TERMINOLOGY IN RWANDA: Challenges and Opportunities

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Rwanda Terminology Development Initiative

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I. About Rwanda

Location: Central Africa
Population: 10,412,820(2010)
Languages: Kinyarwanda(mother tongue),
                        English, French and Swahili.
Literate rate: 60% (the 2002 National Census)
Membership: UN, AU, EAC, COMMONWEALTH
                        and organizations

Historical background: German& Belgian colonial rule, independence in 1962, the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi, reconstruction after 1994.

II. Challenges and Opportunities in terminology works in Rwanda

2.1. Challenges

- Lack of clear and stable language policy over the decades
- High illiterate rate among the population(40%)
- Disorganized and scattered translation and interpretation profession/market
- Poor efforts in promoting terminological and lexicographical works by public and private institutions and lack of update required expertise
- Long oral tradition and poor culture of reading and writing vs few linguistic research
- Very low level of translation graduates (ignoring CAT, terminological search, etc)

2.2. Opportunities

- All Rwandans inside the country speak Kinyarwanda
- Strong political willingness and commitment to promote all sectors of life, including media and LSPs
- Sound progress in making Rwanda the ICT hub in the region: optic fiber, many E-programs, etc.
- Possibility to integrate terminology and lexicography
- Recent integration in the EAC and Commonwealth increased exchanges
- Many interesting events/activities to document terminologically (e.g. agriculture, the genocide, ICT, health, etc)

III. Projects undertaken

Aims: 1) Avoiding to talk in vacuum and advocating for the needs and possibility to promote terminological work in Rwanda and in the region

2) Promoting the use of updated ICT skills in small terminology-related initiatives

3.1. Cell phone Kinyarwanda Menu

This is my own initiative to raise the awareness of telecommunications companies in Rwanda on how to increase their income on one hand, and to solve many communication problems among less literate people who use Kinyarwanda only
* Example of TM already developed
* Contacts made with MTN& Chinese companies

3.2. Community Health English-Kinyarwanda Corpus

Aims: 1) Developing, maintaining and proposing one coherent and updated bilingual terminology database

2) Providing many health volunteer workers(Community Health Workers, HIV Accompagnateurs...) and other health professionals with easy-to-use tools.

* This initiative follows our daily translation activities with an NGO supporting the Rwandan Ministry of Health
*Apply basic skills we acquired in self-coaching with regards to CAT and TMs.

So far, we are at the stage of building an ad hoc corpora using the documentation available.
* Contacts with MOH Community Health Desk in order to use their documents: Tacit agreement.

3.3. Drafting the Project of building the User-Friendly Trilingual Corpus(under thought)

Aims:

1)To provide a computer-managed and computer-readable corpus of(i) parallel and (ii) comparable texts(oral and written, as the case may be) that may be a resource for a variety of purposes, including translating and interpreting, dictionary-making and terminology within the specific context of Rwanda;

2) To provide reference data for corpus studies or research of Rwandan spoken and written discourse in Rwanda.

Our interest in terminology:

1. To improve translation/interpretation profession
2. To initiate technical writing
3. To initiate and develop terminology market.

4. Expectations from TSS 2011

1.	Furthering our basic skills on terminology development and mgt
2.	Learning from experienced people/institutions how to develop terminology-related proposals and get funding inside and outside my country
3.	Generating collaborative partnerships with the above-mentioned people/institutions in order to improve what we have started .

5. Acknowledgement

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to:

- Pr.Dr. Klaus-Dirk Schmitz
- The TermNet Team(the CEO, Blanca Najera and Anja Drame)

Thank you very much!

Murakoze cyane!

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