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Jan Engberg
Dept. of Business Communication,
Aarhus School of Business and Social Sciences,
Aarhus University
Denmark

Correspondence to: je@bcom.au.dk

Abstract. This paper suggests amending the toolbox of analytical approaches to the study of specialized communication and LSP by a knowledge-oriented meso level analysis. The basic idea behind this type of analysis is to combine studies of actual communicative interaction and of individual contributions to such interactions with studies of specialized meanings at a collective level keeping complexity high in the descriptions. The unit of analysis allowing this is specialized knowledge seen as simultaneously individual and collective. The paper begins with an example demonstrating the complexity to be studied through the suggested type of analysis. I proceed to present Knowledge Communication as theoretical-methodological framework of such analyses, followed by a presentation of the differences between a micro, a macro and a meso level approach to studying specialized communication. In the last part of the paper, I demonstrate the ideas on an analytical example.

Keywords. Knowledge Communication, frames, knowledge of experts, specialized meaning, semantic dynamics.

1. Introduction

Since at least the last half of the 1990s the field of studies of specialized communication and LSP has been influenced by what has been termed a cognitive amendment (Baumann 1997; Engberg 1996; Roelcke 2010). It was an amendment and not an actual cognitive turn, as the cognitive view can best be seen as complementing rather than substituting previous approaches (Engberg 2012). However, introducing a cognitive view introduced an alternative focus in the study of specialized communication and LSP: The focus upon the influence of the cognition of individual experts on the stability and change of specialised conceptual meaning (Engberg 2007). This way we gain a wider the scope of perspectives to study specialized communication from and gain access to a more complex picture of our research object.

In order to give an example of such a more complex picture, I will start this contribution with an example that I have presented in previous work (Engberg 2010). In Switzerland, the statutory rules on the legal concept of Mord (= aggravated form of killing someone) was changed in 1990. In example 1 and 2, we see the two different formulations from the statutes:

1. Art. 112 Mord. Hat der Täter unter Umständen oder mit einer Überlegung getötet, die seine besonders verwerfliche Gesinnung oder seine Gefährlichkeit offenbaren, so wird er mit lebenslänglichem Zuchthaus bestraft.¹ (Swiss StGB, 1942 version; my emphasis)

2. Art. 112 Mord. Handelt der Täter besonders skrupellos, sind namentlich sein Beweggrund, der Zweck der Tat oder die Art der Ausführung besonders verwerflich, so ist die Strafe lebenslängliches Zuchthaus oder Zuchthaus nicht unter zehn Jahren.² (Swiss StGB, 1990 version; my emphasis)

The difference between the two formulations lies mainly in the fact that the disposition of the perpetrator, i.e., a part of the perpetrator’s personality, constitutes an important aspect when
assessing whether someone should be charged with *Mord* in the old version of the statute. In the new version, focus is instead upon aggravating characteristics of the actions of the perpetrator (cf. the emphasized parts of the examples).

From the point of view of the formulations in the statute, it is clear how to describe the content of the concept of *Mord*: Between 1942 and 1990, the content of the concept and thus the meaning of the specialized word *Mord* followed the old definition (basing the categorisation of a killing as *Mord* on the disposition of the perpetrator), and after that it followed the new one (basing the categorisation on characteristics of the act). However, by investigating texts written by different legal experts at two periods of time in the process before and after the reform (in the 1970s and in the 1990s) I was able to show that the picture is actually more complex:

○ In the 1970s, some legal experts held the position that already the old version should be interpreted in such a way that the characteristics of the act played a more central role than the general disposition of the perpetrator, in the light of the requirements setup by the general rules and principles of criminal law etc. In opposition to this, the highest Swiss federal court (*Bundesgericht*) stuck to their traditional approach, which was closer to the letter of the statute. They traditionally used facts from the life of the perpetrator preceding the act under scrutiny in order to argue for categorising an act as *Mord*. Thus, two different interpretations of the same statute existed alongside each other.

