From speaking of texts to speaking of Europe

Lita Lundquist

1   Uti vår fælles hage – In our shared garden

Kjersti Fløttum and I met officially, very officially indeed, for the first time in 1989 when I was acting as first opponent at Kjersti's defence of her Ph.D. thesis "La nature du résumé scolaire", presented at the University of Trondheim. It is fun to be reminded, 34 years later, that I had a remote hand in the writing of her book, which was published in 1990, where, in her 'avant-propos', she thanks me for providing inspiration: "(Lita Lundquist) m'a fait réfléchir sérieusement aux possibilités que représentent les théories de J.C. Anscombre et O. Ducrot, de D. Sperber et D. Wilson et surtout de F. Rastier dans l'étude du résumé."

It was clear that Kjersti and I were on common ground already here, both in our research interest in texts, in our quest for methods to analyse them with, and in our endeavours to conceive models applicable for teaching French as a foreign language. Our roads crossed many times on many other occasions, and from the very start, it appeared that we were gardening in shared ground, inspired as we both were by the work of Francophone linguists and discourse analysts such as Emile Benveniste (1970) and Jean-Michel Adam (1977), but also other scholars such as van Dijk (1972), Halliday and Hasan (1976), and Gunnel Källgren (1979).

However, as the making of our respective dissertations took place within different time spans, mine on "La cohérence textuelle "(1980) from the mid-1970s, and Kjersti's from the early 1980s, it is no surprise that the former was heavily inspired by the works of early German and Nordic "mothers and fathers" of text linguistics, Danes (1974), Dressler (1972), Kallmeyer (1974) and Enkvist (1974), to mention just a few, whereas Kjersti had the opportunity to include later important works of specific interest to her field, including Brown et al. (1983) and Sprenger-Charolles (1980).

Little could we know, at that point way back in time, how our text linguistic take on French texts was to develop over the next 30-40 years, towards an ever-expanding and all-encompassing perspective. As we both tended to include Europe in our playground.

Using Kjersti's thesis from 1989, and my own from 1980 as the first rungs on the ladder stretching from then to her recent work on Speaking of Europe (Fløttum 2013a, 2013b) together with my own on the use of humour in the European Parliament as the last (Lundquist & Gravier 2019), I will delineate how we shared certain steps and diverged on others. I will start by describing Kjersti's first bear hug with text linguistics, which actually came after my

own from 1976 and onwards. And then, in the second part, I will describe, with what I hope will be appreciated as a self-ironic, undeniable bias towards the fruits of my own labour, how we both took a quantum leap forward in extending text linguistics to encompass Europe (!). Kjersti moving from summarising texts in French to "Speaking of Europe", and myself from coherence in French texts to laughter in the European Parliament.

2   Speaking of texts in the 1970s and 1980s

Let me start this trip down the text linguistic memory lane with Kjersti Fløttum's book on "La nature du résumé scolaire. Analyse formelle et informative" (Fløttum 1990) as the first pitstop. I think that it will be interesting to see what was in the air at that moment in text linguistic history, and how it has "expanded" ever since – in a slow but steady and decisive development.

a.   Kjersti Fløttum "Le résumé scolaire", 1989

Fløttum's astute thesis from 1989 was inspired by an interest in a certain text type, the summary, and in a text activity: summarising texts in French "lycées", where she gathered her empirical data. She then worked on developing a method for comparing the product, the summarised text, with the original text, in order to explain the activity in terms of what is kept and what is left out. She soon realised she was setting out on an *inter-* and *multidisciplinary* enterprise, which was at that time subsumed under the heading of text linguistics, and which had already puzzled more than one linguist wishing to transcend the limits of the sentence, the proper object of traditional linguistics, to address texts in a systematic way. At the very start, Fløttum mentions the text linguistic key term, *text coherence*, as the *sine qua non* of summarising texts.

