VASA CONGRESS ON SPECIAL LANGUAGES AND TERMINOLOGY

The Nordic congress on LSP and Terminology was held in Vasa, Finland from the 16th to the 26th August, 1982. The congress took the form of a course for Nordic Linguists, terminologists and LSP teachers from colleges and universities, term banks, nomenclature associations, and standardizing bodies, as well as from trade and industry. Participants totalled about 25 and the setting was the Evangeliska Polkhögskolan.

The course forms part of Nordterm's training and research programme, also in this case supported financially by Nordiska Forskarkurser. The primary objective of Nordiska Forskarkurser is to further research in the Nordic countries by improving the training of researchers.

On two previous occasions, Nordiska Forskarkurser have supported Nordterm's work group financially, in connection with the course on terminology held in 1978 at Rolighed, Skodsborg, and the symposium on terminology training held in Oslo in 1981.

The aim of this course was to inspire research in the fields of special languages and terminology and to further communication between the linguist and the terminologist.

Various aspects of special languages and terminology were considered from different linguistic angles. Needs and objectives in special languages research were discussed, taking into account the various backgrounds of the participants.

Lectures were given by 12 highly qualified doctors, professors, and terminologists from Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, each with a profound knowledge of their respective fields, such as terminology, special languages and communication.

The principle subjects discussed during the course were as follows:

1. Special languages research
   1.1 Where (institutional frame) and how this research is performed
   1.2 The role of linguistics in special languages

2. Terminology
   2.1 Terminology and semantics
   2.2 Term harmonization, realism and utopia

3. Special languages and communication
   3.1 Special languages and style
   3.2 Special languages and mass media

4. Problems of bilingual countries (Norway + Finland)

5. Presentation of participants' projects

6. Presentation of a Nordic research programme for special languages and terminology (to be completed)
Looking back on the days in Vasa, I feel prompted to present a very favourable course evaluation. The alternation of lectures and group discussions made it possible both to focus on various specific aspects and also to take account of general considerations so as to achieve an overall view, and to establish links with neighbouring fields. Another benefit of such a course is the inspiration obtained from discussions with colleagues from other countries and with a different orientation of interests. Such discussions, of course, also make possible the establishment of personal contacts for potential future co-operation.

The Vasa course on special languages and terminology produced two concrete results: The first is the proposed Nordic research programme, which is being worked out in detail at the time this report is going to press. It will appear later in the general proceedings. The second is the decision to produce an inter-Nordic organ for general articles, information on research, terminology and special languages. It is felt that such a publication will fill a need by providing information on activities in progress in the other Nordic countries. If the financial problems can be solved quickly, the intention is to present the first issue at the Nordterm meeting in May, 1983. An editorial board comprising members from the Nordic countries has been established.

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