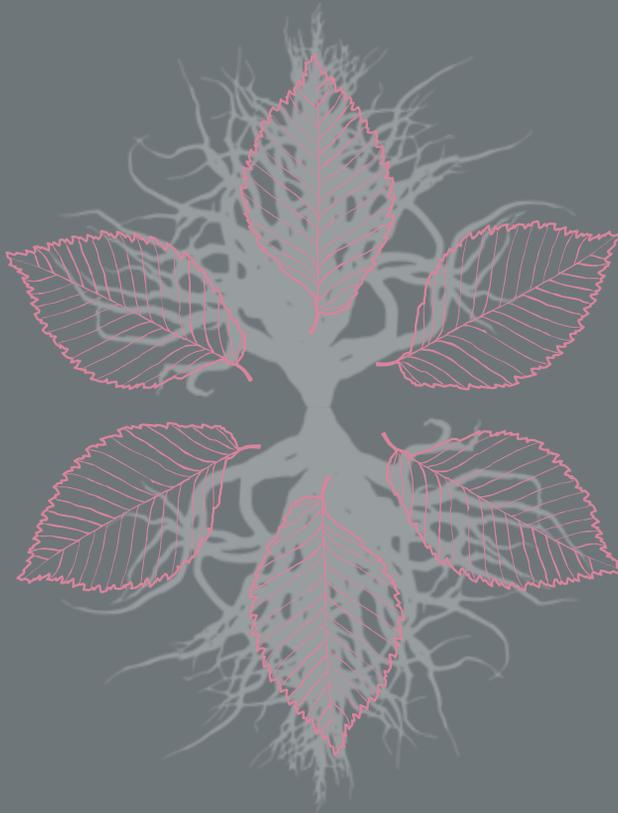# GENRE AND ...

Copenhagen Studies in Genre 2

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GENRE AND ...

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APPROACHES
THROUGH THEORY

GENRE AND WRITING PEDAGOGY

Anne Smedegaard

GENRES PERMEATE THE HUMAN understanding of and interaction with the surrounding world. This pragmatic account of genre was already formulated by M.M. Bakhtin in 1952-1953,[1] with his description of how individual utterances relate to the relatively stable types called "speech genres," which are developed in all spheres of communication (1952-1953/1986, p. 60). These relatively stable types are also found in the class-room. Pragmatically speaking, each school subject has its own oral and written genres, which emerge, develop, and crystallize over time and in specific contexts. These are firmly entrenched in the discourse of the particular subject, and both genres and discourses constitute the subject's norms and ideologies. Such genres thus belong to discourse communities, such as the community surrounding high school Danish teaching—the pivot-point of the present article.

Throughout life, we learn new genres whenever we become members of new discourse communities. Genres are normally learned implicitly, through participation in a discourse community; but this participation can only be remote and tacit at the very beginning, since full membership in a discourse community implies complete genre acquisition of that community's most important genres.

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[1] Cf. also Andersen, <u>this volume</u>.

Fortunately, the new genres that we meet tend to share a wide range of features with genres that we already know. We decode new contexts and genres on the basis of the knowledge that we carry with us from previous situations. Deborah Wells Rowe has demonstrated that acquiring such a stock of genre knowledge is not an advanced communication skill. On the contrary, children learn genres simultaneously with the rest of language. Because written texts are an integrated part of western society, children already possess knowledge of a wide range of written genres before they start school (Rowe, 2008, p. 407).

Building bridges between existing and new knowledge is not equally easy for all schoolchildren. For middle and upper-class children, growing up in families and environments where they are socialized into discourses and genres that correspond to those of the classroom, the decoding process happens frictionlessly. For these children, implicit learning and successful usage of the genres involved in school pedagogy is rather unproblematic. Meanwhile, other children may struggle to decode how to write and speak throughout their years at school (Chouliarki, 2001, pp. 43-45). To refer to the wide spectrum of staged, socially structured, and linguistically embedded teaching-learning activities that are used in all kinds of school subjects, Francis Christie (1993) uses the term "curriculum genres". In this article, it is an underlying premise that explicit teaching in both curriculum genres and other genres eases students' access to school discourse. Explicit genre knowledge gives students the chance to become full members of a given subject's discourse community, along with the opportunity and proper metalinguistic tools to discuss and critique genres and discourses.