> … c'est la qualité de cohérence, en ce sens que le texte constitue un tout avec un thème principal, qui permet de résumer un texte. Il est impossible de résumer un ensemble de phrases incohérent où les phrases ne sont pas liées à un thème commun (ib:12)

Fløttum found tools for attacking this intriguing textual coherence and describing its role in summarising texts first of all in the works of van Dijk (1980), and the notions of *structures* – be they micro-, macro-, super-, global or local. Closest to the text surface and the linguistic ways of ordering and ranging information via syntax, semantics and pragmatics, is the analysis in 'propositions': (predicates + arguments), which are later related to 'facts'. As Fløttum mentions, these facts comprise 'participants' related 'functionally' in roles as AGENT, PATIENT, GOAL, etc. An approach we shared, since semantic case roles had proved to be a useful linguistic tool for analysing coherence in texts, also (Lundquist 1980).

In Fløttum's work, we perceive certain hints at the necessity for changing the *structuralist* view of texts into a more dynamic and *procedural* view. This milestone – a significant change from structure to process, to seeing the text not as a structuralised object on its own, but as an object for a processual interpretation by a receiver – is definitely prompted by the inevitable need to include the reader (or listener) in the text linguistic perspective. This first extension of text linguistics can be seen as the result of the *cognitive turn* in text linguistics reflected in so many other disciplines in the 1980s. But it also entails another aspect, that of the text as *social interaction*, as Fløttum describes when discussing van Dijk and the notion of macrostructure: "Il étudie des structures globales en discours, en interaction sociale et en cognition" (ibid, 43). Here, Fløttum is alluding to the existence of one and the same (type of) structure, in discourse, cognition and social interaction (I prefer this order). Here, we witness an opening

of text linguistics towards more encompassing 'structures', exactly as wished and predicted by the mentor of all Nordic text linguists of that – and later – generations, Nils Erik Enkvist (1925-2009), Professor of English Studies at the Åbo Akademi. Among many other initiatives, Enkvist founded the research group *NordText,* in which both Kjersti and I participated, and which was imbued with a genuine and encompassing interest in all aspects of language, texts and discourse.

b.   Expansionist text linguistics

Enkvist coined the notion of "expansionist text linguistics" when embarking on the study of "Impromptu Speech" (Enkvist 1982). Enkvist saw *expansionist* linguists in opposition to *restrictionist* linguists, along with the traditional oppositions between parole and language, performance and competence, process and structure. Whereas *restrictionists* tend to eliminate "all troubling variables" ("besvärliga variable" (ibid,168)), *expansionists* engage in many troubling variables, because, in Enkvist's words, language has the shape it has in order to serve social relations between people ("språket har fått sin form just för att betjäna umgänget människor imellan" (ibid, 170). I couldn't agree more. Expansionist text linguistics is a corollary of Enkvist's intellectual defence of "interaction-based text models", which include linguistic factors such as Searle's speech act theory and Grice's maxims of conversation. Searle was also to play a key role in my research on text coherence, and Grice largely inspired my later research on spontaneous conversational humour, as presented below.

The question remained – and remains – how should this expansion from the text to other spheres of "the world", as such, be addressed in a more systematic way, and to which spheres? I shall approach that question in more detail by comparing Kjersti's contribution to Speaking of Europe with mine on the use of humour by members of the European Parliament in the second section.

But first, let us see how Kjersti's approach to summarising texts relates to mine in the early phase of text linguistics on text coherence.

c.   Lita Lundquist "La cohérence textuelle", 1980

The key notions in Kjersti Fløttum's dissertation sketched above are immediately relatable to my own thesis[1] on textual coherence: "La cohérence textuelle: Syntaxe, Sémantique, Pragmatique" (Lundquist 1980). This publication actually preceded Fløttum's by slightly under a decade, and I can't help thinking what would have happened to her method for analysing summaries, had she known about it!

For instance, I declared, in the English summary (!) of my thesis, with rather youthful panache, and with words (underlined by me in 2022) subsuming the main ideas of textual linguistics of that time, that

> the failure of syntax for text analysis is explained by the *impossibility of regarding the text as a closed structure like the sentence*, and by the consequent impossibility of subjecting it to an immanent analysis on the level of "La Langue"; on the contrary, *texts must be considered as open dynamic processes*

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[1] Actually presented for the Danish "Tietgen Prize" the "Tietgens Guldmedalje".

