

**Translation mediated communication in  
business environments: the satisfactory cycle.**

---

**A (not only) Portuguese approach**

Alexandra Albuquerque | ISCAP-P.PORTO | CEOS.PP | CLUNL

# Global Society & Some Language Issues (1)



# Global Society & Some Language Issues (2)

## LANGUAGE

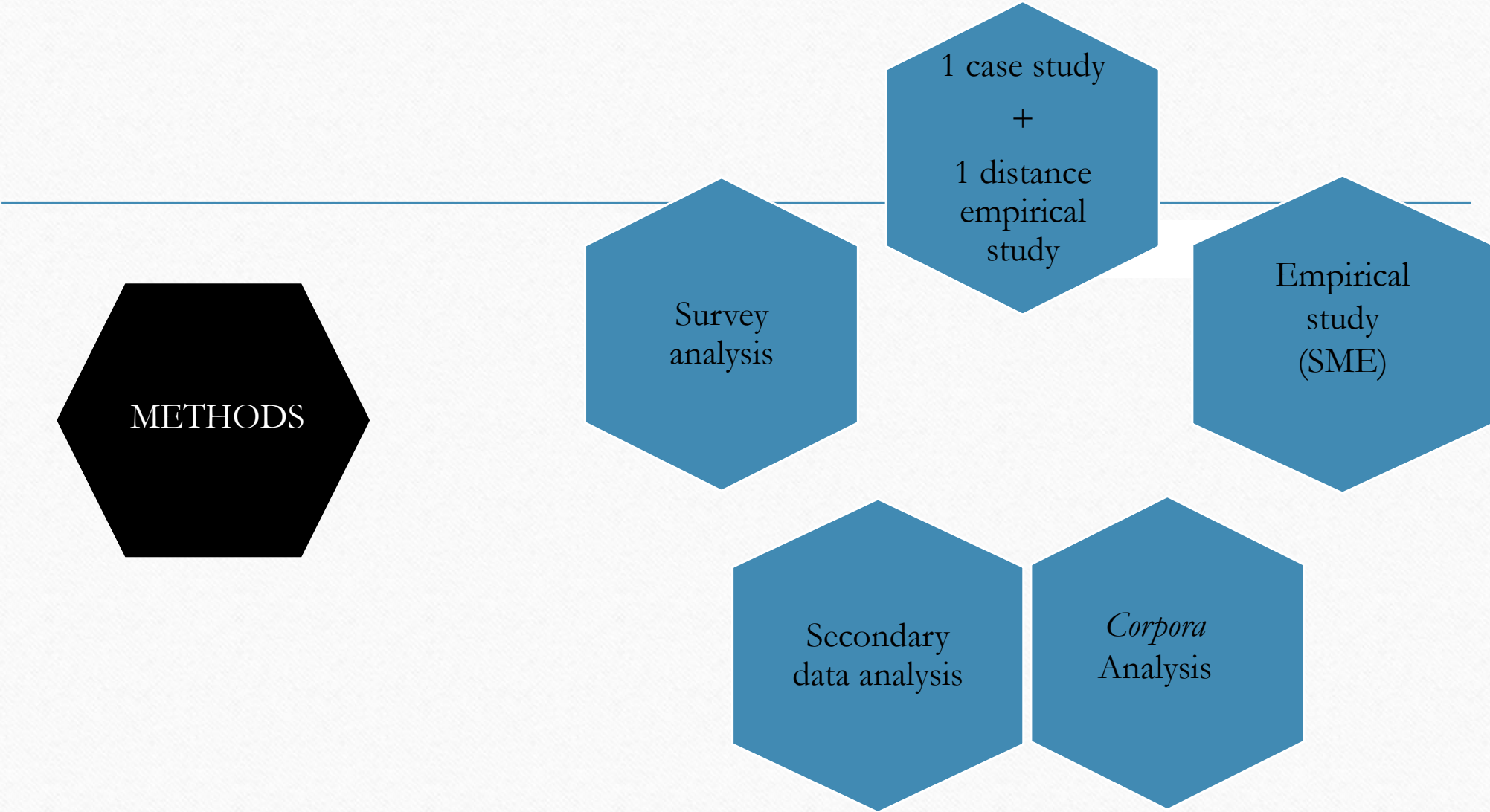
---



**Asset**

**Common Good**

# Methodology



# Some Results (1)

- **Internationalised companies:**

- State that it is important to communicate in the client's language;
- Invest in language according with law requirements or consumers' demands;
- Value cost optimization and resources management;
- Recruit selectively and trust their employees to do the translation work:

⇒ **Language knowledge is part of human and intellectual capital of employees**



**BUT these lack intercultural and terminology mediation skills...**

# Some Results (2)

- ***Ad hoc translation*** (done by employees with no translation or terminology knowledge)

