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(Eds.), *New Challenges for Research on Language for  
Special Purposes*

Berlin: Frank & Timme, Forum für Fachsprachen-Forschun

John Humbley

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RÉFÉRENCE

Simonnæs, Ingrid, Øivin Andersen & Klaus Schubert (Eds.). 2019. *New Challenges for Research on Language for Special Purposes*, Forum für Fachsprachen-Forschung Band 154. Berlin: Frank & Timme, 392 pp. ISBN: 978-37-329-0420-4.

- 1 This book is a selection of papers given at the 21st LSP Conference (formerly known as the LSP Symposium), held in Bergen, Norway, in 2017. The definition of LSP in this context is by no means restricted to English for special purposes, though many of the studies focusing on other languages take English into account. In their Introduction, the editors start off by sketching out a brief history of how LSP, initially dominated by onomasiologically oriented terminology, has been gradually transformed into studies of specialised discourse. To confirm this trend, they have chosen Kjersti Fløttum's keynote lecture, with its textual basis and resolutely cross-disciplinary orientation, as the introductory article to the whole book. They also give an explanation for the rationale of dividing the book into four sections (called chapters): firstly terminology "using corpora" in various domains, secondly texts and textlinguistics (sic: the German influence is perceptible here, not just in the spelling but also in the theoretical background), thirdly specialised translation and finally questions of didactics and training. As is made clear by this wide-ranging selection of topics, this interpretation of LSP goes beyond what is usually assumed to be its scope in English-speaking circles, notably encompassing technical translation as well as emphasizing terminology (eight papers out of twenty).
- 2 **Kjersti Fløttum** is well known to readers of *ASp*, not only for her two articles in the journal (Fløttum 2010, 2014) and keynote lectures at GERAS, but more broadly as an authority on how language is used by different communities and the ensuing necessity for collaboration with researchers from other disciplines. This is eloquently illustrated by her paper, "A cross-disciplinary perspective on climate change discourse", which develops the narrative as a tool by which to ascertain different approaches to problems, exemplified by climate change, a topic with which she has been closely associated for some thirty years. This paper also sets the tone of the whole work by positing the construction and interrogation of the corpus as the starting point for any linguistic analysis. Of particular interest is the attention given to constructing and using different subcorpora, including international and national (Norwegian) reports and analyses written by officials and experts on the one hand and, on the other, the reactions of members of the general public via a Citizen Panel, written by non-specialists. To make sense of the various discourses extracted, the author applies narrative analysis: what is the plot, who are the heroes, who are the villains, etc.?, using various analytical methods, some of which coming from linguistics, but others from different fields, such as political science for opinion poll analysis, in order to achieve a global understanding of the positioning of the players in the debate. There is much in this article of relevance to cultural and language mediation, in particular on



how to set up collaboration with different subject specialists, and the advantages in this regard of pluridisciplinary universities.

- 3 The first chapter in the terminology section addresses a question which will be taken up in several of the other papers, i.e. the influence of English on other languages, especially in specialized communication. **Jelena Anđelković** and **Gordana Jakić**, in “A parallel aligned corpus-based study of terminology transfer from English into Serbian”, are specifically interested in why certain metaphorical terms in the fields of business and commerce are borrowed directly from English, whereas many others are expressed in Serbian through calques or loan translations, which may or may not be metaphorical. It should be noted that the Serbian corpus is made up of the translations of the English-language texts, which may influence the results. In a study previously carried out in Italian (Bernardini & Ferraresi 2011), not mentioned by the authors, it emerged that computer experts writing in Italian used more English loanwords than translators writing on the same subject. Choosing a translated corpus may thus bias the results as far as interference is concerned. Globally though it appears from the study under review that the more original a metaphorical term is in English, the more likely it will be expressed in Serbian by a direct borrowing.
- 4 A very different stance is taken by **Jelena Filipović** and **Andrejana Đordan** in “Terminology policy in Serbia: actors and decision makers in Serbian language policy and planning”, advocating “language leadership” and the creation of a specific Serbian terminology to counter the effects of massive borrowings from English.
- 5 The role of terminology adaptation in a morally disputed area is given very interesting treatment by **Kim Grego** and **Alessandria Vicentini** in “Terminal terminology: ESP in the discourse of assisted dying in British newspapers”. The starting point for this study was in fact a selection of terms taken from specialized lexica and texts on the “end of life”, from which some keywords were selected then searched in a corpus compiled from texts on this subject in the *Guardian* and the *Times* over one year (419 texts in all). It turns out that medically assisted dying is dealt with in at least five areas (medicine, law, politics, economics and religion/philosophy), the three latter showing more variation and more ideological or even polemical use. In addition, the number of texts from political and religious leaders was far greater than those from the public as expressed in letters to the editor and other forms of feedback included in the corpus. Extending the corpus to other varieties of English or other languages, as the authors suggest, would add a useful parameter to a study which already sheds much light on linguistic means of determining attitudes which may be attached to terms.
- 6 A study in short diachrony of political terminology is presented by **Marcus Müller**, **Hartmut Behr** and **Jens Steffek**, entitled “The discursive formation of key terms in International Relations”. It is an analysis of the term *regime* as used in a corpus of ten years of specialised articles from a recognized academic journal of international studies published in English only. The authors start by declaring that there is no justification for treating terms any differently from other language manifestations but they do go on to define them as being “controlled by a definition” (p. 106). Starting from the cooccurrents of keywords (*norm, principle, rule, international...*), they then analyse the specialized meaning that the term takes on, characterized by a flurry of defining contexts over a limited period of years and the use of the term in related knowledge domains.

