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## 225. The Development of Languages for Special Purposes Herausbildung von Fachsprachen

1. Approaches to the study of LSP
2. Sociolinguistic aspects of LSP development
3. A concluding remark
4. Literature (selected)

### 1. Approaches to the study of LSP

1.1. The term *language for special purposes*, or *language for specific purposes* (cf. Hoffmann 1988) is used with a variety of meanings (cf. art. 25; art. 136; Ammon 1998/1999a), and the word-forming structure of its equivalents in national languages makes its various aspects explicit: cf. e.g. the German equivalent 'Fachsprache' (Laurén 1994). As the English term 'language for special purposes' (henceforth LSP) suggests, the relevant linguistic phenomena (forms, varieties) are defined on the basis of the purposes they serve, or their functions. It is therefore logical to work with the concept of LSP proceeding from Prague inter-war functionalism. As is well-known, this was based on the general idea that "seen from the functionalist viewpoint, language is a system of purposeful means of expression" (PLC 1929/1983, 77). The authors connected with the Prague Linguistic Circle asserted the opinion that a special language should not be identified with "the sum of peculiarities of vocabulary and phraseology differing from common usage", i. e. with terminology in particular, and they urged that the special-purpose discourse and texts should

be investigated as a whole (Vančura 1936, 161; Pytelka 1972). However, it was not until about 1970 that this research program started being implemented in connection with the communicative and pragmatic orientation of linguistics (cf. Helbig 1986) and linguists (and sociologists) focused on specialized communication as such in more detail, including the question of how specialized communication is produced in the everyday interaction among the speakers (Drew/Heritage 1992; Lynch 1993). Nevertheless, the study of terminology has not lost its importance within the framework of the investigation of LSP, as demonstrated by the contents of the monumental handbook edited by Hoffmann, Kalverkämper and Wiegand (1998/1999) as well as its full title *Fachsprachen/ Languages for Special Purposes. Ein internationales Handbuch zur Fachsprachenforschung und Terminologiewissenschaft/An International Handbook of Special-Language and Terminology Research*. Nowadays the term LSP, or 'Fachsprache', thus refers to a research area within which various phenomena of different degrees of complexity are being analyzed: (i) specific lexical sets, terminology in particular; (ii) sets of linguistic means (i. e. not only lexical ones) having special functions; (iii) specialized texts and their genres; (iv) specialized communication, including specialized oral communication. These four analytical subjects have not been usually

studied separately (terminology, i.e. subject (i), may be an exception), on the contrary, the investigation of the more complex subjects comprises also the less complex ones (e.g. (iv) may comprise (i) and (ii) and the inclusion of (iii) is also possible). It is significant that most attention has been devoted to the less complex subjects, i.e. primarily to terminology, this state of research being also influenced by the prevailing 'product-orientation' not 'process-orientation' of linguistics.

There can be considerable stylistic differences between the individual LSP (cf. 2.5.1.). The term LSP comprises both the theoretically-specialized and practically-specialized communicative domains (Seibicke 1985). However, unlike the classical concept of Prague functionalism (on that see Havránek 1932/1983), it is not limited to the standard language. It follows that LSP also comprises the means referred to as jargon and slang (cf. Nekvapil 1993; Partridge 1970).

1.2. The development of LSP can be studied according to the four analytical subjects above. Proceeding from the general idea that good diachronic descriptions are to a certain extent made possible (or easier at least) by good synchronic descriptions, it is obvious that the possibilities of LSP development investigation are best where special vocabulary is concerned and worst in the sphere of specialized oral communication. In the description of the LSP development two aspects can be distinguished: (i) the aspect of the development whose description refers to the important social factors and historical events, capturing the changes of LSP against the background of long stretches of time (e.g. centuries), (ii) the aspect of development whose description refers to language-forming and text-forming principles giving rise to various aspects and features of LSP. Obviously, the 'development' in the first sense cannot exist without the 'development' in the second sense, or rather the two aspects of development presuppose one another. However, this article will focus on the first aspect.

The emergence and development of individual LSP is connected with the emergence and satisfying of social, or communicative, needs. Yet identical communicative needs can be satisfied by different language means and varieties. It follows then that in the history of a society the same 'specific purposes'

need not be fulfilled exclusively by the local national language, but also by a foreign language, or the local and foreign varieties may compete. The notion of LSP is therefore so abstract from the functional point of view that it can comprise different language varieties, including various 'languages'.