> and must therefore be tackled as the executive side of language on a level with "La Parole" (Lundquist 1980:238)

The bravura went as far as to implicitly refer to Saussure without even mentioning him, and later to state that

> (t)he result of these deliberations was to reject structuralist sentence linguistics in favour of speech act linguistics, and to replace the traditional division of linguistics into the fields of syntax, semantics and pragmatics, with the three fundamental speech acts that Searle suggested in (1969), namely the reference act, the predication act and the illocutionary act (Lundquist 1980:238)

And I boldly continued by putting forward no less than "a new theory about the structuring of the text on three levels, the thematic, the semantic and the pragmatic levels". On this basis, "I work(ed) out an analysis model", which on the thematic level (Danes 1974a, 1974b, Halliday & Hasan 1976) included the "concepts of co-reference, semantic isotopy and connectors". The semantic level was specified by way of "semantic roles" or "case roles" such as Cause, Agent, Receiver etc., inspired by Fillmore's Case Grammar (Fillmore 1968), who split the proposition into the reference (act) + the predication (act), a method also used by Fløttum, as we saw above. And finally, for pragmatic coherence, as tools for analysing coherence, I used "the modalities (that) are expressed in person, tense, mood and voice as suggested by Benveniste in "L'homme dans la langue" and "L'appareil de l'énonciation"" (Lundquist 1980, 240).

With this "description apparatus" applied to three different text samples – an obituary, a geography book (about France) and a legal textbook – I arrived at three types of textual coherence that I saw as typical "basic structures" of three different text types. These were the narrative, the argumentative and the explicative text types, respectively. This led me to bravely form the hypothesis that there is a relation between "text type and text coherence", but also to admit that "the inventory and classification of both modalities and case roles should be given a final touch as far as defining and delimiting the various categories that are concerned" (Lundquist 1980, 243). An insight that was actually to be abundantly pursued in further research by linguists as well as text linguists.

The concluding lines (Lundquist 1980, 243) truly culminate when I proclaim the following: "the fundamental essence of the text constituting *process* (is) text as a form of *communication about relations between phenomena* in *our outer world*" (my 2022 emphasis). But they also relate to a former article (Lundquist 1976), which already announced the main schemata for my analysis of text coherence in Lundquist (1980). Figure 1 from 1978 below illustrates "the structures of text linguistics" (!), to be developed in Lundquist (1980) in the way I just sketched, so let me just point to the "upper cap", encapsulating all of it under "Reality", which was to subsume all "relations between phenomena in the outer world". Quite a mouthful, which was left untouched at that point in time at least, and evidently, in linguistics and text linguistics, not yet ready for this expansion.
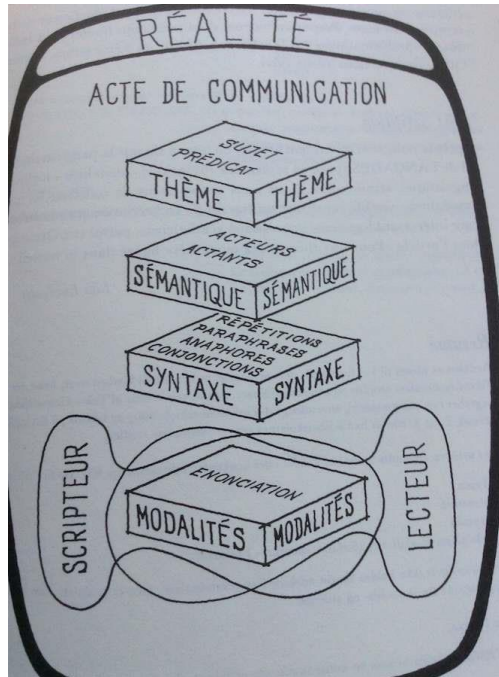
Figure 1: The structures of text linguistics (Lundquist 1978:63)

d.   From text to "Reality"

