

Project Danish in the Making – Velux Foundation

Susana S. Fernández & Carsten Levisen

19 – 21 August 2026

Nobelparken, Nobelsalen (day 1) and 1481-366 (day 2 and 3)

Conference: Intercultural semantics

Day 1: Betydningsdannelse i dansk som andetsprog - Ord og fraser i semantiske nøgledomæner (på dansk) (Nobelsalen)

10.15-10.30: Ankomst og kaffe

10.30-10.40: Velkommen

Susana S. Fernández, Aarhus Universitet, & Carsten Levisen, Roskilde Universitet

10.40-11.30: DanSKiB

Præsentation af en online kulturordbog og læringsressource



Susana S. Fernández & Astrid Mus Rasmussen, Aarhus Universitet

11.30-11.40: Pause

11.40-12.10: ARBEJDE



Louise Tranekær, Roskilde Universitet

Digital sproglæring på arbejde

I dette oplæg vil jeg præsentere et digitalt sproglæringspil, som jeg har udviklet til migrantarbejdere i manuelle virksomheder såsom slagteri og rengøring, og jeg vil give indblik i nogle af de sproglige udfordringer i arbejdsinteraktioner, som udgør spillets udgangspunkt og sigte.

12.10-12.40: MAD OG DRIKKE



Martha Sif Karrebæk, Københavns Universitet

“Our beer”: Language, consumables and nationalism

Both food and language play a role in the construction of the nation as a cultural community. As such, they can be used to negotiate boundaries (Karrebæk, 2013, 2021), in- and exclusion, and they can themselves become objects of negotiation and re-interpretation. In this presentation, I will use nationalism (Anderson, 1983; Billig, 1995; Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983) as a theoretical frame to discuss beer, i.e., a consumable (cf., Ichiko & Ranta, 2015), from a linguistic ethnographic perspective (Karrebæk, Riley & Cavanaugh, 2018; Riley & Paugh, 2018). I will give a recent example from the municipal elections and add a reflection on how this might be relevant for teachers and migrants.

12.40-13.40: Frokostpause

13.40-14.10: MILJØ



Carsten Levisen, Roskilde Universitet

Dansk er Grønt. Interkulturel semantik i en omskiftelig omverden

Med “dansk er grønt!” som heuristisk greb undersøger jeg de ord, konstruktioner og neologismer, der kendetegner sproget i de diskursive og sociomaterielle formationer vi kalder ”den grønne

omstilling”. Den interkulturelle semantik tilbyder måder at undersøge samspillet mellem sprogkultur og omverdensforandringer på - og blikke til at belyse de nye, grønne betydningsdannelser i samtidsdansk.

14.10-14.40: LÆRING



Søren Eskildsen, Syddansk Universitet

Hverdagens sproglæringsarenaer: Netværksbygning, language learning in the wild og interaktionel kompetence

For at forstå voksnes L2-læring må man analysere social interaktion metodologisk stringent på dens egne præmisser. Med afsæt i samtaleanalyse og sprogbrugsbaserede tilgange undersøger jeg, hvordan L2-læring som udvikling af interaktionel kompetence opstår i og former sociale relationer. Gennem casestudier viser jeg, hvordan L2-talendes sproglige udvikling er vævet sammen med udvikling af sociale relationer. Jeg runder af med at diskutere epistemologiske og pædagogiske implikationer.

14.40-15.00: Kaffepause

15.00-15.30: SUNDHED



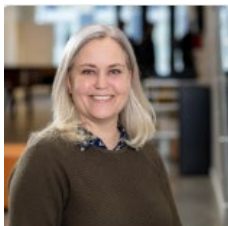
Daria Morgounova Schwalbe, Syddansk Universitet

“Kan selv, skal selv”: Blame, Shame, and the Moral Logics of Self-Responsibility in Danish Healthcare

Drawing on participatory methodologies and research on communication and non-attendance in Southern Denmark, this talk explores how the moral semantics of responsibility, blame, and shame are produced and negotiated through the implicit language of Danish healthcare. It demonstrates

how logics of self-responsibility—embedded in blame-and-shame rhetoric and culturally recognizable expressions such as “kan selv, skal selv”—reorganize accountability and shape how patients and professionals navigate and respond to care in contexts marked by migration and linguistic diversity.