## 2. Sociolinguistic aspects of LSP development

### 2.1. Antiquity

The emergence of LSP is usually ascribed to the differentiation of human knowledge and the division of labour in society. Such differentiation is well attested in ancient literature. In Homer's *Iliad* (1980, 216), we can read e.g. about physicians as a distinctive group of people – their language, however, could not have differed much from that of the other people in the era of archaic Greece as the education of these physicians had not been institutionalized yet at that time (Wenskus 1998/1999). It can be assumed that LSP started to form predominantly in such social conditions when a limited group of people engaged in a certain activity for a long time, communicating with each other intensively. Such a situation must have existed as early as in the Greek 'schools', philosophical or medical, of the classical period. The width and differentiation of the antique knowledge of the world is attested by Aristotle's works: his works on logic, 'physics' (i.e. natural philosophy and science), philosophy, ethics, politics, rhetoric and the arts. Aiming at a systemization of then existing knowledge, Aristotle contributed significantly to the fixing and systemization of the relevant special expressions. While the Aristotle's disciples had faced the problem of the relation between the special expressions and the local variants, i.e. the competition between the means within one language, the ancient Roman authors faced the competition between special expressions of Greek origin and those of Latin origin. The cultural contacts between the Greek and Roman world provided an opportunity to intentionally internationalize the Latin special language, and this possibility was sporadically exploited (Wenskus 1998/1999).

### 2.2. The middle ages

The late Roman antiquity saw the emergence of the so-called liberal arts (*Artes lib-*

erales) that constituted the backbone of the school education in the Middle Ages. For more than a thousand years the seven liberal arts provided the means to communicate in Latin on grammar, rhetoric and dialectics (trivium), arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music (quadrivium). At the time when the Romance languages started forming and Latin was no longer the mother tongue of any large group of people, it was especially the teaching of Latin grammar that served as a language-stabilizing factor and contributed substantially towards the fact that the Middle Ages never lost contact with classical Latin culture and that special language has been able to draw on Latin (and Greek) up to now. The fact that the medium of education in medieval Europe was a single language, Latin, made it much easier for the scholars from different countries participating in the formation of special knowledge to communicate with each other. On the other hand, education was restricted to a limited group of people and it was provided only by certain institutions (particularly by monasteries and later by universities), which in certain situations must have served as a communication barrier between a smaller group of educated people and a much larger group of those lacking education.

Latin was also used as the language of religion and liturgy, and it thus became the means of spreading the western Roman Church concept of Christianity. As the promotion of Christianity was connected with the expansion of power, Latin as the liturgical language met with obstacles in some areas. As far as the communicative needs were concerned, the feudal rulers argued that Latin was incomprehensible to ordinary people, and sought to promote the use of the linguistic means of local origin as the liturgical language. As early as the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century this motivated the origin of the so-called Old Church Slavic, conceived on a Bulgaro-Macedonian basis by the Byzantine scholar Cyril (Constantinus) and his brother Methodius to meet the needs of their mission activities on the territory of Great Moravia. Old Church Slavic soon became the official language of the Bulgarian empire (Hill 1992), and remaining relatively uniform, it performed an important role in the literature on the territory of a number of Slavic countries. Old Church Slavic is generally considered the first standard literary

Slavic language, yet it originated as a LSP, namely a liturgical language (cf. Salmon 1998/1999). Daneš's claim that "the majority of standard languages are in their initial stages functional languages" (Daneš 1988, 1508) is worth mentioning here.

The 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries saw a great upswing in economic life connected with the division of labour between the farmers and craftsmen as well as with the rise of modern cities. This process may be assumed to have also had a linguistic dimension, yet we have only scarce information about it. The problem is that e.g. the language connected with ore mining and processing had a practically-specialized character and was predominantly represented by oral communication in local languages, or dialects. It usually follows that we have no detailed records about it. Thus a methodological problem substantially influencing the presentation of the earlier development of LSP arises: what is available to us are the language materials from the fields based on the written records of special knowledge as their constitutive element, i.e. predominantly the language materials from the domain of theoretically-specialized communication.