This daring and intrepid "zigzagging" as Enkvist was to describe it "between the text, the universe of discourse meaning and *universe at large* within which the text can be placed" ((Enkvist 1989, 166) my emphasis), coined by the term "Reality" in my model in figure 1, appears to contain in embryo the subsequent development of text linguistics, with its ever increasing insistence on extra-linguistic factors such as communicative context, addressee's world knowledge, mental models as cognitive representation of text and world, social norms, etc.[2]. Such factors turned out to be necessary for describing how readers grasp coherence in texts, and, of special interest for Fløttum's work for explaining how they arrive at a decision on what to keep from a source text and render in a summary. To go further still, as we shall do in the rest of this article, the "reality" layer will also prove to contain elements of a political and sociocultural order, as shown by the case studies of 'voices of' Europe in Fløttum (2013) and of humour in the EP in Lundquist & Gravier (2019).

3   Fast forward 30 years from speaking of texts to speaking of Europe

Kjersti Fløttum and I have both ventured into expanding text linguistics to new spheres, which necessitated extensions into other, and as it turned out, neighbouring fields of research.

a.   Speaking of and within the EU

In 2013, Kjersti Fløttum edited the book "Speaking of Europe" (Fløttum 2013a), which presented nine articles (including Fløttum's Introduction) written by participants in the big *EurLing Group*, which was established at the University of Bergen in 2005. The aim of the

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[2] See Lundquist 1985, 1999 for more.

project, as of the book, was to develop a *multidisciplinary* framework for studying "linguistic and contextual questions related to political discourse in the EU" (Fløttum 2013b, 6). Thus the contributors to the book "bring in rhetorical theory, metaphor and conceptual theory, cognitive and corpus linguistics, lexical statistics, polyphony, logical semantics as well as different pragmatic and philosophical perspectives"(ibid, 2). A multidisciplinary framework, indeed, with elements grouped on three "levels": "(a) the historical-political level, (b) the situational-rhetorical level, and (c) the linguistic and text-linguistic level" (ibid, 2). These hyphenated headings reveal the endeavour to combine linguistic elements from the "speaking of" with "Europe", i.e. with political and sociological aspects in the context of the European Parliament, where political actors present their speeches.

Readers will note that text linguistics, together with linguistics, has been attributed a level of its own in the *EurLing Group*, and interestingly, articles written by Fløttum's colleagues, reveal a return to the French "enunciative linguistics", which was a subject touched upon in Kjersti's and my first professional encounter at her dissertation defence in 1989, as mentioned above. And which, also, as shown in Figure 1, is one of the "structures of text linguistics" I rather pompously suggested back in 1978. For Fløttum and her *EurLing* project, this approach is of key interest since it "is based on the view that all utterances contain traces of the act or activity producing it (…), be they traces of the situation in which it is produced (…) or traces of the protagonists of the utterance, i.e. speaker and addressee" (ibid, 10-11). This approach was enhanced by adding the French linguist Ducrot's theory of the "polyphony in language", which Kjersti had substantially helped to develop within the framework of the Scapoline Project[3]. Another source of inspiration also came from French linguistics, the argumentative linguistics of Ducrot and Anscombre (Ducrot et. al. 1980), who showed that argumentation is not only a question of text and discourse but is encoded at utterance level. Both enunciative, polyphonic and argumentative linguistics proved to be very useful when unravelling the complexity of speeches made in the European Parliament, where the many voices spoken with in order to satisfy diverse audiences, reveal themselves in the argumentation and often ambiguity they contain.

b.   Multi- or inter-disciplinarity?

You can tell from the articles in Fløttum (2013a) that the project and ongoing discussions have enabled scholars from various fields to inspire each other and discover and accentuate theoretical notions that enrich the different specific (text) linguistic notions and scope. Yet, the research performed in the *EurLing Group* testifies that linguistics and text linguistics have an important role to play in addressing political discourses. And they show that an array of linguistic approaches pave the way for other disciplines to take over.

