

EDITORIAL:

Linguistics, along with Language for Special Purposes, as is the case for all sciences, evolves according to societal need, discoveries in other fields of science, new currents within philosophical thought, etc.

Should anyone be in any doubt about this, we recommend that they read the study entitled “Antike Fachtexte / Ancient Technical Texts”¹ by Thorsten Fögen published last year which deals with the history of professional communication from Antiquity to the present-day.

The above-mentioned evolution of an evermore complex society does, however, apparently require the breach of the established boundaries between the various scientific disciplines. This particular tendency is reflected in what is nowadays known as the “cognitive sciences” further defined as an “assembly of different scientific disciplines with a common object of research”².

Cognition, memory, language, emotions, attention, vision for instance, are all examples of cognitive activities that fall into the ambit of this multidisciplinary research area in full growth. “Cognitive sciences thus form a research area working with many concepts and methods across classic interdisciplinary lines”².

Interdisciplinary research is, however, not a new aspect of linguistics. In his book, Thorsten Fögen sets up a whole array of both old and new branches of language science such as phonetics, statistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, Language for Special Purposes, translation science, etc. All of which have brought into play an extensive array of non-linguistic scientific disciplines and methods such as physics, mathematics, medicine, psychology, sociology, anthropology and cultural sciences, just to name a few.

This particular field is undergoing continuous expansion, this means that linguistics will have to deal with areas that may, in themselves, not all be new although they might differ from those that linguists have dealt with hitherto. An example of this is to be found in this issue of our journal: Basseby Antia et al. demonstrate in their article the direct usefulness of morphosemantics in connection with the marketing of pharmaceutical products. Although the theoretical basis of this study consists of linguistics and LSP theoretical models, the authors are aware that it also indicates the growing necessity of the interdisciplinary approach.

¹ Thorsten Fögen (2005): *Antike Fachtexte / Ancient technical Texts*. W de Gruyter, Berlin. ISBN 3-11-018122-3

² Association des Étudiants en Sciences Cognitives (ASCo), Bordeaux.
<http://www.sm.u-bordeaux2.fr/asco/Scico/def.html>

There is another example that also concerns the area of public health; this is a problem of the food production sector which will be the subject of our next symposium to be held in November. The problem consists of the names given by food manufacturers to their products along with the way consumers decode these names on the one hand, and the claims made by the manufacturers on behalf of their products concerning their nutritional and health value on the other.

These claims or puffs are to be found on the labelling of, in the presentation of and in the publicity announcing the characteristics of foodstuffs or nutritional components thereof. This second aspect is of particular interest to the European Parliament which is in the process of drafting legislation designed to “eliminate those puffs concerning nutritional value and health that are either misleading or meaningless to the consumer”³.

The research that is clearly necessary in this complex area will require the close international co-operation of linguists, psychologists, sociologists, experts in commercial law, manufacturers, authorities etc.

A research centre is in the process of being set up at the Copenhagen Business School for this very purpose.

The Editorial Board

³ Product labelling and packaging: Nutrition and health claims in consumer information. Activities of the European Union. Summaries of legislation.
<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l21095.htm>