

Handbook of Terminology

Vol 3 Legal terminology

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In the Realm of Legal Terminology

Legal terminology is a fundamental pillar of legal systems and the knowledge associated with them worldwide. It serves as a crucial tool for understanding the complexities of various legal cultures. In our increasingly multilingual world, legal terminology has long been the primary means of expressing legal concepts in the languages of different legal systems.

From the Roman Empire, where Roman law was articulated in Latin, to the establishment of Renaissance states and their legal systems, which were documented in vernacular languages, the differing realities of comparative law provide us with powerful tools to explore new contexts and achieve innovative outcomes in constructing multilingual legal systems.

Terminology truly reflects an effort to represent legal culture as it relates to legal knowledge. A legal term encapsulates a concept through linguistic means, acting as a unit of legal expertise. Observing the discrepancies between legal terms from various systems allows us to approach the study of legal terminology presented in this book.

Edited by Łucja Biel and Hendrik J. Kockaert, both esteemed scholars in the field, this volume is the third in an extensive Handbook of Terminology. Volume 1 focuses on general methodological approaches, while Volume 2 examines terminology within the Arab world.

As the editors note, *This Handbook attests to the vibrant research community working in legal terminology. Its objective is to survey diverse approaches and combine perspectives of both scholars and practitioners from the domains of Terminology, Translation studies, Linguistics, Law, and Information Technology, but also contribute perspectives from a variety of legal systems.*

The volume comprises twenty-five contributions divided into five parts:

1. Properties of Legal Terminology
2. National Legal Terminology in Translation
3. Legal Terminology in Multilingual Organizations
4. Terminological Tools and Resources
5. Legal Terminology in Training Contexts

In each part, contributors address key topics concerning legal terminology, providing insights and the current state of research on the mentioned subjects. In the editors' words, *the first attempt to bring together various perspectives and offers a compendium of information on legal terms in a single place.*

As the editors recognize, *Despite its breadth and depth we were naturally not able to cover all the topics we wanted but the Handbook is a good starting*

point that attests to the multifaceted nature of legal terminology as a field of practice and research.

One of the main critiques of the book is its limited perspective on contemporary issues of legal multilingualism. The examples and terminologies explored primarily focus on dominant legal languages and systems, with a notable bias towards Common Law jurisdictions. Many minority languages and their legal contexts are not addressed.

Additionally, there is a lack of discussion regarding the translation of legal codes in Europe and their connection to legal terminology, as well as the development of legal terminology within these minority languages, both in terms of status and within their linguistic frameworks.

In conclusion, this Handbook provides foundational research on the intersection of law and linguistics and serves as a springboard for future endeavors in legal terminology, offering an indispensable tool for law and the societies governed by it.