15.30-16.00: MELLEMLER UDDANNELSE OG ARBEJDE



Line Møller Dugaard, Aarhus Universitet & NTNU, Norge

At bygge hus – på ‘uddannelsesdansk’. Fra modtagelsesklasse til erhvervsuddannelse for nyankomne unge med dansk som andetsprog

Præsentationen tager afsæt i projektet “Uddannelsesdansk – nye veje i arbejdet med sprog, fag og tekster på tværs af modtagelsesklasse og erhvervsuddannelser”. Her samarbejdede forskere i dansk som andetsprog, modtagelsesklasselærere og faglærere om at udvikle undervisningsforløb, hvor der blev arbejdet systematisk med og på ‘uddannelsesdansk’ – det fagspecifikke dansk, der er relevant i overgangen fra modtagelsesklasse til erhvervsuddannelse. Præsentationen fokuserer på et undervisningsforløb i byggeteknik, hvor der blev bygget miniaturehuse – på ‘uddannelsesdansk’.

Day 2: Migration Semantics (in English) (1481-366)

10.00-10.15: Arrival and coffee

10.15-10.45

Welcome and presentation of Danish in the Making

Carsten Levisen, Roskilde University & Susana S. Fernández, Aarhus University

10.45-11.45: Keynote presentation

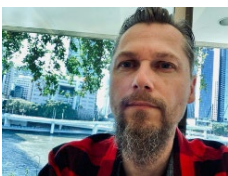


Ariane Borlongan, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Meaning on the Move: Migration-Related and Migration-Induced Lexis in the Oxford English Dictionary

Migration moves people — and with them, meaning. This chapter argues that human mobility is a primary, yet systematically undertheorised, driver of lexical and semantic change. Drawing on migration linguistics (Borlongan, 2023) and using the Oxford English Dictionary as a case study, it demonstrates that migration operates on language in two fundamental ways: by adding new words to the lexicon and by transforming the meanings of existing ones. Together, these processes constitute the migratory lexical footprint — the cumulative, recoverable mark that human movement leaves on a language broadly and meaning particularly.

11.45-12.1



Carsten Levisen, Roskilde University

Lexicographies of Life. Language migrants and their worlds of meaning-making

This talk bridges semantics, lexicography, and lived experience, focusing on “language migrants”, i.e. people who have crossed linguacultural borders and live in new languages. I propose a conceptual synthesis between migration linguistics and intercultural semantics and explore how

life-centered lexicographies can open new pathways for the study of meaning-making in and across worlds.

12.15-13.00: Lunch break

13.00-13.30



Stephanie Mašková, Griffith University

Postcolonial migration: How people talk about movements between Denmark and Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland)

Movements between Denmark and Kalaallit Nunaat have long been shaped by coloniality. This presentation examines local terms used to describe these movements and the people involved. Analysing these words, I explore how language is used to normalise certain movements while contesting others, and to what extent movements within the Danish Realm are understood as “migration”, implying separation, or as “mobility”, implying an imagined community.

13.30-14.00



Ana Paula Braga Mattos, Aarhus University

Cultural Keywords for Critical Intercultural Analysis in Language and Area Studies

This presentation explores the use of cultural keywords as an analytical and pedagogical tool for critical intercultural analysis in language and culture education. The teaching context brings together students with BA backgrounds in Brazilian, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Indian and South Asian studies. By working with cultural keywords, students critically examine meanings, values and assumptions embedded in different linguistic and cultural contexts, including cross-cultural

relations in the Danish context. The presentation reflects on the role of semantic analysis in fostering critical intercultural awareness.

14.00-14.30



Katalin Jobbágy Jørgensen, University College Absalon

Minimal Language in the Primary School Classroom

The Danish vocabulary of L2 Danish primary school students is smaller than that of L1 Danish students and teachers often have difficulty explaining words to the students. Some teaching materials provide word explanations, which, however, are often even as difficult as the target words they are trying to explain. I work on introducing Minimal Danish to teachers and students as a learning aid for L2 Danish.