However, they also, in my view, show how *multi*-disciplinarity may risk leading to a form of "*explosive*" rather than "*expansionist*" approach. What is called for, then, may be an approach that is more *inter*-disciplinary, a path I have chosen in my study of *humour in the European Parliament*.

c.   Speaking of humour in the European Parliament

In the mid-2000's I embarked on a new project, at first sight only vaguely related to text linguistics. First, it was a solo-project on *humour in business and politics* in which I focused on Danes' – often surprising – use of verbal humour in professional contexts with (mainly) French colleagues (Lundquist 2010, 2014). From 2012, I worked together with a well-reputed

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[3] "La théorie scandinave de la polyphonie linguistique".

French scholar in political science, Magali Gravier[4]. In our article "You Have Got To Be Joking!" A study of humour in the political context of the European Parliament", we interviewed Danish and French MEPs (members of the EP), 10 and 12 respectively, with the main goal of seeing how *context* influences one's use of humour (Lundquist & Gravier 2019).

Digging into this specific context of people working in an international organisation, as is the case for Members of the European Parliament, we saw that they change the context for using humour in several respects. The main change is that they go from a national to an international context, which many MEPs perceive as causing obstacles for making their 'normal', 'local' humour work successfully; as stated here by a French MEP: "I use the same triggers — in the EP and in France — but they don't always work", an experience that is echoed by his Danish counterpart: "Being a Dane makes it safe to use humour with other Danes – you cannot be quite as sure when you are facing another nationality that they actually understand your humour".

In order to lift these folk-theoretic observations to a more scientific level, we brought in expertise from each of our disciplines in a joint effort to combine them for this specific purpose. It was in this way that we could move directly from the linguistic inspiration from Sigmund Freud's seminal work on the (linguistic) "technique of wit" (Freud 1905), to three *social models of humour*, which describe the effects provoked by signals of humour on social relations in general, and in professional relations in particular. The first was the *encryption* model (Flamson and Barrett 2013), which insists on humour being an "*encrypted*" *key* to a joint understanding, and which helps explain why the correct *decryption* of the hidden – humorous – message, may not be obvious to people with other languages or other cultures, and who are socialised in other national and political contexts to other *keys* of humour.

Second, we turned to the so-called "AAA-model" (Curry and Dunbar 2013), which brings out the role that humour plays in creating relations between people. The main concepts of this framework are *assortment*, *affiliation* and *altruism*. *Assortment* constitutes the first step where individuals identify similarities with other people who share the same humour as themselves. Step two consists of wishing to *affiliate* with these people, that is, to establish bonds with them. Finally, step three, *altruism*, implies initiating cooperative relations with people to whom the individual feels similar and with whom (s)he wants to bond. This model helped us point to situations experienced by the MEPs in their working contexts where humour had worked positively. As stated here by a Danish MEP: "Humour is one of the easiest ways of getting in contact with others... if you wish to create results [...] politics is all about relations", and here by a French MEP, who seems to meander through the triple A's: "A moment of shared laughter makes... opens... a link... it makes it possible to see people from a different angle [...] I think [humour] would make people a bit more human and likable".

The third model that helped us cast light on the specific role of context in the use of verbal humour in a European political context, was the social critical approach of *unlaughter* to "humour and ridicule" (Billig 2005). Unlaughter, which is "the rhetorical opposite of laughter" (ibid, 177), i.e., "the refusal of audiences to respond with laughter" (ibid,179), is a

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[4] With whom I had worked before on the multiplicity language policy as a legitimising strategy in the EU (Gravier & Lundquist 2011).

manifest disapproval, a sort of 'meta-discourse' of humour that is used to comment on what is to be considered funny" (ibid, 183). The notion of *unlaughter* describes the "disciplinary power of humour" in that it explains how learning (new) humour keys may take place under the constraints of a new social context. Learning the social conventions for using laughter in a specific social context takes place via this "rhetoric" of laughter and unlaughter: the first followed by approval and mirth, the second by disapproval and embarrassment.

So, what did the MEPs learn from changing from their local context to a global context? They all learned, often with a trial-and-error rationale, that there is an *encryption key of humour* specific to the EP that presents itself first and foremost as a list of "go's and no-go's" for humour[5]. This means that MEPs perceive new codes of humour in the European Parliament that require a new "*we*-feeling", a timid opening to a new "common identity" (Lundquist 2021), as Fløttum also mentioned in her introduction "Speaking of and within the EU": "(the) discussion of 'common identity' and a possible '*we*-feeling' is pertinent to analyses of EU discourse" (Fløttum 2013b, 10).

d. What happened to text linguistics here?

