

COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE at work

Editorial

Communication and Language at Work

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This 2022 spring edition of the international and peer-reviewed journal *Communication and Language at Work* features three papers. Even though all three papers are in many ways quite different, they do, nevertheless, have one thing in common; namely the fact that they are all signs of a stirring, of an undercurrent, of a need for exploring and for questioning disciplinary conventions and boundaries.

I am not claiming that the papers in this edition of CLAW are aiming to upend their respective fields of research altogether. I am, however, pointing to the fact that they all seem to be questioning the taken for granted of their respective fields of research. (Generalizing crudely the main fields of research presented, applied, discussed, and evaluated in this edition of CLAW being those of identity work and identity formation, change communication and strategy-as-practice, communication theory and the sociology of knowledge.) That is, whereas all papers take their point of departure in what Kuhn might have referred to as the ideology and the literature of a 'normal' period of research, each paper also clearly ventures beyond that. I am not proposing that the three papers are the harbingers of Kuhnian-style revolutions, but I do believe that each paper is testimony to the fact that weaning research off its reliance on disciplinary conventions and boundaries is indeed a productive endeavor.

Pondering the three papers from the helicopter perspective, I was reminded of a key moment in L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. After a long and arduous journey, during which Dorothy and her friends have completed several perilous tasks on behalf of the Wizard of Oz, the friends return to the mesmerizing Emerald City. Here, in the wizard's throne room, the following conversation takes place:

"But isn't everything here green?" asked Dorothy.

"No more than in any other city," replied Oz; "but when you wear green spectacles, why of course everything you see looks green to you."

Even if the authors of the papers collected here may not have taken off the green tinted spectacles of their disciplines altogether, they have, at the very least, put on glasses with a lighter shade of green.

In the first paper, by N. Singh and S. Frandsen, *Camouflaging as identity work: A study of how professionals position themselves in the intersection of professional work and sales work*, the authors examine how professionals negotiate their identity in the intersection of various discourses constructing both unpreferred and preferred social identities. As a result of their empirical work, they propose the concept of camouflaging as identity work to illustrate how professionals (re)construct their identity and position themselves as professionals by integrating and blurring the lines between the various discourses of professionalism and sales in a way that makes sales work appear as a natural part of their professional work and identity. Based on this, the authors are able to identify and unfold four ways in which professionals position themselves in relation to sales work. This paper adds significantly, empirically as well as conceptually, to the literature on professional identity, identity work and identity tensions.

In the second paper, by S. Kjærbeck and M.W. Lundholt, *Communicating strategy in a town hall setting. Is dialog possible?*, the authors investigate top management's attempts at facilitating dialog with employees in an administrative housing association. Focusing on a specific town hall meeting, the authors analyze communicative

methods and techniques employed by management; they do so in order to evaluate whether or not this particular setting allows for 'real' dialogue. Based on ethnomethodological conversation analysis key sequences are analyzed with a view to establishing whether the town hall meeting is facilitating or hindering dialogue. The authors are able to conclude that whereas the format of the town hall meeting may, ostensible, seem to favor dialogue, the specific meeting in question is designed and performed as managers' one-way communication of information. In effect impeding and discouraging dialogue rather than facilitating it – potentially giving rise to organizational silence as a result.

The third and final paper, *Knowledge Communication: Prolegomenon to a Research Programme*, is the thoroughly revised version of P. Kastberg's inaugural professorial lecture, which he gave on March 16th, 2018. Here, the author gives a brief, narrative account of how his scholarly interests progressed from lexeme to communication, i.e., from applied linguistics to philosophy of communication. Based on this trajectory, which is both epistemological and disciplinary, he goes on to address the formative force of perspective when it comes to his personal *Bildungsweg*. With a view to the disciplines that the author was socialized into, i.e., Language for Specific Purpose, Public Understanding of Science, and Knowledge Management, the author progresses to establish the three Cs of the Knowledge Communication research programme, i.e., communication, convergence, and constructivism, respectively.

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