○ In the 1990s, the position held by the legal experts in the 1970s could be said to have been incorporated into the law, as the 1990 formulation of the statute largely follows their previous position. This is visible, e.g., in the argumentation from the government for reforming the statute in 1990. Looking at the decisions by the *Bundesgericht* in the first 10 years after, however, I found a number of examples, where the court uses almost exactly the same wording and thus the same argumentation as under the former statutory formulation. This shows that the court still tends to hold a position that lays some weight upon disposition.

○ Late in the 1990s, we also find some other legal experts holding a new position based upon the 1990 formulation, stating that even reproachable actions may not fall under the category of *Mord*, if the disposition of the perpetrator does not enable him or her to realise that the actions are reproachable. Therefore, instead of being a characteristic of *Mord* the perpetrator’s disposition may actually in this new position be seen as a characteristic that prevents the perpetrator from being charged with *Mord*.

I do not want to go into a legal and political discussion of the relevance of the different positions, as this is beyond the scope as well of my expertise as of the scope of this contribution. But what we can gather from the situation described above is that instead of one meaning of *Mord* existing at a time in society, as the approach focusing upon the statutory formulation suggests, what we have are diverging interpretations and thus different knowledges connected to *Mord* existing in a society simultaneously. Over time, there is a change in what is the dominating interpretation of the concept. This change leads to a change in the statutory formulation: As the position that emphasises characteristics of the act rather than of the actor gains ground, it becomes relevant to change the formulation of the statute in order for it to be in accordance with the dominant approach. However, this does not make the other position go away. It makes it necessary for the *Bundesgericht* to modify its argumentation, but they seem to keep at least parts of their traditional argumentation also under the umbrella of the reformed formulation. Thus, also in the situation of the new formulation there is more than one interpretation among the relevant experts.

I call this view of the meaning of a legal concept *non-monolithical*. In a monolithical view the basic assumption is that all experts share the same interpretation of, e.g., legal texts and thus the same meaning of a concept. In opposition to this, a non-monolithical view focuses upon
what individual experts actually know and on the overlaps as well as the differences. Point of departure is thus that there will be divergences and that these divergences are what drives the conceptual development as seen in the example. In my view, it is this last aspect that constitutes the major theoretical advantage of working with a non-monolithical approach to legal concepts, apart from the fact that the approach gives us a more correct picture of the actual complexity of conceptual knowledge. Additionally, it also can give us better insights into what the actual process of understanding looks like at the level of individual experts.

The present contribution departs from these assumptions about the importance of focusing upon cognition and knowledge and elaborates upon some of the methodological consequences. The cognitive amendment to the methods applied in the study of specialized communication and LSP and the acceptance of the actual complexity makes it relevant to focus upon the interplay between knowledge as a collective and at the same time an individualised phenomenon. This focus, in its turn, creates a need for a kind of observational middle ground between the knowledge of individuals (relevant for studies of individuals’ cognitive structures and processes) and the collective knowledge reflected in word meanings as represented, e.g., in specialised dictionaries and encyclopaedia. The central aim of the approach to be presented in this contribution, focusing upon the middle ground (meso level regularities) is to study the collective knowledge of a group of experts, but without abstracting away the individual differences between the experts. It is my claim to be substantiated below that all of these additional observational perspectives emerge because the concept of knowledge is focused.

In this contribution, I will start out by presenting the Knowledge Communication approach developed at the Department of Business Communication in Aarhus. This presentation functions as a basis for the knowledge concept I rely upon when developing methods that may systematically grasp the kind of complex picture demonstrated above. Next, I develop the idea of a meso level approach to conceptual analysis as a middle ground between micro and macro level approaches. Finally, I present a small example of an analysis that I have carried out as a meso level analysis.