### 2.3. The late middle ages and the renaissance

Only the profound economic, social and cultural changes which started occurring during the period of late feudalism and the Renaissance (approximately from the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century) changed the communication structures in Europe, leading to the gradual withdrawal of Latin from its position of special language, and to the progression of regional (national) languages. Specialized communication had to cope with the new demands laid down by the unprecedented development of craftsmanship, trade, science and technology connected with the development of the cities and the class of burghers. The cities offered good opportunities not only to people with education linked to Latin culture, but also to people with practical knowledge capable of contributing to the development of crafts and trade. The need for such people led to the establishment of lower secondary schools providing the fundamentals of mathematics as well as reading and writing on the basis of the vernacular. It should be pointed out here that the medieval Artes did not comprise only the above mentioned Artes liberales but also the Artes



mechanicae. These were close to practical life as evident from their division into *Lanificium* (i.e. wool-cloth production as an example of a craft), *Armatura* (a military, or technical, craft), *Navigatio* (travelling, trade), *Agricultura* (agriculture, horticulture), *Venatio* (hunting, food production) etc., (Haage 1998/1999). *Artes mechanicae* were more significantly permeated by vernaculars than *Artes liberales* (Eis 1962, 14). Economic life was characterized by a new division of labour. The advancement of craft specialization is documented by the Nuremberg list of crafts from 1363 comprising 50 entries (Drozd/Seibicke 1973, 11). The specialization of crafts, however, need not have automatically brought about a parallel linguistic specialization. One can suppose that the particular special languages, or more precisely their subsystems or individual elements, overlapped. The languages of crafts were determined by the limited communication networks which the then craftsmen entered. The close link to the locality was evident from the strong dialectal character of LSP and the high proportion of regionalisms. It was only the later movement of the travelling journeymen through a larger territory that could lead to the gradual generalization and stabilization of special languages. The languages related to some manufacturing processes were probably kept secret to a certain degree, which was connected with the protectionist measures taken by the individual craftsmen as well as the guild organizations. The esoteric language of medieval alchemists, the predecessors of the chemists, and the interpretation of alchemist texts have posed a specific research problem up to these days (Drozd/Seibicke 1973). Note also that the representatives of the 'undignified professions', thieves in particular, created their own distinctive languages as well. Traditionally these linguistic means have been well-documented. A glossary of argot terms on the German territory (*Rotwelsch*) is documented from the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Eis 1962, 49), similar English and Czech lists date back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Partridge 1970; Oberpfalzer 1935). According to then European scholars, science should also contribute practically to everyday life. That was one of the reasons why they programmatically started turning their attention to regional (national) languages. They did not only aim at the possibility of communication with people who did

not know Latin, but also at a symbolic expression of a departure from the traditional special knowledge based on speculation. The new special knowledge indeed was not only intended for practice but also anchored in practice and even confirmed by experiment. The Renaissance scholar was not only a scholar but also often a scientist and a technician (Kalverkämper 1998/1999a). New media of communication were needed for the new contents. Nevertheless, the road from the use of Latin towards the unmarked use of the national language was a long and indirect one, leading via the parallel use of Latin and a vernacular either in the form of language-mixed texts (Paracelsus, Luther or Blahoslav; cf. Čejka 1998) or in the form of the explication of particular special expressions (from Latin to the vernacular or even vice versa), sometimes leading also via French, which aspired to succeed Latin in the function of the medium of international specialized communication (this happened e.g. in mathematics, cf. Fluck 1996). Although it ceased to be the universal communication medium of educated people, Latin retained its important position of a theoretically-specialized language for a long time. Scholars often based their choice of Latin or the vernacular on whether they wanted to address the broader public or a narrower group of specialists. It should be noted, however, that different communication media had been used before for written and for oral communication. Thus e.g. the Czech Court of Justice established during the reign of Přemysl II (i.e. 1253–1278) was conferred in Czech but its records were written in Latin (Cuřín 1985). The notes on which the reformer John Hus (1371–1415) based his sermons delivered in Czech were also formulated in Latin (Němec 1980). Specialized literature, written almost exclusively in Latin for many centuries, started being translated into regional (national) languages on a large scale. The translations from Latin substantially influenced the word-forming structure of the vernacular terminology as well as the syntactic and hypersyntactic structure of the vernacular specialized texts, and Latin itself changed to a certain extent with the vernaculars. The growth of special knowledge was accompanied by the increasing importance of specialized literature in the life of late medieval societies. Preserved German written relics document the fact that the texts of specialized nature were by

