InterPARES PROJECT: 1999-2018

CLAID TEAM: 2005-2018

(*CARIBBEAN, LATIN AMERICA InterPARES DISSEMINATION*)

BRAZIL: an amazing experience

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Good afternoon

Buenas tardes

I am very happy to be in this country and it’s an honor for me to take part in this event.

And since this event has a historical perspective, as we are celebrating 20 years of InterPARES and its conclusion as a Project run by UBC and 13 years and conclusion of CLAID TEAM as an interaction of this Project, I would start saying

Once upon a time there were two Brazilian archivists who were invited to integrate the InterPares Project as members of a very special group of researchers, namely Claid Team (Caribbean and Latin America InterPares Dissemination). Actually, the team was constituted by five very friendly nations: Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico and Peru.

Of course, the Brazilian archivists (Claudia and I) accepted the honorable invitation with a big smile. It was the year of 2005. Since then, and for thirteen years, the two archivists have had the opportunity of diving in the immense theoretical and empiric ocean of InterPares Project. Today, after a long journey of lectures and courses presented all over the country, we are here to present a short panel of how much InterPares Project contributed to the enrichment of Archival Science in Brazil.

Concerning myself, I was in charge of the Terminology Task Force and I’m going to speak about

The contribution of InterPARES Terminology Task Force to Archival Terminology and Practice in Brazil

Concerning terminology, InterPARES Project started with a glossary (Interpares 1), then it evolved to a Terminology data base with a dictionary and a glossary (Interpares 2 and 3) and arrived to Interpares 4 with a Terminology data base constituted by a glossary, a dictionary, an ontology and a multilingual work which is the Multilingual Archival Terminology, organized in partnership with the International Council of Archives.

This lecture focuses only on the glossaries of the four phases of the Project and, just to obey the time, among the three hundred and six (306) terms sent to us to be translated to Portuguese, I’m going to mention only one, the term ***record.***

LET’S SEE

In her two previous talks presented in InterPARES meeting in South Korea (2009) and Malaysia (2010), the coordinator of Team Brazil, Claudia Lacombe Rocha, spoke and wrote about a key term of archival science, that is, the term *record*. In her first paper Rocha[[1]](#footnote-1) stated: “…the translation of **record** to *Documento arquivístico* was recently adopted in Brazil, and it is important to note that InterPARES Project findings strongly contributed to that change.” This is very true and, little by little, we see Brazilian archivists using the term *documento arquivístico (record)***,** instead of *documento de arquivo (document of archives)* which has always been the favorite of Brazilian archival community. However we must say that the change that we begin to note now hasn’t occurred so peacefully. In fact, we can detect a certain degree of tension and even a dispute between those in favor of the term *documento arquivístico (record)* and those in favor of the term *documento de arquivo (document of archives)*. The latter argues that the term *documento de arquivo* is a Latin name, being adopted by countries of Latin origin, such as France, Italy, Spain etc., and by Latin America archival communities. Despite being a very solid argument, it can be confronted with a new conception which has its origin in the scope of InterPARES Project. Let’s see. The term *record* is a synonym of the term *archival document* which means *documento arquivístico* in Portuguese. The terms *archival* in English, and *arquivístico* in Portuguese, are adjectives and, as such, identify the entity in question more appropriately since they qualify it. By this moment it might be appropriate to remember Jenkinson’s[[2]](#footnote-2) words and, by replacing the term “archives” for “records”, we could say that records “… are documents with a qualification.” So the entity is an archival one. And why is it so? For its own nature, that is, it is “…made or received in the course of a practical activity, and set aside for action or reference[[3]](#footnote-3).” By its turn, the term *documento de arquivo* gives an idea of place, that is, the document is in an archival institution or department. And why is it there? Because it was placed there.

There is still another consequence of the term *record* in the conception of the archival entity by Brazilian archivists. It shows us the importance of conceptualizing the archival unity, using singular, not plural as we always do when we employ the term *archives* each time we want to conceptualize the entity. The perception of our mistake gains strength when an important author from Spain, Heredia Herrera[[4]](#footnote-4), makes a self-criticism in her book of 2007 saying that mentioning the set of documents when conceptualizing the archival entity, she herself, “… deviates and does not define record but fonds.”

Finally, we must say that the work of translation of the term *record* in the scope of InterPARES Project has enhanced the comprehension of its meaning among Brazilian archivists.

**Conclusion**

This is a very, very small picture of the repercussion of InterPARES Terminology Task Force in the Brazilian archival community since I have mentioned only the term ***record.*** I wish I could have spoken about other terms such as *document, set aside, archival bond, authoritative record, bounded variability, chain of custody and chain of preservation* to name only a few.

As expected, our terminology group worked hard trying to conciliate some terms to our archival practice and to assimilate new ones as well.

As a matter of fact, due to our participation in the InterPARES Project, many terms were included in the glossary of our “Technical Chamber of Electronic Documents” which belongs to the National Council of Archives. Besides that, we have managed to disseminate some of them in our national meetings and among archival science students.

Thus, there seems to be no doubts about the contribution of InterPARES Terminology Task Force to Archival Terminology and Practice in Brazil.

And last but not least, I have to say that having integrated InterPARES Project and Claid Team was one of the most enriching experiences I have ever had in my professional life. The tense and warm discussions of our group in so many meetings in the National Archives marked our work in trying to grasp all the concepts and to make the best translations. So many questions! So many answers! So many uncertainties! In the end those meetings were in fact a collective study which enlightened our minds towards an endless search for knowledge. At least we are not alone as we have the support and beauty of Heidegger’s words, according to whom “questioning is the devotion of thinking.”

For all these aspects I’d like to say thank you very, very much Professor Luciana Duranti for this wonderful opportunity.

1. Rocha, Claudia Lacombe. The challenges of developing a common glossary across different countries and languages in InterPARES 3: some examples from team Brazil experience (InterPARES Symposium, South Korea, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Jenkinson, Hilary. The English Archivist: a new profession. (H. K. Lewis, London, 1947) p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Duranti, Luciana; PRESTON, Randy.**International research on permanent authentic records in electronic systems (InterPARES 2)**: experimential, interactive and dynamic records. (ANAI, Italia, 2008) p. 832. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. HerediaHerera, Antonia. Que esunarchivo. (Ediciones TREA, 2007, Gijon) p. 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)