2. Knowledge Communication – a theoretical framework for the analysis

In the context of the Research Group on Knowledge Communication at Aarhus University we have worked with the following basic definition of knowledge communication with relevance for the subject of this contribution:

Knowledge communication is strategic communication. As ‘strategic’ it is deliberately goal-oriented, the goal being the mediation of understanding across knowledge asymmetries. As ‘communication’ it is participative (interactive) and the communicative ‘positions’ converge on the (co-)construction of (specialized) knowledge. (Kastberg 2007)

We see three perspectives as central for looking at specialized communication (Kastberg 2010; Ditlevsen 2011; Engberg 2012):

- Construction of knowledge (e.g., cognitive and linguistic structures of individuals)
- Representation of knowledge (e.g., texts and genres, signs)
- Communication of knowledge (e.g., interaction, sociology, setting)

In accordance with the non-monolithical approach demonstrated above, we see knowledge as being inherently tied to individual human beings as the actual carriers of (specialized) knowledge and the empirical source for studies of knowledge. Furthermore, the basic interest is in knowledge in its actual complexity (Kastberg 2007, 2010). The ambition of grasping better the actual complexity, however, also means that the collective aspects of individually held knowledge have to be taken into account. Although knowledge is only empirically present in individuals, this knowledge is dependent not only upon personal experiences, but also upon
interpersonal communication (teaching, instruction, ...) and social control and tradition (cf., e.g. Barth 2002).

On this basis, it is the aim of the group to study the strategic (= decision-based) communication of specialised knowledge in professional settings with a focus upon the interplay between knowledge and expertise of individuals and knowledge as a social phenomenon and the coping with knowledge asymmetries, i.e., the communicative consequences of differences between individual knowledge in depth as well as breadth.

The aspect of knowledge asymmetries is not important for the purposes of this contribution. Instead, the interaction between knowledge at individual (micro) and collective (macro) level will be the focus of the remainder of this contribution (Engberg 2007: 4-5).

3. Suggested levels of analysis: Macro, micro, meso

I will now introduce the basics of a type of analysis of specialized communication rooted in the presented ideas of Knowledge Communication as a supplement to the more traditional ways of investigating specialized communication and LSP. I call this type of analysis ‘meso level analysis’. The name indicates that it is positioned between a micro and a macro level approach. I will demonstrate the differences between micro, macro and meso levels of analysis on the basis of the following figure:

![Fig. 1: Descriptive levels for the investigation of specialized communication](image)

The model in fig. 1 represents two different levels of conceptualising and investigating specialized communication and LSP:

- **At the lower level,** we find individual actors (in our case legal experts) interacting communicatively. Specialized communication in this perspective is an interaction between such actors, which they carry out from each their (institutional) position, standpoint and specific background of knowledge and experience. The arrows between the actors represent this interaction. The communicative interaction in the legal field will regularly be carried out based on knowledge fixated in some data carrier (in the figure represented as a book, but in today’s world the data carrier may as well be placed in a computer medium). Thus, arrows between the actors and the book represent this relation: The communicative interaction in the legal field will, as in the introductory example, often be about how to interpret legal concepts contained in legal statutes or commentaries. As a result of this interaction mutual knowledge emerges, which the interactors agree upon, represented in the model in the form of a sketched head-and-book at the top of the circles.
At the higher level, we see a number of experts, in this case legal experts, represented together next to each other as members of a group (indicated by the circle around the experts). This represents the perspective that the basis of specialized communication is the specialized knowledge shared and agreed upon among experts constituting a discourse community. This shared knowledge may be gained and stabilized, e.g., through their university studies. In order to underline the more static nature of this perspective on specialised communication, there are no arrows between the members of the group.

From the point of view of Knowledge Communication, we would see both perspectives as describing aspects of communication of specialized knowledge. In the lower perspective, specialized knowledge is seen as emerging from communicative interaction. Focus is upon the co-constructed nature of such knowledge and the knowledge construction processes at the individual level. In the upper perspective, on the other hand, specialised knowledge is the basic shared prerequisite of experts binding together and characterising the community of experts. One of the goals of the Knowledge Communication approach is to accept both perspectives and to combine them in order to achieve a more complex description. The double arrows between the three lower circles and the upper circle shows this relation. The idea is that each of the interactions shown in the lower part of the model is carried out on the basis of the shared knowledge that the experts need to have in order to be accepted as members of the discourse community. The shared knowledge thus influences the interaction, as it is part of the background knowledge of both interactors. On the other hand, the shared knowledge is not as stable as it may seem from the representation of it. For it is actually dependent upon how members of the discourse community use and interpret it in their different specialised communicative interactions. Therefore, the arrows between the two levels go in both directions. This is intended in order to model the circumstance that changes emerging from individual interactions may influence and eventually alter the shared knowledge, as was shown in the introductory example. In this way, the Knowledge Communication approach combines static and dynamic perspectives to a complex picture of specialised knowledge in communication.

