

Language Works 2(2)

Welcome to this the third edition of the Danish student journal of linguistics known as Language Works – Sprogvidenskabeligt Studentertidsskrift. In this issue we can present six fine articles with very diverse points of departure and very different research interests within the large field we know as *language studies*. We will be visiting different areas of linguistics students' interests: from interactions on Facebook to interactions in primary school and elderly care; from fundamental theoretical discussions on the nature of online language, to minute details in conversations; and from phonology to corpus linguistics. If we were ever in doubt, the issue shows the breadth of the field of language studies. And if there are areas within the field not yet covered, maybe they will be covered in the next issue when you have sent *your* manuscript to us.

Contents in this issue

Maria Jørgensen gives her treatment of a question which has interested many since the dawn of the Internet and the first exchanges in chat and e-mail: How are we best to understand the language used online with regards to the traditional language modalities of spoken vs. written language? Is a linguistic interaction online more akin to written or spoken language? And, more significantly, *why*? What are in fact the essential traits that separate spoken and written language? Jørgensen's answer takes its point of departure in the concept of *interactional* language and the rules we are shown to orient towards in *talk-in-interaction*.

Equally net-based and also based in interactions on Facebook, Hanna Birkelund Nilsson's analyses the debate which occurred when *Den Store Bagedyst* (the Danish version of The Great British Bake-Off) sent a contestant out of the competition because of his interpretation of the theme *mandehørm* (literally 'male stench', roughly 'locker room attitudes' or 'male chauvinist stance'). Nilsson shows how the sending-off and the resulting debate in the broadcasting corporation's Facebook site lead to discussions about the understanding of gender among (especially younger) Danes today. Nilsson distinguishes two gender discourses and believes to be able to trace a development away from a traditional, static understanding of gender roles, towards a more dynamic understanding more in line with contemporary gender theory.

Another treatment of norms, but this time not within the virtual world of Facebook, is found in Pauline Skalts' investigation of identities and norms of proper conduct in group work among 2nd grade (age 8-9) primary school children. Through an analysis of a group work session, Skalts shows how norms and identities are constructed in a way that one boy is systematically excluded. When the analysis of the interaction is compared with fieldnotes from ethnography conducted in the same class, she furthermore shows that this is a pattern that stretches beyond the confines of the single interaction and is repeated by teachers and class mates alike.

The second article in the issue with an interaction analytical approach takes us from the very young to the somewhat older, and from one institutional context to another. Andrea Bruun's article presents a conversation analytical study of the use of names in conversations between a caregiver in

home care and a senior citizen. As Bruun points out, the function of personal names in these interactions cannot be the selection of listener or next speaker; there is only one listener and one next speaker. Bruun, however, shows that the occurrence of names is far from random, and that names have an important function in interpersonal relations and in the organisation of actions.

Estelle Le Duc's study of recent phonological developments in Scottish English takes us from studies of language use towards more language structural and sociolinguistic grounds. Scottish English is traditionally *rhotic*, i.e. phonological /r/ is pronounced also after vowels. Based on readings recorded in Glasgow and Edinburgh, Le Duc shows signs that young Scots are moving away from rhotic pronunciations. Furthermore, she shows a system in the occurrence and non-occurrence of rhotic pronunciations both with respect to linguistic (phonological) context, and with respect to the social characteristics of the speaker.

The sixth and last article in this issue is Kenneth C. Enevoldsen and Lasse Hansen's quantitative study of political bias in newspaper articles. Based on automatic counting of value laden words, Enevoldsen and Hansen compare two newspapers (with different political profiles) in their coverage of two political parties representing different political wings. The study in part confirms the expected variation in coverage of the two parties by the two papers. But perhaps more importantly, the study tests a method of automatic, quantifiable and presumably objective appraisal of political bias in texts. This test of a method also gives grounds to some fundamental considerations on the nature of textual bias and sentiment: How is bias in texts conveyed, and how is it interpreted? In that sense Enevoldsen and Hansen's article takes us back to the big theoretical questions which opened the issue.

Your article in the next issue?

As always we want to end with an invitation: Do you have a good idea or a project that could interest others? As a student, you may have an essay that could be turned into an article. As a teacher, you may have supervised or assessed an essay that you think could become a good article. Or you have perhaps participated in a conference, workshop, seminar or course that could be the basis for a thematic section/special issue of *Language Works*?

We are looking for articles of quality, but what you submit does not have to be perfect. We promise that we as editors will help you improve your article if you send it to us. All articles will get a review from an expert with suggestions for changes and improvements. So, it takes work to publish, but this is also a good way of improving your communication competences. We prefer that you write your article in English or Danish/Norwegian/Swedish, but should you wish to write in another language, talk to us about it.

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