far more widespread than literary texts, thus substantially influencing the formation of written German (Eis 1962; Haage 1998/1999). The 14<sup>th</sup> century also brought about the rapid development of specialized literature in Czech. Similarly to the situation in other European countries, one of its streams aimed at facilitating Latin schooling, which was even the goal of the Latin-Czech rhyming dictionaries. Such literature reached its climax on the Czech territory with the dictionaries by Mg. Claretus de Solencia, in which the author (or possibly a group of authors) tried to summarize and partly even complement the Czech terminology of Artes liberales and all the then special lexis. Some of the expressions introduced by Claretus, a contemporary of the emperor Charles IV (1316–1378), have remained in specialized Czech till today. The dictionaries also illustrate the author's tendency to translate into Czech even those Latin expressions that had already been commonly used in Czech texts. The fact that the distinction between one vernacular and another was felt to be much less significant than that between Latin and a vernacular is manifested by Claretus' including in his dictionaries a considerable number of German expressions, or expressions of German origin, as local equivalents of Latin terms (Michálek 1989). The invention of printing was of crucial importance to the formation of special languages, making specialized literature more generally available. In the circumstances of the advancing specialization of crafts it was no longer sufficient to pass on special knowledge orally, as it had been still common in the medieval guild organization, and knowledge was increasingly being passed on by means of written genres. Naturally, this increased the requirements for the graphization of regional languages and contributed towards their gradual stabilization on all language levels including that of text construction. This was supported by the fact that in the process of the formation of centralized monarchies there arose the need for an identical communication medium that could be used on the territory of the whole state.

#### 2.4. Early modern age and the enlightenment

The development of LSP was considerably influenced by the capitalist production relations appearing in certain branches in the

form of manufactures since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Manufacture production caused the decline of some crafts and the relevant special languages either became extinct as well or were incorporated in the newly emerging special languages (Fluck 1996). Production became more closely linked to the development of science, which resulted in a more exact manner of specialized expression. It was manifested by its higher degree of abstraction and differentiation. Terminological synonymy or heteronymy became undesirable. Scholars and specialists conducted intense discussions on the relation between things and words, or concepts and terms. It was theorized that special language is basically an analytical method and should therefore be optimized (Haßler 1998/1999; Gardt 1998/1999) – another step towards modern language management was thus taken. The fast growth of special knowledge was accompanied by the introduction of the new division of labour not only in production but also in science. (Natural) scientists have only specialized in their 'scientific field' since that time. However, this fact increased the demands on a wider communicability of scientific knowledge, especially due to the effort of the 'enlightened' scientists to use the special knowledge in practice, outside the sphere of the specialists themselves. These were the reasons that led to the attempts to summarize all knowledge in such a form as to make it available to anyone interested in it. Hence in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century there originated e.g. *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers* edited by J. L. d'Alibert and D. Diderot. It should be noted that the 'Encyclopédie' covered also the sphere of production, i.e. such processes that did not use to be the subject of exact description. Such descriptions inevitably meant a large amount of definitional work comprising the formation of terms and terminological systems. This was one of the means of introducing the scientific approach into the language pertaining to production (Drozd/Seibicke 1973).

#### 2.5. The industrial revolution and the formation of modern nations

In this period many European states underwent a complete transformation from agrarian societies to industrial ones (social modernization) while in other parts of Europe

this process entered its decisive phase. Two factors were fundamental to the development of LSP: (i) close links between certain spheres of science, technology and production which led to the origin of further special languages as well as complex scientific-technical languages making full use of the existing specializations; special expression was becoming more scientific, but at the same time it spread in various forms into everyday language (e. g. as a result of secondary school technical education); (ii) regional languages were becoming completely transformed into standard national languages.