---

  - is a common practice in corporate international communication, as *support activity* – in the fields of human resource management – to *primary activities* like, for instance, service provision.
  - is a process, with a *modus operandi* where terminology is a critical issue (that can be improved)
  - has (no) impacts on the
    - employees
    - international communication of the company
    - Image of the company (on the clients)

# Some Results (3)

(Portuguese) consumers/ final clients:

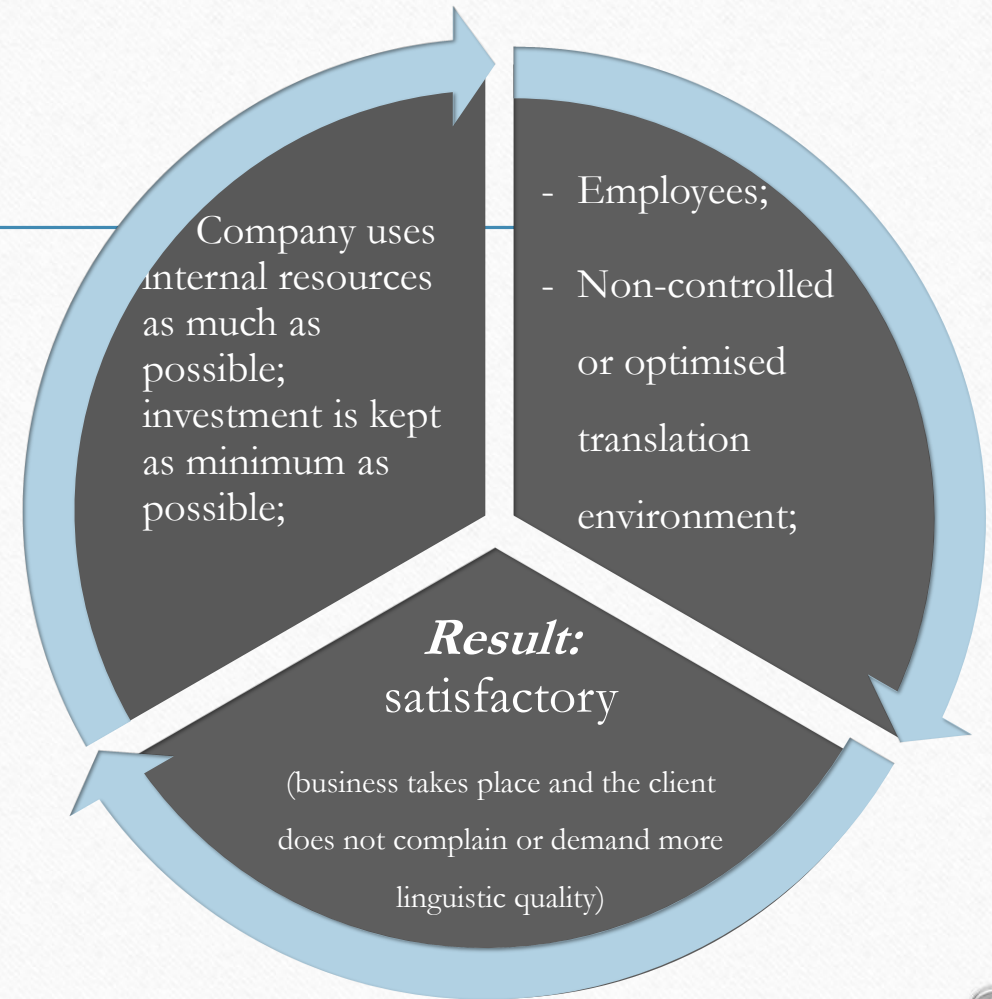
---

- In general, they do not care about the linguistic accuracy or linguistic variant of technical documents, as long as the message is functional.
- When common language is English, in international contexts, participants are most of the times non-native speakers, therefore they are also generally not too demanding.

### **SATISFACTORY Cycle**

In a corporate international communication context:

- Language is a means to an end: to close a business
- Participants are often not very proficient or demanding
- Investment is kept at the level of “necessary”
- Error is frequently disregarded based on trust
- Non-optimised communication



