



**Discourse and Identity in the Professions. Legal, Corporate and Institutional Citizenship**

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Volume 149 in the Peter Lang series *Linguistic Insights* is a collection of studies based on papers originally presented at the international conference Issues of Identity in and across Cultures in the Professional World organized within the framework of a research project (Identity and Culture in English Domain-specific Discourse) financed by the Italian Ministry for University. The focus of this collection is on the ways the in-group identity of a given professional community affects, and is affected by, the norms for communicative behaviour elaborated by the social group and followed, but also re-created, by its participants in the performance of their social practice, as exhibited in discourse. The main interest is to investigate the ways and means by which discourse is used, sometimes strategically manipulated, to make typical identity traits stand out for even or even to provide a specifically intended identity.

Discourse and communication behaviour are one of the characterizing properties, probably the most evident, of a professional community. Other definitions stress that “professional discourse is discourse produced by professionals, in professional



contexts, for professional purposes”, thus relating to any domain or fields of action whenever it is used for professional purposes. A third approach is the one adopted by genre analysts, who prioritize the role of “genre” in shaping the schematic structure of the discourse and influence and constraining choice of content and style. All three frameworks are used in the studies either singularly or in various combinations. The linguistic and sociological aspects of professional identity in its multifaceted expressions are mostly investigated with the help of corpus linguistic tools.

The volume contains three sections: Corporate citizenships, Legal citizenships and Institutional and socio-political domains. In the first chapter it is stressed how corporate identity and citizenships are constructed by companies to project a positive image onto their stakeholders, spanning from how to rebuild a challenged reputation and a socially responsible identity of the company till the social identities created by motor-cycle brands. In the next chapter a number of cases, from arbitration and legal settings, analyse the difference between professional legals or professions acting as legal arbitrators in for instance sports. Overall the conclusion is that although the practice is identity-forming, the original background of the stakeholders is reflected in their terminology and choices. In the last chapter the power of language in identity building in the institutional and socio-political domains is brought to the foreground. Specific linguistic strategies are used for the purpose of stressing or denying certain aspects to achieve political objectives and set specific norms in accordance with the views of the sender of the communication.

The Insight series promote specialist language studies that focus on specific aspects of language use in one or several language. The themes of discourse and genre make up for a remarkable number of studies/volumes published in the series reflecting the fact that society is affected by the communicative behaviour of influential stakeholders who are in their turn affected by their own specific objectives in the performance of their professional practice. To understand the spin and how we are all targeted in various domains is essential to our actions and how to deal with decision-making in both business, politics and daily life.

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