- 7 The theoretical approaches to terminology are varied and the present volume reflects this healthy diversity. **Juan Rojas-García** and **Melania Cabezas-García** are two of several linguists represented in this volume who adopt Pamela Faber's Frame-based terminology model, illustrated by her work on the terminology of coastal engineering, allied with Distributional semantic models of general linguistics with a view to knowledge extraction from texts. In "Use of knowledge patterns for the evaluation of semiautomatically-induced semantic clusters", the authors use these clusters not just to characterize semantic relations or disambiguate word senses, but more particularly to identify Knowledge Rich Contexts (KRC), another terminological concept which proves singularly useful in several of the articles included here. This paper proposes a novel cluster validation method, demonstrated by the cooccurrences of a small sample of two terms, one representing an entity (*beach*) and another representing a process (*erosion*); it is shown that most of the cooccurrences bear a conceptual relation to the term under consideration.
- 8 One of the eventual outcomes of the previous study is a term base or, in its more ambitious conceptual version, a terminological knowledge base. Building such a term base for legal terminology is the focus of **Katia Peruzzo's** "Developing targeted legal terminology resources: learning from future lawyers". The topic can be regarded a variant of one of the hoary questions of legal translation: must the legal translator also be a trained lawyer? In this case, the author strives to determine whether the same term base can be used for both translators (in training or in practice) and lawyers, the latter group limited here to those in training, though in their fifth year. The study is set in a translators' school, which already has a workable term base, and the author explains why it was necessary to build a separate database for legal terminology. As a justification it is pointed out that legal terminology is inherently most complicated and even more importantly that legal terms need to be placed in the context of the legal system they belong to, which may or may not correspond to a particular language community. To determine whether the challenge of a term base could be successfully aimed at both linguists and lawyers a questionnaire was designed and then addressed to final-year law students on the basis of the existing general term bank. The law students found the phraseological information useful, in particular the different meanings acquired for example by relatively common verbs used in connection with legal terms. They particularly appreciated the *Equivalence* field, which in fact indicates the degree of equivalence. More specifically they suggested creating special fields for *Legal System* and *Legal Framework* to account for nationally and legally specific terminology. As in many of the papers, the reader is inspired to reflect on broader issues brought up in the individual projects described in the paper, in this case, for example, in assessing the reusability of term bases in general for public other than (future) translators.
- 9 **Natascia Ralli** and **Isabella Stannizzi's** Approaches to the unification of legal and administrative terminology, an example from South Tyrol (our translation of „Ansätze zur Vereinheitlichung der Rechts- und Verwaltungsterminologie: ein Beispiel aus Südtirol“) is the only paper not in English. It is an excellent illustration of the intrinsic difficulty mentioned in the previous article of expressing in one language concepts from a different legal system which at the same time uses a different language, in this case Italian legal concepts translated into German while at the same time avoiding

confusion with similar though differing concepts used in other German-speaking countries.