It is my claim that traditional studies of specialized communication have tended to focus on either the lower part of the model (micro level studies) or (predominantly) on the upper part (macro level studies). I see also a need for a meso level type of analysis in order to get closer to showing the actual complexity of specialized communication in the form of the interaction between the levels as described above. In section 4, I will present an example of this type of analysis. But first I will present some background on what I mean by studies at the macro, micro and meso level.

By studies focusing upon the macro level I mean the bulk of traditional studies in specialized communication, i.e., studies of the language of a domain or a genre. Researchers are interested in the specific linguistic characteristics (e.g., Engberg and Rasmussen 2003) on the Danish language of statutes), in characteristic pragmatic elements of the language (e.g., Cao 2009) on illocutionary acts in Chinese legal language or Troshborg (1995) on illocutionary acts in English legal language), or in formulation conventions tied to specific situation types (e.g., Engberg 1997) on the genres of court decision in German and Danish), to mention only a few examples, all from the field of law. Work on terminology and specialized lexicography typically also belongs to this group. The list could easily be continued. Prototypical for these approaches is that they approach their object of study as a socio- or functiolect (Kalverkämper 1998). This means that the lower part of figure 1 is abstracted away. Naturally, authors are aware of the social roots of any linguistic system. But focus is upon the upper part studied as being independent from communicative interaction. This is, of course, unproblematic as such, among other things because such studies are necessary in order to create text books, dictionaries, databases and other sources of regularities and norms for the communication within a specialized domain. Nevertheless, it requires a process of abstraction that reduces heavily the level of complexity in the descriptions compared to the complexity of the real world situation studied.
A different position is taken when doing studies at micro level. By this designation I mean studies of the language and linguistic behaviour of individual experts. In the above figure, this means focusing upon the lower part of the model. Focus may be on individual actors and their language use and knowledge, but without focus upon the interaction between the elements inside the circles in the model. A recent example of this type of analysis is a study of John Swales’ research articles and the idiolectal elements that may be deducted from a corpus study of them (Hyland 2010). Focus is here upon the regularities of the linguistic activity of one player in the field. Focus may also be on the interaction between different actors and the co-construction of knowledge through this interaction. A recent example of this type of analysis is a study of the negotiation of the borders between (objective) facts of a case and (subjective) legal interpretations in a US court case (Anesa 2009). Here, idiolects play no role, but focus is upon how the interaction works and what results the interaction produces. Typically, in micro level studies we also have a reduction of complexity in that the level of general regularities plays no central role. Instead, studies of individual cases is more normal. Again, this is sensible and leads to interesting insights into the functioning of a system at individual level.

However, the situation described above leaves a gap in the research landscape for what I would suggest to call meso level studies. I define them as studies of the (linguistically expressed) knowledge of a group of experts with focus upon the contribution of individuals and upon convergence and divergence between their knowledge – in order to describe the actual complexity of the knowledge and the interactive knowledge construction processes underlying discourse in the group. So the idea is to take as vantage point the communicative interactions, as they are the only relevant place to empirically study the process of exteriorisation and interiorisation of the shared knowledge constituting specialized communication (cf. Hoffmann 1993: 614). However, in order to keep a higher degree of complexity in the description as is traditionally the case, not only singular interactions should be studied. Instead, the object of study is a number of similar interactions, in order to also be able to say something about regularities across more instances as is normally done in macro level studies. The meso level character of such studies lie in the fact that they include the interaction between the upper and the lower level of the model in fig. 1: Interest lies in abstracting regularities at the upper level, but without forgetting or neglecting the concrete contributions from the lower level to this process. It is also possible and often relevant to stop the process of abstraction before we reach, e.g., the level of the law of a nation. It may be relevant to assess the concepts of smaller groups, even as a step on the way to a higher level of abstraction (Budin 1996: 180). At the same time, the meso level character is visible in the fact that the analysis of micro level situations will include the influence from shared knowledge from the macro level. With a meso level approach, we intend to take seriously the two-sided character of knowledge mentioned in the description of the Knowledge Communication approach, viz. to be simultaneously individual and collective, and to describe both sides and their interrelatedness.