This article provides an introduction to the three most prominent international pragmatic genre theories and their accompanying pedagogical programs. These three genre schools, which have developed over the last decades, are Rhetorical Genre Studies (RGS), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and the Sydney School, which is based on Systemic Func-

tional Linguistics.[2] This theoretical discussion serves as my point of departure for the rest of the article, in which I present an analysis of genre understanding and teaching in the portion of high school Danish instruction that is concerned with writing.

In 2005, three examination genres for use in high school Danish instruction were introduced in a departmental order and teacher guidelines issued by Denmark's Ministry of Education. The three genres were identified as the literary article, the *kronik*, and the essay.[3] These three genres are the ones that students mainly produce during their three years of Danish instruction in high school, and they are the genres that the students will encounter in their final examination.

This article argues that the account of genre reflected in the official documents about the three genres issued by the Ministry of Education overlooks important insights that have emerged over the last three decades in international pragmatic genre theory and pedagogy. I will show that even though pragmatic genre theory has influenced parts of the descriptions of the three examination genres, the descriptions are not informed by

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[2] Sunny Hyon (1996) was the first to group the work in genre analysis into these three categories in her widely quoted state-of-the-art article "Genre in Three Traditions: Implications for ESL".

[3] A *kronik* is a long opinion piece for newspaper publication, typically written not by a journalist, but by a person who wants to contribute to a specific discussion of a topic by directing attention to circumstances that have escaped the public debate. The writer normally draws on either professional or private knowledge. This genre is not quite the same as the English "feature article," as it only rarely contains elements of short stories, and because its purpose is to evoke a rational response more than an emotional one. Accordingly, I here retain the Danish term *kronik* rather than using a translation (as I do for the other two school genres). Nevertheless, the school *kronik* can be said to be reminiscent of the "argumentative essay" used in Anglo-American school systems, whereas the "essay" used in Danish instruction differs from the "essay" used in English classes in Anglo-American schools in that the former draws on the tradition of personal exposition and discussion deriving from Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592).

a fundamental understanding of genres as functional entities integrated in a specific social and rhetorical context. I will argue that this has severe consequences for the pedagogy that is the result of the Ministry's guidelines.

THE PRAGMATIC UNDERSTANDING OF GENRES

RGS rests on Carolyn Miller's (1984) well-known pragmatic and rhetorical genre approach.[4] Her definition of genres as "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" (Miller, 1984, p. 159) is a shared basis for members of RGS. Amy Devitt (2004), for example, accentuates Miller's description of how we understand situations as recurrent even though situations are materially unique and our individual perception of a given situation is unique. These recurrent conditions, which are attached to specific social contexts, prepare the ground for people to produce and recognize typified actions such as genres (p. 13). Furthermore, it is common in RGS to adopt Miller's description of the relation between types and situations as reciprocal. That is: we use types and conceptions in our understanding of recurrent rhetorical situations, and we construct these types and conceptions while engaged in situation-bound interactions (Miller, 1984, pp. 156-157).

Amy Devitt (1993) argues that genres not only respond to, but also play an active part in, the construction of recurrent situations (p. 577). The text reflects the genre, and thereby indirectly reflects the situation as well: "by beginning to write within a genre, the writer has selected the situation entailed in that genre." (p. 578). In this way genres, through their usage, have a great effect on the context: they maintain, reveal tensions within, and help to reproduce social practices and realities. At the same time, genres are context-bound: they are formed by society and the different types of situations it presents. Charles Bazerman (2003) of the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) movement, which is strongly connected to RGS,

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[4] See also Sunesen, this volume.

describes this connection as something that is present in all meaning-making, written as well as oral, fiction as well as non-fiction; even in silent reading, we always interact with the written text in a context, and we always use tools such as genres: "We have no sense-making mechanism apart from our orientating toward a situation and activity, using culturally available tools." (p. 387).

