prava EU-a.

Keywords: institutional translation, parallel corpus, terminology variation, Croatian, English, COVID-19

Ključne riječi: institucijsko prevođenje, terminološka varijacija, paralelni korpus, hrvatski, engleski, COVID-19