In order to make it clearer what the distinguishing characteristics of meso level analysis are, we will in the following section present a small example from a major analysis that intends to apply the meso level approach.

4. Example of meso level analysis

4.1. Core assumptions

The example stems from a still unpublished analysis of the legal concept of Corporate Criminal Liability as it has been developed in US law. A pilot study of the analysis has been published (Engberg 2009b). In accordance with the Knowledge Communication approach, I see legal concepts as elements of knowledge situated in the minds of individual legal specialists, but with a collective background: Individual legal specialists have learnt the concepts from others as the shared and consolidated concepts of the field. And every individual legal specialist knows how other experts in the field generally perceive a legal concept, even if they do not agree with this
In accordance with the model in fig. 1, legal concepts are seen as being subject to potential changes (also at collective level, i.e., the upper level in the model) due to the fact that they are involved in ongoing communicative meaning-making processes in dialogue (discursive interactions, i.e., the lower level in the model).

4.2. Corporate Criminal Liability

The concept investigated here has three main components:

- **liability**, *n.* 1. The quality or state of being legally obligated or accountable; legal responsibility to another or to society, enforceable by civil remedy or criminal punishment
- **criminal**, *adj.* 1. Having the character of a crime; in the nature of a crime
- **corporation**, *n.* An entity (usu. a business) having authority under law to act as a single person distinct from the shareholders who own it and having rights to issue stock and exist indefinitely; a group or succession of persons established in accordance with legal rules into a legal or juristic person that has legal personality distinct from the natural persons who make it up, exists indefinitely apart from them, and has the legal powers that its constitution gives it.

(Engberg 2009a)

We are thus talking about the responsibility for criminal activities of an entity (the corporation) that acts as an independent player by way of natural persons, but in its own right and as an independent legal person. The concept is especially interesting for our purposes, because it is an example of a legal concept that holds two conflicting interests at the same time:

- On the one hand, society wants to be able to punish the person actually responsible for criminal activities. In some cases, this is rather the corporation as such than the natural persons carrying out the activities. At the beginning of the 20th century the concept of corporate criminal liability was introduced into US law in order to avoid situations, in which a corporation could take advantage of actions carried out by employees at lower levels of the hierarchy, for which only the employee could be punished.

- On the other hand, it is a basic principle in US law that criminal liability presupposes criminal intent or *mens rea*. As corporations are not natural persons, it is at least relevant to discuss to what extent it is possible to ascribe such criminal intent to the corporation as such (and not merely to the natural persons acting on behalf of the corporation).

Expert discussions on this concept and its precise content circle around assessing the correct balance between the conflicting interests and the consequences of this balance for the relative weight of the components of the concept. Thus, knowledge about the different principles and their balance, when applying the concept, is part of the knowledge base necessary for participating in specialized legal communication on the topic. And different individuals may have different positions concerning the importance of different factors influencing the balance. This fact makes the concept especially relevant for research on the structure and composition of specialized knowledge as an individual and a collective unit.

4.3. Frames as analytical tool

The example from the analysis presented here uses conceptual frames as the basic unit of analysis. As the focus of this contribution is to present and demonstrate the idea of meso level analysis, and not the actual results of the analysis, I will not go deeply into a methodological description of frame analysis. Nevertheless, I will present the main characteristics briefly, before approaching the actual example:
Frames are supposed to model elements of the organisation of knowledge in human memory. They are derived from schema theory from psychology and cognitive studies.

The basic assumption behind this theory is that knowledge is organised in network structures with associative relations. Knowledge elements that have been experienced or been taught as being connected to each other are also connected in memory. The organisational unit for the knowledge elements are called frames.

A frame contains elements characterising aspects of a concept. As an example, a (Danish) house frame contains among many others such knowledge elements as roof, door, window, garden, shelter, cosiness, family, and investment.