14.30-14.45 Coffee break

14.45-15.15



Lauren Sadow & Noah Rørbæk, Aarhus University

The making of stepping-stone Danish

In this presentation, we revisit metalinguistics as the central arena of attention: what words should we use to describe and analyse words, and what ways of speaking should we apply to account for ways of speaking? We reflect on the difficulties and possible solutions to some of the metalinguistic challenges that intercultural semantics can cause. We identify specific challenges we have encountered in concrete analytical work on Danish, and with these examples as a basis, we offer new insights and ideas on metalinguistics in intercultural semantics.

15.15-16.30: Workshop

Other languages in the making

Facilitated by Susana S. Fernández & Carsten Levisen

Day 3: Cultural keywords and scripts across borders (in English) (1481-366)

10.00-10.15: Arrival and coffee

10.15-11.15: Keynote presentation



Cliff Goddard, Griffith University

“It often rains in Denmark”: Re-thinking the semantics of “often” in theory and practical analysis

The word “often”, which plays a key role in many nsm explications and scripts, has long been regarded as a simple portmanteau for ‘at many times’. Here I argue that “often” requires a more construal-like explication, including a cognitive component and a ‘before/after’ perspective, as well as the combination ‘at many times’. In nsm theory, it means that “often” gets a promotion: from a mere portmanteau to a small but prolific semantic molecule. But what are the implications for nsm practice, for social cognition, and for human cognition generally?

11.15-12.45



Alexandra Kratschmer, Aarhus University

Comparing keywords and semantic fields in populist and Islamophobic discourse in different European countries

This talk presents some results from the DEMINE project (<https://demine.eu/>), a European Union’s Horizon Europe (HORIZON) Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Doctoral Network (MSCA-DN), dealing with aspects of communication in relation to migration and conflict in Europe. The talk will focus on semantic aspects of populist and Islamophobic discourse types, comparing in particular the use of key words and the activation of semantic fields in primarily social media data between European countries.

12.45-13.30: Lunch break

13.30-14.30: Keynote presentation



Zuzanna Bulat Silva, University of Wrocław

Expressing surprise via cultural signs in Polish Sign Language

Cultural signs in Polish Sign Language (PSL) are unique, idiomatic gestures having no exact lexical equivalent in Polish. They are considered ingroup markers, signifying belonging to the Deaf community in Poland. They also indicate signing fluency, and just like cultural keywords in vocal languages, they embody shared cultural values and ways of thinking and feeling among the Deaf. In my talk, I want to analyse three PSL cultural signs (*ep*, *awu*, and *pu*) which serve to express the speaker's emotions when something is, broadly speaking, different from what is expected. I will demonstrate their application in PSL and explain their meaning through NSM primes.

14.30-15.00



Thomas Schwaiger, University of Vienna

Austrian Schmääh as a cultural keyword (and its relation to other humor concepts in German)

Despite there being quite a bit of popular and scientific (including linguistic) commentary, the Austrian German concept of *Schmääh* 'ironic, misanthropic wit' does not yet seem to have received a lot of attention within the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) approach. Accordingly, this presentation explores the Austrian cultural keyword *Schmääh* from an NSM perspective and relates it to other, more general German concepts of humor (e.g. *Spaß* 'fun', *Witz*, *Scherz* 'joke').

15.00-15.15: Coffee break

15.15-15.45



Anna Sroka, Kazimierz Wielki University

'Meant-to-be' bonds in Chinese interpersonal relations: reconstructing cultural scripts for 缘分 (yuánfèn) and 默契 (mòqì)

This talk examines two Chinese cultural keywords, 缘分 (yuánfèn) and 默契 (mòqì), using the framework of cultural scripts. It reconstructs the shared assumptions that make relationships feel “meant to be” and that support mutual understanding without explicit verbalization. The analysis highlights the cultural logic behind expectations and interpretations in interaction, and briefly relates these notions to comparable ideas in other linguistic-cultural settings.

15.45-16.15



Sandy Habib, Tel-Hai University

“May an ostrich kick your heart”’: Curses and blessings in contemporary Arabic discourse (focus on Jish)

This talk explores the ethnopragmatics of trigger–response routines in Jish Arabic. It focuses on responses that are phonologically associated with preceding expressions, a topic that has received little scholarly attention. Using NSM, these routines are explicated and cultural scripts are proposed to capture the social norms governing their use.

16.15-17.00 Closing words and informal reception