

BUDIN, Gerhard: Wie (un)verständlich ist das Soziologendeutsch? Begriffliche und textuelle Strukturen in den Sozialwissenschaften. (How (in)comprehensible is the German of sociologists? Conceptual and textual structures in the social sciences). Frankfurt/M. etc.: Verlag Peter Lang 1993. 198p. ISBN 3-631-42758-1. = Werkstattreihe Deutsch als Fremdsprache. Bd. 42*

In this study, the author has set out to prove that a descriptive exposition of social science terminology is in fact feasible, practicable and useful. The aim of such terminological work is to illuminate the conceptual structures in sociological argumentative contexts and thus to insure an intelligible textual presentation.

The study consists of the following five chapters: 1. Reflection on social science from the point of view of the theory of science. 2. Theoretical foundations of terminological study and its application to social science concepts and terms. 3. Language usage in the social sciences — the contribution of research on technical terminology. 4. Analysis of the terminology used in the sociological system-theory of N. Luhmann — a case study. 5. The significance of the case study for the theory and practice of analyzing social science terminology. The bibliography embraces 11 pages.

As this outline of the study already indicates, the author is concerned to situate terminological analysis in a significantly larger framework than hitherto: he does this first of all by studying the terminology in the context of language usage and by carrying out this study in the larger context of the theory of science; secondly, he deliberately addresses a field of study which is traditionally reckoned among the so-called „soft sciences“ and which till now has attracted little terminological attention.

In the first chapter, the social sciences are located within the horizon of the theory of science, thus evoking a clearer picture of the variety of starting-points, goals and methods and of the theoretical pluralism which results therefrom. Already this fundamental heterogeneity of the social sciences suggests some initial conclusions about the sort of terminological problems to be expected. In a special section entitled „Language as an Instrument for Representing Knowledge in Social Science“, the underlying problem is directly addressed, thus constructing a bridge to the following chapters, which in the broadest sense have to do with knowledge-representation. Already in this first chapter, the close connection between theory, its concepts and their linguistic representation, notably in the form of terms, becomes evident.

The second chapter opens with a critical presentation of the theoretical foundations of the science of terminology, initially, in terms of the classical positions in general, but then quickly concentrating on the special aspects of the social sciences. The object and the concept are studied as the units of thought and knowledge, and the process of concept formation and the conceptual variety prevailing in the social sciences are likewise investigated. Already here, a number of deviations from and additions to traditional positions emerge, which subsequently will be illustrated and confirmed in the analyses carried out in chapter four. Likewise, in chapter two, the conceptual dynamics and systematics are studied; the

conceptual systematics is taken up again in chapter four, where it is illustrated by a case study and expanded through further elaborations. An additional topic treated in chapter two is the description and naming of concepts in the social sciences. In the end, the semiotic triangle sketched at the beginning of this chapter is completed by consideration of the relationships connecting concept and name and concept and object.

The study of technical and scientific language forms the center of chapter three. Following a compact, well-conceived presentation of previous approaches and results of such study, the author turns attention to „the supportive role of technical language research for terminological work“, putting his comments in the context of „the investigation of the use of language in the social sciences“. After noting the peculiarities of the individual language levels, the author concentrates on the linguistics of technical texts and on the characteristics of scientific discourse, in particular in terms of what these topics can contribute to the analysis of the structures of argumentation and the forms of cognitive representation of concepts, conceptual connections and conceptual interdependencies. The comprehensive overview of all these elements together makes possible the kind of analysis so necessary for this branch of science, an analysis which does not stop at the level of mere naming. This chapter concludes with the formulation of eight hypotheses, the validity of which will be demonstrated in the case study carried out in chapter four.

In the introduction to chapter four, the author offers a compact survey of sociological systems-theory. The next section describes the composition of the text to be analyzed, N. Luhmann's „Meaning as a fundamental concept of sociology“ (1971). The central part of this chapter consists of a careful, systematically constructed analysis aimed at making visible the interdependencies among the above-mentioned elements and culminating in an impressive example of terminological analysis. A particular segment of the conceptual structure of Luhmann's theory is presented in graphic form as a conceptual field with symbolically represented conceptual relationships. Regrettably, it would appear that several relationships, which were explicated in the explanation of signs, have gotten lost in the graphic presentation itself. Thus, for example, the symbols „—“, for „relation of effectiveness“, „}—“, for „production of subconcepts through linkage“ are not found in the diagram. Likewise the distinction between „non-specified relation here“ and „specific other connections - function etc.“ is not found in the diagrammatic presentation. As a result, the number of recognizable relationships is reduced from 6 to 3 and the relational complexity of the conceptual field does not come to full expression. In this connection it should also be noted that the misprint-gremlin has left his finger-prints more often than usual here.