In our joint linguistic-sociological efforts in the article on Danish and French MEPs' use of humour in the European Parliament, Gravier and I combined our linguistic and politico-sociological backgrounds. Departing from a text linguistic discourse study of a specific case of *verbal interaction*: spontaneous humorous remarks in ongoing conversations, we extended this analysis by systematically drawing upon three sociological disciplines that enabled us to account for the *social role of humour* in the specific political context of the European Parliament. This was a major step towards filling in the 'reality' box put so boldly at the top of the text linguistic model in figure 1, but it also takes us to the very far end of the text linguistic scale, and perhaps far beyond. This called for, in my view, a deeper linguistic analysis of humour in ongoing professional discourse between people from different countries with different mother tongues. I have focused on this since 2014 and will outline my findings briefly in the following.

e. Linguistics in humour studies

In my studies on – especially Danes' – spontaneous use of humour in ongoing professional conversations, I took up fundamental concepts from early discourse and text linguistics, first of all those recommended by Niels Erik Enkvist in his studies on impromptu speech, in which he drew on Searle and Grice (see above). But let me first give an example of such a spontaneous remark, intended as humorous by the sender, the Dane, but certainly not perceived as such by the receiver, a French scientist working at a Danish university. When the Frenchman was asked by a Danish colleague why he had not yet learned to speak Danish, he explained that he was having trouble getting into evening classes to learn the language. Quick as a flash, his Danish colleague retorted in English: "You should get a divorce and marry a Danish woman." The Frenchman was severely offended: "It came up very coldly in a discussion, and as it was at a moment when I was trying desperately to learn Danish, it was very hurtful."

Spontaneous conversational humour, as in this example, has much in common with impromptu speech, so it is no surprise that notions from Searle's speech act theory came to mind. Could humour used in ongoing dialogue be seen as a particular "illocutionary force",

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[5] For more details concerning the results we obtained by expanding linguistics with these sociological humour models, see Lundquist & Gravier (2017).

signalling that this remark – i.e., the propositional content of it – should not be taken seriously, but was said in fun? This, at least, is what I suggested in Lundquist (2020, 91-92).

Naturally, Grice and his notion of maxims of conversation from his seminal article "Logic and Conversation" (Grice 1975) are clearly useful for explaining how and why humour produced without warning in a professional, fact-oriented and serious dialogue may cause surprise, puzzlement and misunderstandings. According to the general "principle of cooperation", we expect every contribution in a conversation to respect logical rules such as consistency and coherence, as stated by Grice:

> Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks and would not be rational if they did. They are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts; and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction. (Grice 1989, 26).

As, in a business, political or other professional conversation, the common purpose – e.g. reaching agreement or signing a contract – is expected to a lead in a certain direction, and first of all to be serious, a humorous remark that is not perceived as such, is taken as distorted, abrupt and often offensive because it leaves the partner disorientated and off balance. On a more speculative level, I thus propose that Grice's "conversational implicatures", generated as they are by general "conversational maxims", should be supplemented by a set of "conversational implicatures *cum humour*" (Lundquist 2020, 90-91). In a later, less academic and more user-friendly book inspired by my book from 2020, co-authored with Helen Dyrbye, *Danish Humour – Sink or Swim* (Lundquist & Dyrbye 2023), we have perceived such "implicatures cum humour" as *conversational gangplanks*, to be laid out and used very often in professional conversations with Danes.

f.   The "dialogical particles" of the Danish language and Danes' propensity for rapid and implicit humour

