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► **To cite this version:**

Brigitte Juanals, Martin Lafréchoux, Jean-Luc Minel. The Standardization Process: Exploring the Battlefield. 4th International Symposium on Process Organization Studies, Jun 2012, Kos, Greece. pp.21. halshs-00711608

HAL Id: halshs-00711608

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-00711608>

Submitted on 25 Jun 2012

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The Standardization Process: Exploring the Battlefield

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In the domain of the international standardization of social security, the organization standards – called management standards – of security are published (or are in the process of being published) by NGOs authorized to conduct standardization activities. These texts deal with the security and protection of people and goods; they are characterized by their international, European or national production process and are widely applied in a transnational space to both private and public organizations.

The specificity of our research field – information security management standards in the broader international context of social security – led us to design an analytical framework capable of describing the texts of standards in order to apprehend the communicational and organizational policies recommended by these texts. This framework must also be relevant to deal with the process of the construction of terminology which is carried out by the technical committees (TC) in charge of this task. Our research aims to identify, in a specific industrial branch, the conditions and mechanisms which entail the introduction of new standards and how these mechanisms result in the crystallization, communication and circulation of recommended practices, knowledge and procedures, means of organization and socio-technical arrangements.

Our research covers several themes: i) What are the motivations and the communication strategies of organizations which are the “authors-players” in the field? ii) What kind of mechanisms are organizations using to reference these standards and how do they put them into practice? iii) In the texts of the standards themselves, where do the concepts originate from and how are they developed, what are the diachronic variants of terms used to lexicalize them? iv) What kind of software should be developed to study the networks of influence that seek to impose a given terminology and hence the concepts used by the standards? Our paper will focus on point 4, as research on the other themes has already been published (or submitted) in Juanals & Minel (2011), Juanals (2012), Lafréchoux & al. (2012a), and Lafréchoux & al. (2012b). We will present the building of a new tool, called KONTRAST, which aims to combine a socio-organizational analysis with a linguistic one. More precisely, we try to leverage the terminological variants in a non-stabilized terminological domain and to track the lobbying and influences at work in the battlefield (Lafréchoux & al., 2012b).

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