#### 2.5.1. The language of electrical engineering (henceforth LEE)

We shall illustrate the formation of LSP through the development of LEE between 1760 and 1900, i. e. from the emergence of this language up to its modern form (Unger 1998/1999). We shall see the social complexity of such a process and its correspondence to the development of the respective field. At the same time, this section should serve as an explanatory alternative to the other sections of this article, in which the various aspects of development are presented in a generalized, and therefore rather simplified, manner.

What has to be realized first in the case of LEE is the fact that, unlike other technically oriented special languages of the preceding epochs, it is a scientifically founded special language. This is related to the fact that the first stage of LEE formation (1760–1830) is set (according to Unger 1998/1999) only in the domain of science, namely experimental science (Franklin, Volta). It is characteristic of this stage that the communication network consists exclusively of scientists and that their language displays a high degree of abstraction manifested also by the sporadic use of artificial symbols for the elements of the investigated objects (not for the relationships); the special expressions are not numerous, yet very frequent.

The second stage of LEE development (1830–1870) is determined by the fact that electrical engineering had become a complex social phenomenon: apart from the scientific domain differentiated into experimental science (Gauss, Siemens) and basic physical science (Faraday; Kirchhoff), new domains are established: the technical domain (the invention of the carbon filament

bulb, the construction of the DC generator) and that of production (the production of telegraphs). The domain of basic physical science is characterized by the highest level of abstraction accompanied by the application of mathematical models. Both the scientific and technical domains are permeated by the terminology of Newtonian mechanics. LEE is no more limited to the communication among scientists, but is also used, or co-formed, by the technicians and factory employees active on various levels of the organization of production. Thereby LEE obviously becomes stratified, yet its individual strata remain mutually permeable.

The key feature of the third phase of LEE development (1870–1900) is that the domains of the field established so far (science, technology, production) are complemented by the domains of application and consumption (the production of home telegraphs and street lamps). Within LEE there emerges a new level of expression typical of the communication between the representatives of industry and commerce on the one hand and the consumers on the other. Such communication is characterized by a very low proportion of special lexis and the application of terminology basically for the purposes of advertising (for more detail cf. Unger 1998/1999).

#### 2.5.2. Language intellectualization and the establishment of standard languages

In this period the development of special languages is closely linked to the establishment of standard (national) languages. This is achieved by means of gradual intellectualization of language expression. With respect to the standard language, this process is defined by the Prague school in the following way:

“By the intellectualization of the standard language, which we could also call its rationalization, we understand its adaptation to the goal of making possible precise and rigorous, if necessary abstract, statements, capable of expressing the continuity and complexity of thought, that is, to reinforce the intellectual side of speech. This intellectualization culminates in scientific (theoretical) speech, determined by the attempt to be as precise in expression as possible, to make statements which reflect the rigor of objective (scientific) thinking in which the terms approximate concepts and



the sentences approximate logical judgements" (Havránek 1932/1983, 147; cf. also PLC 1929/1983, 91).

On one hand LSP make use of the means of the standard language, on the other hand it is LSP that intellectualize the standard language, representing within it the component that had once been considered the set of communicative means serving to fulfil the cultural and civilization needs of the highest level. In this sense, the standard language is made a full-fledged standard language only by LSP. It is therefore only logical that the national movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> century aiming at the transformation of ethnic groups into nations made the intellectualization of the national language a part of their language programmes (Hroch 2000). The intellectualization comprised several phases, the final and highest being the production of specialized literature including scientific terminology. The intellectualization/ rationalization can also serve as an explanation of the fact that regionalisms are not desirable in the sphere of LSP, and that the local dialects are therefore out of place in specialized (written) language. Being a part of the standard language, LSP should be uniform on the whole territory inhabited by a certain nation. As early as in this period, this fact led to a substantial activity of national terminological committees, whose task was to standardize the special languages of individual fields. On the other hand, the fact that LSP were constituted during the formation of modern nations sometimes meant their being affected by the processes whose rationality already proved problematic after a few decades. What became valuable was the effort to develop the national/ ethnic linguistic sources rather than the established international means (not to mention the linguistic means of a further developed nation politically governing the ethnic group in the process of emancipation). At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Czech patriots devised Czech equivalents of numerous names of scientific fields. Thus the traditional names as *philosophia*, *logica*, *aesthetica*, *grammatica*, *historia*, *psychologia*, *botanica*, *chymia*, *physica* were replaced. Nevertheless, these words returned into Czech after some time, while most of their Czech equivalents disappeared (for more detail cf. Havránek 1979, 92). The intellectualization of national languages did not remain limited to the language pro-

grammes of the national movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is a modernization process which can still be relevant in various countries of the world. For example, in the 1970s the Prague concept of language intellectualization was adopted for the modernization of the language Tagalog, or Filipino, in the Philippines (Gonzales 1999, 152).