# (In)visible problems

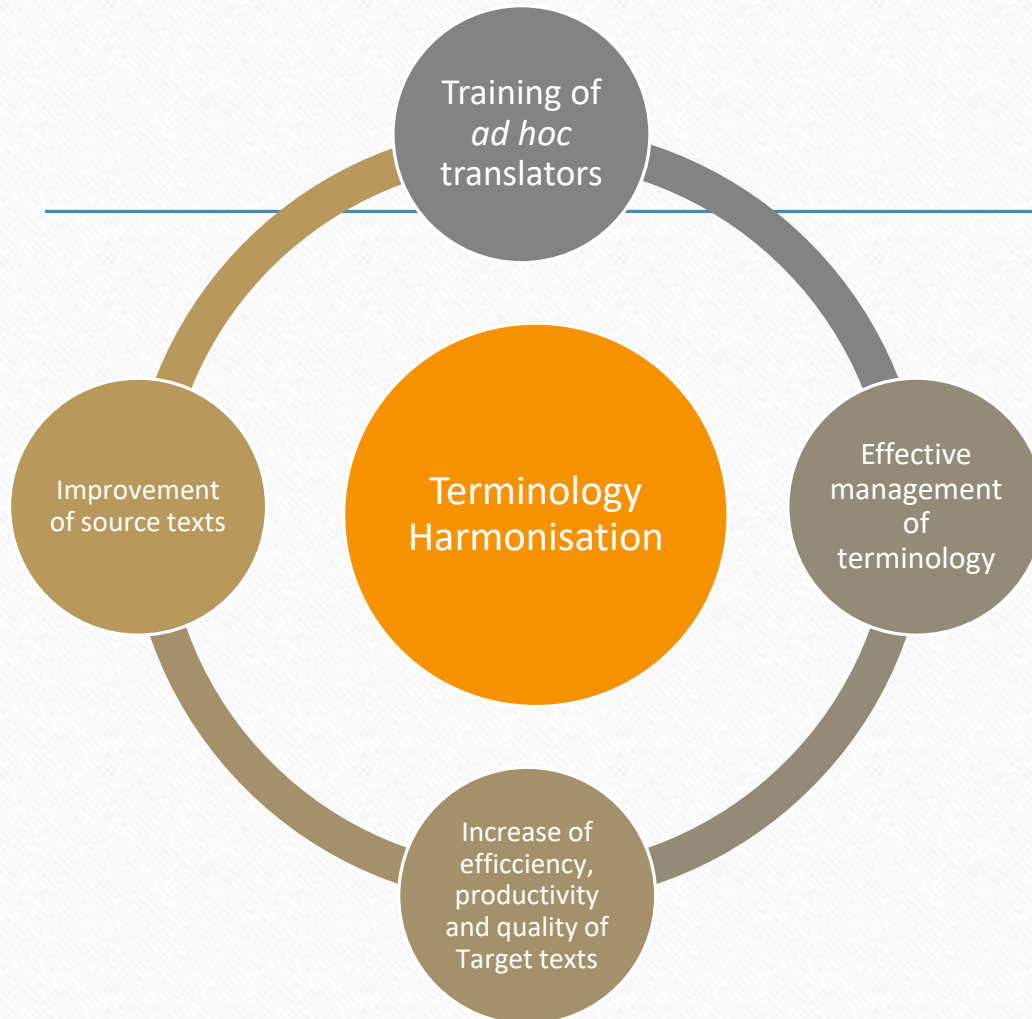
- Lack of translation and terminology skills
- Low efficacy of terminology resources

---

- Terminology variation
- Linguistic equivalence problems
- Time consuming and non-optimised translations
- Discourse inconsistency

- Lack of Training
- Lack of professionalisation
- Bad practices
- ...

**Corporate Culture**



## Cycle of GOOD

(improvements)

- Introducing improvements on the process:
  - Training (translation and terminology competence)
  - Improvement of source texts
  - **Terminology harmonisation**
  - Effective CAT and terminology tools

**Return**

- More efficiency, productivity and quality of target texts
- Cost reduction

# Cycle of GOOD (optimised process) – Results from the experimental study

Cost	Value (Time: hours spent by the researcher)	Value (Time: hours spent by the employees)
Preparation of the Translation memory	5	
Preparation of the glossary	5	
Deleting duplicates	2	
<i>Corpus</i> analysis	15	
Training	8	16
Practice with the translation tools		6
Skype support	2	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37h</b>	<b>22h</b>

## Advantages

## Value (Time: hours)

Reduction of translation time

65%

Decrease of terminoly variation and of revision time  
(efficacy increase)

75%

Increase of the employees' self- confidence

Intangible/ unmeasurable

**TOTAL**

16h,57'

## Tangible return

## Hours (per employee)

## Workdays

Productiviy increase per month

13h

1,6

Productiviy increase per year

156h

19,5

<sup>[1]</sup> Tomámos como referência os projetos através dos quais analisámos a produtividade das colaboradoras-tradutoras.

<sup>[2]</sup> O que significa que depois de três projetos de tradução, começaria a haver retorno do investimento, sem contabilizar os benefícios intangíveis e impactos da melhoria extra departamento.

## Some (last) Conclusions

- More quality at the beginning of the process creates more quality at the end, with less costs;

The cycle of Good in non-professional translation is possible with low investment

Mediation skills are now part of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

Terminology is classified and a **required competence** to perform in several professional fields: technic, law and health related (ex: ESCO)

Terminology training and translation skills need to be seen as transversal skills in the global world and included in the curriculum of (future) specialists (namely in Management)

“**Quality** begins and ends with Education” (Ishikawa)



Change in the  
corporate  
culture?

Questions? Comments?

Thank you!

---

Alexandra Albuquerque