But why does Danish humour need special conversational implicatures to be understood and accepted? Non-Danes I have interviewed often referred to the fact that Danes give no "warning signals" – expressed via linguistic and extralinguistic signals such as intonation, facial expressions, gestures or the like – that communicate "I'm just joking". That may be true for a foreigner listening to Danes speaking a *lingua franca*. When Danes speak Danish, however, among their countrymen, they have at hand a whole range of small linguistic expressions, *jo, vel, nok, da, vist*, etc., the so-called "dialogical particles" or "conversational 'small-words'" (Hansen & Heltoft 2011, 1015), whose function is to regulate dialogue by pointing to shared knowledge and "common ground". By *bonding* the speaker and listener in a kind of *intimacy*, these small signals, which are almost inaudible to a foreign ear, monosyllabic and unstressed as they are, weave an intricate web of interrelated and very subtle meaning potentials that are left for the speaker to decipher. The dialogical particles, which we could range in the 'modalities of enunciation' box of Figure 1 above, pave the way for *decrypting*, so to speak, the *encrypted* humorous message.

Thus, the rather abrupt and rude reply from the Danish colleague in the "get a Danish wife" example above, could and probably would, if spoken in his mother tongue, have featured one

or several of the small but highly communicative softener words that signal this is being said with a touch of humour e.g.:

> "Then you'd *jo, da, vist/vel, nok* better divorce and marry a Dane!"

g. Explosive or expansive text linguistics?
With the above text linguistic *cum* sociological approach to a specific example of verbal interaction: the use of verbal humour in a transnational political context, I have tried, together with my colleague from political science, to confine and restrain an unwieldly multi-disciplinarity to a more controllable *inter-* or *bi-disciplinarity*. But, still, I dream of arriving at a *unitary model* that complies with the idea of an expansive form of text linguistics, such as that we have been striving for in Nordic research in text linguistics since Enkvist's time.

4 Conclusion. Towards a unitary model?
I have no solution, at present, to this problem, though I have attempted a certain "unitarity" model in my research on *humour socialisation* (Lundquist 2020, 2021), which sees humour (a "national humour" such as that of Danes) as being formed in interaction between language and society. I argue for and try to explain that people have and use the humour they have in the form they do because they have been socialised via the society they grow up in and the language they speak.

In fact, for Danes, it emerged in my studies that in their use of humour there are interesting correspondences, maybe even correlations, between the *prevailing forms of conversational humour* among Danes: irony and self-irony on the one hand; the *Danish language* with its multiple use of dialogical, bonding particles on the other, and finally with characteristics of *Danish society* itself. Through centuries of historical-political influences and events, Danish society has been "civilised" (Elias 1994) into a bottom-up, homogeneous, egalitarian consensus society, based on a high level of trust and "*we*-feeling" between its citizens (Kaspersen 2019). Described with the metaphor of a "campfire society" (Jespersen 2004), the Danes' way of living together constitutes a propitious natural habitat for the use of innuendo, implied and 'inside' humour, which takes the form of (overly) rapid remarks ("kvikke bemærkninger"), which too many non-Danes often take seriously.

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│       Humour DK         │
│    Irony, self-irony    │
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┌─────────────────────────┐          ┌─────────────────────────┐
│    Danish language      │          │     Danish society      │
│   Dialogical particles  │          │   We feeling and trust  │
│                         │          │    Campfire mentality   │
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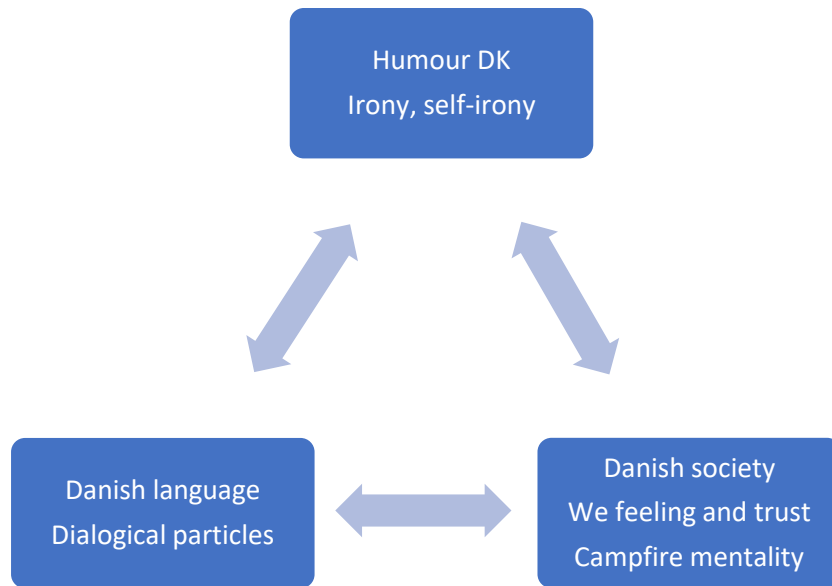
Figure 2: Correspondences between Danish humour, the Danish language and Danish society

