

Editorial

Texts, terminology, language for special purposes, who cares?

Some modern students claim to be unable to digest more than a handful of pages from the textbook at a time. Short and punchy in 140 character tweets, politicians seem to love it! Simplified English to reduce translation costs. Emoticons to express our feelings.

Manuals for hardware and software with hundreds if not thousands of pages published on multiple platforms to comply with EU-directives .

Wordy and endlessly long terms and conditions that we all accept with a quick mouse-click without reading one single word because we are eager to launch an application.

Food labels with dozens of information elements that very few consumers care to study before making a purchase decision.

Blaise Pascal (French mathematician 1623-1662) who started a letter by saying "Je vous écris une longue lettre, parce que je n'ai pas le temps d'en écrire une courte" (I write you a long letter, I lack the time to make a short one).

Xu Bing (chinese artist born 1955 living in the US) who published "Book from the ground: From Point-to-Point," (2012) which is a pictogram-only narrative which can be read by anyone.

A MacBook Pro which now comes with a small 20 page easy-to-read leaflet.

These scattered examples of observations of various features related to text production are not meant to be judged as right or wrong, and certainly not an attempt to reduce the role of LSP. They are meant to illustrate how fascinating production and comprehension of texts and pictures are, and how challenging it is to get a message through in the best possible way in a multilingual, multicultural, and multimodal world, where the audience's attention, expectations and ability and preparedness to understand are never the same to-morrow as they were yesterday. Just in case somebody had forgotten.

So who cares? We do – and so do our contributors and our readers.

Henrik Selsøe Sørensen
Editor in chief