- 10 **Lotte Weilgaard Christensen**, in a paper focusing on Danish LSP, “Danish knowledge patterns and word sketches for semi-automatic extraction of terminological information” carries on the tradition of conceptual terminological analysis which has long been a feature of Scandinavian LSP studies. She notably takes up the challenge of using modern tools – Sketch Engine in particular – on Danish corpora which perforce have not been tagged. She manages to extract knowledge patterns through knowledge rich contexts by using word sketches.
- 11 **Fátima Faya Cerqueiro**’s paper, “Introducing academic writing through abstracts in ESP instruction”, is the first in the textual analysis section, though it may well have been placed among the works on didactics, given the focus of the experience presented. As previously mentioned, the methodological diversity of LSP in general and the present volume in particular may be enriching, but it can also be challenging at the same time, as it proves to be in this paper. The subject is an experiment carried out with students writing a summary of texts they had read, with the paper focusing on the evaluation of the advantages that this exercise brought them. But the reader who expected an analysis of the textual genre of the abstract will be disappointed: no definition of the abstract is given and there is no information on what model the student had to write credibly in this genre. The problem may be that the exercise described is a sort of *précis* writing rather than drafting an academic abstract, which has however been abundantly studied, in particular in Bondi and Sanz (Eds.) (2014).
- 12 **Nataša Logar** and **Tomaž Erjavec**, in “Slovene academic writing: a corpus approach in lexical analysis” describe how they used an existing Slovenian general language corpus and built another specialised corpus to distinguish terminological groups, academic vocabulary groups, grammatical groups and others. The emphasis is on general academic vocabulary and phraseology, a field which has recently received much attention (Jacques & Tutin [Eds.] 2018).
- 13 **Clara Inés López Rodríguez**, in a state-of-the-art paper, “Verbal patterns to express DISEASE in English medical texts” describes how verbs were selected from a corpus in relation to the conceptual class of DISEASE. One of the main interests of this article is the introductory precautions taking into account various parameters of semantic and syntactic nature, for example the conceptual implications of DISEASE as a first, second or third argument in a structure, where it may be subject or object. The ultimate aim of incorporating the results of the analysis into a future English-Spanish medical dictionary is an important aspect, but the way to achieve this goal is perhaps even more relevant to those interested in a thorough linguistic and conceptual treatment of specialized discourse.
- 14 **Päivi Pasanen** adopts a frame-based terminology mentioned in previous papers in “Pattern-based approach to causality in the field of maritime safety”. The causality referred to is the relation illustrated by the term *collision*, a major concern of safety experts. The corpus is made up entirely of 59 investigating reports in English from the period 1989-2017. According to the methodology advocated, a frame is drawn up on the basis of several templates. For the collision event, three templates are posited to account for the vocabulary extracted from the corpus. The first template represents the agent (linguistic expressions of the various classes of causes), the second the event itself (type of process involved) and the third the effect and patient template (types of

event), the three being linked by typical verbs (*occur, cause, contribute*, etc. which link the templates). The thrust of this paper is on extracting knowledge from texts: what is not approached, however, is crossing this with knowledge obtained from other sources, for example regulatory texts and normative definitions.

- 15 **Tania P. Hernández Hernández** brings Bourdieu's social analysis to bear in order to shed light on spelling differences in the term *chikungunya* in Mexican Spanish. In "Linguistic capital and translational doxa: writing 'chikungunya' in Mexican Spanish", she analyses reaction from Spanish-speaking experts and specialized lexicographers on the question of adapting the spelling of this disease. Some readers may feel that the critical apparatus disproportionate when it comes to what may be considered symbolically significant but at the same time a minor orthographical point.
- 16 **Miriam Paola Leibbrand**, in "From *chiffre d'affaires* to *turnover* and from *revenue* to *produits*: an LSP approach to financial translation", starts off by regretting the paucity of work on accountancy terminology, without however taking into consideration lexical resources such as Ménard (2011), which may be outdated but which reflected the state of accounting ten years ago. She collates all the terms referring to a limited number of concepts characterised by formal and probably conceptual variation (*consolidated statement of profit or loss*) figuring in a corpus of publications from a number of French-speaking countries, both English and French monolingual and bilingual documents, highlighting the variation within languages but more particularly with regard to equivalences. This is certainly an important point to make, but surely at some future stage note should be taken of how the relevant regulatory bodies define such terms.
- 17 **Aurélie Picton** and **Amélie Josselin-Leray** return to Ingrid Meyer's idea of Knowledge Rich Contexts, which has proved to be a key concept for interrogating corpora for term extraction. They intend to take this concept further and extend it to linguistic information useful for translators. In "A mixed-methods approach to characterize Knowledge-Rich Contexts for specialized translation", they present an experiment in translating a specialised text on volcanology inviting the participants to identify word patterns. The participants were given a number of potential KRCs (some turned out to be Knowledge **Poor** contexts and thus unexploitable) and a number of confirmed terms with their cooccurring nouns, adjectives and verbs, which turned out to be helpful not simply for choosing suitable collocations, but also for finding the equivalents of terms in the other language. It emerges that KRCs usefulness for translation can differ significantly from those used traditionally in term extraction, the complex nature of translating justifying the mixed method approach, which is carefully documented in this paper.
- 18 **Elena Chichetti** and **Flavia De Camillis** also present a paper set in bilingual South Tyrol. In "Translator skills for expert to lay communication: experience with e-learning modules on occupational health and safety", they argue for a common or at least overlapping set of skills for both technical communication and translation. Building on the framework of competences developed by the European Master's in Translation and those of the European Association for Technical Communication (tekomp), they sketch out those skills necessary for specialists to lay communication, be it through translation or not. It is argued – and cogently so! – that technical communication skills are now a necessity for translators.