## 2.6. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century

The development of science, technology and industry as well as the establishment of new nation states was accompanied by the continuing intensive building of the national LSP. Within the national languages the standardization of LSP gave rise to the so-called professional jargons or slangs on the periphery of LSP – it was against the background of the standard linguistic means that the jargon or slang expressions started being recognized as strongly marked. However, science, technology and production did not develop in hermetically sealed nation states. The efforts to develop and elaborate the LSP in national languages was therefore accompanied by a weaker or stronger tendency to form national LSP (terminology in particular) in such a way as to strengthen their supranational character. International coordination committees were even set up to serve this purpose. For example, in 1906 the International Electrotechnical Commission was established and its task was also to standardize terminology (Oeser/Picht 1998/1999); the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) originated in 1946. The internationalization efforts within LSP found also their theoreticians, among the most important E. Wüster (1898–1977). The planned internationalization of LSP, however, was not motivated only rationally but also ideologically. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the central and eastern European countries strongly tended to reduce the influence of English and promote that of Russian, particularly as far as the language of humanities was concerned (it was ideology that determined even which specialists were and which were not to be quoted in scientific discourse). After the political changes in 1989 these countries displayed a reverse tendency – to eliminate the impact of Russian, promoting that of English (cf. Panzer 2000). The development of the international languages of science was also dependent on the political and economic strength of the states of Europe and the

world (Ammon 1998/1999b; Ehlers 1996). In many countries, the transition from the socialist (communist) system to the capitalist system had an immediate impact on the set of the genres and words used in everyday economic life (cf. Rathmayr/Klingseis/Schmid 2000; Engerer 1999; Höhne/Nekula 1997). The elimination of some special genres and words, and on the other hand the introduction of others, support the idea that certain language changes are not mere reflections of social changes, but contribute themselves towards the formation of the new social reality (cf. Nekvapil 1996). The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a mass expansion of electronic media. The consequences of their application for the development of LSP are yet to be ascertained. Transcending, on the basis of English, the frontiers of individual states (cf. the Internet), these media undoubtedly enhance the supranational character of LSP, thus contributing to the international standardization of specialized expression (e.g. in the case of the structure of specific written genres). On the other hand, not being subject to central control, or national central control, electronic media can also act as a factor of destandardization (in the sense of Mattheier/Radtke 1997), at least as far as the national LSP are concerned. This unclear situation coincides with the postmodern tendencies in language planning which stress language variability, suppressing the unifying function of standardization (Neustupný/Nekvapil 2003).

### 3. A concluding remark

The analysis of the individual LSP as well as of the complex development of LSP from the point of historical sociolinguistics (Mattheier 1988a; Němec 1987) is in still its initial stage. The point is not only that there are not enough preliminary works mapping the socio-communicatively motivated language changes (Mattheier 1988b) relevant to the emergence and development of LSP, but also that it is difficult to apprehend the dynamic aspect of these changes realized in individual communicative events. In other words, it is difficult to capture the language variation in and outside the scope of LSP (Gunnarson 1993) and the gradual generalization of the 'successful' variants. How can we capture, e.g., the gradual terminologization, or determinologization, of a nominal

expression? Language management theory (Jernudd/Neustupný 1991; Jernudd 1994), studying the way the speakers experience deviations from language norms in discourse, thereby indicating the potential language changes, represents a promising model that has not yet been fully exploited. It should be noted that by stressing the investigation of discourse, language management theory corresponds to the latest stage of the development of 'special-language linguistics' itself. This orients towards a complex study of specialized discourse (Munsberg 1998/1999), devoting partial attention to the diachronic dimension within the scope of this orientation (cf. Gunnarson 1989, 1997; Kalverkämper 1998/1999b).

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