The frame is not just a mere container, but a structured unit, structured in dimensions called slots. The slots constitute the structure of a concept, showing the categories to which the constitutive knowledge elements of the concepts belong. Knowing a shared concept at expert level means possessing a mental slot structure similar to that of the rest of the group of experts and thus knowing what elements may be expected to be communicatively introduced or presupposed about a concept.

Slots are (pre-)filled based on experience (we know what to expect from experience) and may be actively filled through communicative interaction. The elements ascribed to the slots are called fillers. Communicative interaction may change the pre-filling of a slot and thus the expectations of the knower. That slots are typically pre-filled in memory enables us to infer elements not actually introduced in a communicative interaction and thus to understand what an interacting person actually means.

The elements from the Danish house example above could be seen as fillers for the slots constructive elements (roof, door, window), surroundings (garden), emotions (cosiness, family) and retirement funds (investment). The function of the frame in memory related to communicative interaction is to organise knowledge so that we may systematically access background knowledge relevant for understanding words in context.

Summing up, frames are internally structured knowledge units. Slots are the elements constituting the structure. And fillers are the concrete knowledge elements expected or actually introduced in communicative interaction. A frame analysis of the kind I present an example of here is performed based on texts treating the concept under scrutiny, constructing the organisation of knowledge elements from the analysis of empirical data. It thus focuses upon the parts of the frame actually introduced actively and refrains from studying.

4.4. Corpus of study and principles of analysis

The empirical basis of the study consists of 18 articles from US law journals. They are issued between 1988 and 1993. The time span was chosen because a landmark case was decided in 1987, leading to discussions about the right balance between the two conflicting interests described in section 4.2. The texts were chosen from a database based on key words related to the concept of Corporate Criminal Liability in order to secure that the concept played a role in them. All relevant articles fulfilling the key word criteria were included in the corpus. The meso level idea behind designing the corpus this way was to collect a population of articles that treated the concept under scrutiny within a limited period, thus enabling us to sketch out a picture of the different aspects of the concept communicatively virulent within this period.

The analytical approach (called Knowledge Collection and Categorization Method, Engberg 2009b: 129) is to first manually scrutinize parts of the texts in which the concept is mentioned in order to collect the knowledge mentioned about the concept. In a second interpretive step the collected knowledge is categorized into slots and subslots in accordance with the concept of Matrix Frames introduced by Konerding (1993). This part of the analysis is thus qualitative.
and interpretive. In a second analytical phase, we look at quantitative aspects of the results and investigate the data for more or less generalizable tendencies. In this way, we move towards the generalised macro level, but without abstracting away the details from the qualitative micro level studies. Hence, the analytical approach is in accordance with the principles of the intended meso level analysis.

4.5. An example of analysis

As an example of the kind of meso level analysis performed in the project, I have extracted the graphic representation of the subslot *mens rea* (or criminal intent), which is part of the slot circumstances and conditions, consisting of knowledge elements indicating the circumstances and conditions under which someone may be charged with corporate criminal liability.

![Diagram of the subslot mens rea and its three different filler types](image)

What fig. 2 shows is that based on the analysis of the texts in the corpus three different positions as to the importance of the concept of *mens rea* have been found. In the figure, we have indicated the number of authors presenting the different elements, along with their names. One author (Bucy) actually mentions all three positions (as he presents all positions in the discussion in his article), whereas three authors mention two positions (Leary, Reilly, Welk) and the rest only present the position they stand for themselves. This is an example of the fact that only the elements relevant for a specific interaction are introduced. And if the intention of the author is to argue for his or her position, but not to present the others, only one is mentioned. As all positions are held by a number of authors, however, we can suppose that all three positions are part of the overall shared knowledge. Thus, readers can infer the positions not mentioned and in this way understand correctly a given contribution to a communicative interaction.