In the fifth chapter, the results of the case study are evaluated and the conclusions drawn are compared with the hypotheses postulated at the end of chapter three. Along the first postulate could not be validated by the analytic results of the case study, namely „that the concepts of the social sciences are often used in divergent senses and often are not at all or only

inadequately defined“; all the other postulates could be validated, e.g. - that conceptual specifications are often contained implicitly in and distributed throughout the text; - that the concepts often first take form in the course of the scientific discourse; - that a content-oriented terminological study is needed, since it cannot be determined merely on the basis of the text, whether the terms which appear in the text designate new concepts or merely represent an anaphoric lexical recurrence.

In the concluding portion of the last chapter, the author draws the consequences of the results of his study with respect to terminological research in the social sciences. This section is of particular importance: first of all, it presents the practical consequences for intra-disciplinary communication; secondly, assuming the validity of the distinction made by Wüster between „general terminological theory“ and „special terminological theory“ related to individual disciplines, it lays the foundations for a „special terminological theory of the social sciences“ based on the theoretical grounding and the practical application of terminology research in general. Summing up, one can say that the author has successfully traversed new terminological territory and has broadened the theoretical foundations of terminological research. Furthermore, this book makes an important contribution to an improved perspective on intra-disciplinary communication, technical language and terminology, in particular inasmuch as it has linked this problem-complex with the basic issues of scientific theory as such.

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GERLACH, Uwe; GERLACH, Gordon: Moderne Mentaltechniken. Neue Wege zu Tiefenentspannung und Wohlbefinden. (Modern mental techniques. New ways towards depth meditation and well-feeling). Renningen-Malmsheim: Expert Verlag 1995. 160p. ISBN 3-8169-1087-4.

One of man's oldest desires has always been to heighten his physical and mental capacities beyond the everyday level. It is well known that already in ancient cults chemical as well as physical means were used for this purpose: from mush-

rooms to the drums of the shaman. Also the targets attempted remained much the same: they were meant to enhance power to perceive and to process information, to provide enlightenment to understand thoroughly and to understand the meaning behind the meaning, extending the intensity and the range of consciousness. Our times changed but the terms and the focus: we are speaking of intensified sensorial perception, of coping with complexity by not-only-rational/cognitive modes, and by better targeted tools of communication. Needless to remark that a market for commercial applications is blooming: from advertising to marketing; also - not unexpectedly - often on and over the thresholds of manipulation.

This context given, the authors attempt to present mainly the (serious, respectable) techniques concentrating on well-known 'hard and quick' methods. 'Soft and slow' techniques are left for later elaboration. Although it was not promised to provide a comparative overview, the chapters present a basis for the understanding of mental techniques and some of the main methods, i.e. concerning meditative ones (mind mapping, visualization, optic-acoustic stimulation; concerning mental systems (including mind machines) and not the least also in short NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming).

The understanding of the particular approaches is well founded by a short but informative introduction into the functioning of mental training, physiology and psychology (left hemisphere, right hemisphere, gates of perception a.o.). The features of mental techniques not easy to classify and to relate are well structured and well presented. Preponderantly the text gives access to the why and how of mental techniques, but may hopefully also wake the cautious criticism of the reader as to the preconditions of the use of such hard interventions and their obvious limits.

The authors refrain from recommendations, which seems positive recalling the highly individual base of the methods chosen. Less fortunately, it does not but cursorily touch a critical note. The reviewer may be allowed to add that there is principally no easy way, no 'Six Easy Lessons for Beginners, no Previous Knowledge Required'. In the long run, to gain a sustainable state, deeper than momentary trance and relaxation, on which the book focusses, will only be achieved by continued learning and exercises, extending over years. Thus the value of the book lies in its properly investigated, transparently presented information on techniques available and their possible fields of use. Moreover, it will motivate and pave the path for further, more comprehensive reading.

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