- 19 The final section on didactic aspects of LSP is in fact entirely devoted to English, with the partial exception of the first: **Verna Lusicky** and **Tania Wissik** tackle the problem of corpora for LSP in an original and helpful manner. In “Language resources in repositories and catalogues: Pilot study on their potential for LSP teaching and training”, they argue that LSP is both a user and a producer of corpora which they regard as just another form of “language resource”, and they proceed to list other language resources which may be turned into LSP usable corpora. In particular they show how LSP users can be trained to search through repositories and catalogues of research work, in particular in the context of the various initiatives stemming from Digital Humanities. This is particularly useful when dealing with a variety of languages. As this paper is part of the teaching and training section, it is only natural that a couple of didactic scenarios should be provided.
- 20 In “Lawyers in the age of Social Media; LinkedIn® as an educational and professional tool”, **Anila Ruth Scott-Monkhouse** shows how the postgraduate programme of the University of Pisa, English for Law and International Translations, uses professional social media to interact with professionals. A hands-on training course – learning by doing – is described in practical terms.
- 21 The final paper, “Coping with long texts in ESP classes: using notes in content visualisation” by **Tamara Sladoljv-Agejev** and **Visnja Kabalin-Borenic**, argues for some tried-and-true teaching methods, here the use of note taking to focus learners’ attention on assimilating the content of long texts, paying particular attention to the role played by visual text structure, in both those texts being read and the notes taken by the students.
- 22 The editors have chosen in the title of this thought-provoking collection to put the emphasis on “new challenges”. From a strictly material point of view, it would be equally valid to point out the new opportunities offered by new tools and the perspectives that they open up. It is striking to see how Sketch Engine has become not just the default corpus interrogation tool, but also an indispensable aid in building usable and interpretable corpora. Perhaps one of the challenges, generally taken up by the authors of this book, is to construct corpora in such a way that the results can be legitimately exploited, and here the recourse to the methods of discourse analysis, now widely adopted, is a necessary step in this direction.
- 23 Another challenge which goes to the heart of LSP studies is the dominance of English as the language of research. The authors indeed focus their analyses on a variety of languages: English predominates, but Danish, French, German, Italian, Serbian, Slovenian and Spanish are also studied, and this in itself is encouraging. What does seem to be missing, however, is acknowledgement of research carried out in languages other than English. Two examples will suffice, one concerning narrative theory and the other the status of legal LSP. The first serves in the keynote article as the guiding principle used to interpret the various discourses about climate change, and most convincingly too, but no mention is made of other dimensions (storytelling, *mise en récit...*), amply illustrated by a French research movement, conveniently encapsulated in Resche (ed.) (2016), which could have backed up some of the case studies. Similarly, the discussion on legal terminology becomes much clearer if a further step is taken to regard it as not as an LSP but as an institutional language, necessitating different tools (Busse 1998).



- 24 These are challenges to LSP studies in general and by no means a criticism of the book under review. On the contrary, it gives an encouraging overview of the broad scope of LSP and research approaches linked to it.
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