Looking at the content of the three different filler types, we find that the three positions are mutually exclusive: one expert cannot at the same time hold more than one and must reject the other two. This is indicated in the figure by the use of the arrows between the circles in the figure).
What makes the analysis underlying this result an instance of a meso-level analysis is the fact that on the one hand we intend to describe regularities tending towards a macro level, as we aggregate the utterances in the different texts from the corpus and construct a smaller number of different possible positions by way of abstraction. But we do not abstract away the differences or intend to find the most widely held position, as one would do in a fully macro-oriented study for, e.g., many dictionaries, intending to find the generally accepted view and to exclude the diverging views. Instead, we preserve the complexity by showing all three mutually exclusive positions in the description of the frame fragment. We indicate the number of authors mentioning the different positions, thus also indicating the relative strength of the different positions: Positions held by few people will have a weaker position than those held by many people.

What we achieve through this type of analysis is that we get access to data of importance to the interaction between the upper and the lower level of the model in fig. 1. The fact that we have three fairly strong positions represented means that a fight over the actual content of the concept is raging among the experts. Thus, we can predict a certain instability of the concept in this respect. Furthermore, we may follow over time the role of specific authors in the process of developing a concept. We may look at more texts by the different authors and thus follow the conceptual dynamics that tends to be lost in the traditional macro as well micro perspectives.

Finally, we can compare the quantitative data for the different slots in order to assess the degree to which the knowledge elements contained in the frame are disputed, as was the case with the subslot *mens rea*. As the study is still unpublished, I will limit myself to presenting the data for the slot *circumstances and conditions*, to which also the subslot *mens rea* belongs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of subslots</th>
<th>Subslots without disagreement</th>
<th>Subslots with disagreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circumstances and conditions</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Number of subslots to the slot *circumstances and conditions* of the frame *corporate criminal liability*: division according to whether the fillers of the subslots show internal disagreement between positions.

As is visible from table 1, the subslots without disagreement are in the vast majority. The experts that have been subject to this analysis tend to agree upon what are the important aspects of the circumstances and conditions under which the specialized concept treated here may be applied. However, we also see that disagreement exists and is virulent. This way, we have established knowledge about the relative stability of this (part of the) concept. And it is possible to compare the numbers from this slot with similar numbers for the other slots that the specialized concept of Corporate Criminal Liability consists of and thus say something about the stable and more unstable parts of the concept.

5. Concluding remarks

With this rudimentary example analysis I wanted to demonstrate a specific consequence of focusing upon knowledge in the study of specialized communication and thus following what Roelcke (2010) calls the cognitive-linguistic function model. The focus upon knowledge enables us to see the underlying shared knowledge and, at the same time, the communicative interactions constructing this shared knowledge. Amending the toolbox for analysing specialized communication with this kind of focus is in my view, substantiated in this contribution, relevant in order to describe better the actual complexity of our object of study.

This idea of intending to focus on more levels at once in the analysis is relatively new to our field, but it is emerging in other fields, too, in these years. As an example, in the project presented by Harder (2010) he intends to combine insights from cognitive linguistics with socio-cognitive approaches in order to give descriptions that include analyses at the level of formulation and individual cognition together with analyses at societal and discourse level. Here we find also
the combination of a macro and a micro level. Furthermore, in the field of management studies a recent approach suggests to see strategies of business management not as a management tool to be used to influence the company from an outside position. Instead, strategies are seen as practices being performed within a company by managers and employees in cooperation. Thus, strategies are seen as emerging from the life of the company rather than being seen as imposed upon the company by management (Vaara and Whittington 2012). Interestingly in our context, this approach also works with a micro level of interactions and a macro level of shared and emergent knowledge of the strategies of a company.

Studying the interaction between micro and macro levels in a meso level analysis is thus apparently a timely suggestion, which in the field of specialized communication and LSP opens up for a focus on the knowledge of individual experts and its interaction with knowledge as a social fact. Future will show what the discipline may achieve from this wider perspective.

6. Notes

1 Murder. Has the perpetrator committed murder under circumstances or due to considerations that show his highly reprehensible disposition or his dangerous character, he is sentenced to lifelong imprisonment (my translation).

2 Murder. If the perpetrator acts very unscrupulously, if especially his motives, the purpose of the act or the way it is carried out is especially reprehensible, he is sentenced to lifelong imprisonment or imprisonment for no less than ten years (my translation).


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