Perhaps this model can be generalised to suit other examples of language use in specific social contexts, illustrating that we use language in specific situations as we do because we have been "moulded" by the society where we live – with all its forms of social groupings and norms for social behaviour – and by the language we grow up with, our mother tongue, which we have "embodied" and use naturally, intuitively and spontaneously from infancy in that society. Enkvist's precious remark that "language has the shape it has in order to serve social relations between people" springs to mind here.

Let me finish on a very speculative note by suggesting that we squeeze into the REALITY box in Figure 1, a model of linguistic socialisation that renders and combines particular features of a given language with specific characteristics of the society in which people learn to speak and use this language. It is at this intersection that I would wish to put truly "expansionist text linguistics".
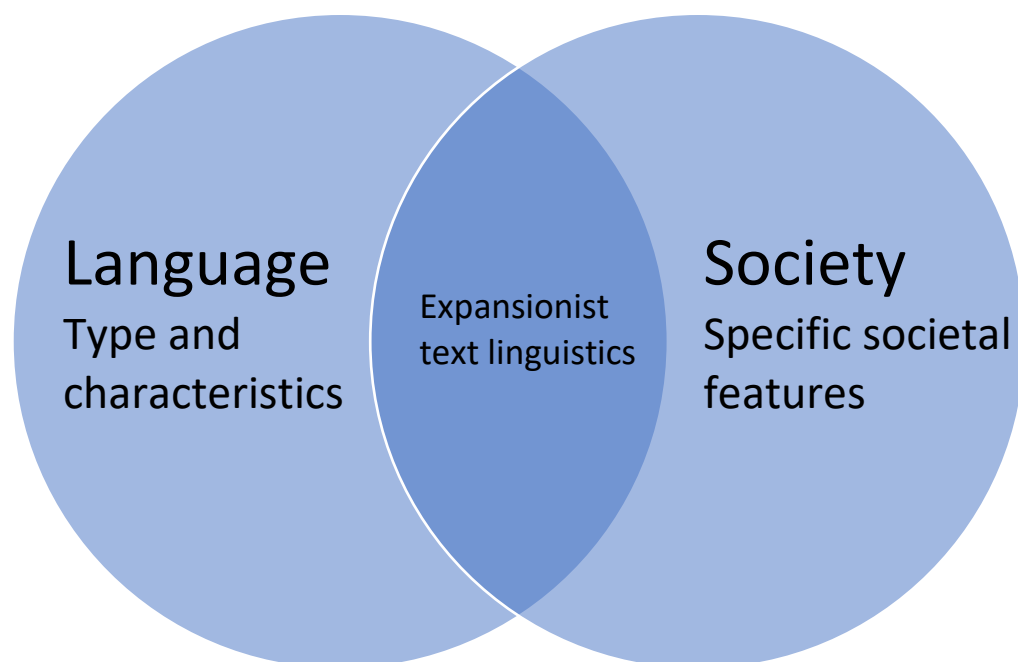
Figure 3: Towards a model of "expansionist text linguistics"

a. Perspectives

With these results in mind and given the common ground that has existed from the very beginning between Kjersti Fløttum and me, is it any wonder that I would love to embark on a common project with her (and her colleagues)? Perhaps just on a small scale, and by combining our knowledge, we could compare how Norwegians and Danes use humour?[6] It would not surprise me if, while exploring *uti vår fælles hage*, we found more similarities than differences between our two countries, given our partly shared history and more or less shared language.

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[6] I have already approached the topic 'Nordic humour', comparing in a first step Swedish and Danish humour (Lundquist in press).

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