Context and situation also play an important part in the understanding of genre in ESP and the Sydney School. Even though perhaps the most influential figure in ESP, John M. Swales, has changed his definition of genre throughout the years, he has maintained the notion that genres are shared types of ways to act in specific situations. In 1990, Swales defined genres in relation to discourse communities. Genres are described as communicative events used to achieve the discourse community's common goals (2008, p. 9). The genre's communicative purpose is one of its privileged criteria, and contributes to its stability together with a range of other features such as structure, style, content, and intended audience (2008, p. 58).

In *Research Genres: Explorations and Applications* (2004), Swales' focus moves from individual genres to the relation between genres used *within* a field, and he describes different genre constellations such as hierarchies between high- and low-valued genres, genre chains, genre sets, and genre networks (p. 12-25). Here Swales avoids the term "discourse community," but instead uses such words as "field" and "sector." He criticizes his former position on genre as both too narrow to apply to all empirical cases and too general to be used in analysis of emergent genres. Instead, Swales wishes to make genre a metaphorical endeavor, and comments on six different metaphors used by different genre theorists such as Bazerman, Devitt and Fishelov: "genre as frame," "genre as standard," "genres as biological species," "genres as families," "genres as institutions," and "genres as speech acts." (p. 61-68). Swales points to the fact that genre command is a necessary component, but is not the only thing needed for

discoursal success (p. 62). With a reference to Beaufort (1998), Swales underscores that shared knowledge in a field also pertains to subject matter, rhetoric, and writing process (p. 62).

Swales (2004) stresses that it can be a challenge to work out the communicative purpose of texts. He states that "the repurposing of the genre(s)" must be incorporated as a separate stage in the analysis no matter whether it follows the tradition of ESP or RGS. Moreover, several complicating factors make it necessary to question preliminary interpretations of the communicative purpose throughout the analysis. For example, texts do not always do what they seem to be doing; genres develop over time; sometimes the author has multiple purposes; texts do not always do what is implied by the genre label; and speech acts can give rise to different interpretations (p. 73).

The Sydney School understands genres as integrated into social practices of a given culture and as recurrent configurations of meanings used with specific purposes. Its genre definition has stayed the same since the 1990s, and reads as follows:

> As a working definition we characterized genres as staged, goal oriented social processes. Staged, because it usually takes more than one step to reach our goals; goal oriented because we feel frustrated if we don't accomplish the final steps (…); social because writers shape their texts for readers of particular kinds. (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 6)

The definition captures important aspects of genres, but does not distinguish genres from a whole range of other social processes, such as (for example) war or a career path.

In the Sydney School's definition, structure takes a prominent place. The Sydney School also considers the relations among different genres to be extremely important, inasmuch as knowledge of these relations increases our understanding of how genres are used and chosen. Many factors can

distinguish one genre from another; for example, the presence of a timeline in a recount differentiates it from an observation or a comment, and the use of specific reference in descriptions brings out their contrast to reports, in which general references are preferred. In the Sydney School, systems of choices constitute genres (Martin & Rose, 2008, pp. 6-7).

The three schools all define genres as both social and cognitive: genres are "situated cognition" (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 7). Ian Bruce (2008) converts this both/and-understanding of genres to an either/or-understanding, i.e., genres are *either* social or cognitive. Social genres refer to "socially recognized constructs according to which whole texts are classified in terms of their overall social purpose" (p. 8). His examples include personal letters, novels, and the academic article. The three examination genres used in the Danish high school also fit in here. The cognitive genres are deeply connected to their rhetorical purpose, as for example to sort information according to importance. The cognitive genres are defined by the functional use of language, and count text types such as narrative, expository, descriptive, argumentative, and instructional. Furthermore, although a social genre can consist of only one cognitive genre, it is more common that social genres exhibit features of a wide range of cognitive genres.

I do not find this separation of cognitive and social genres appropriate. Bruce appears to derive his conclusion that static, cognitive structures or genres actually exist from the fact that whenever we enter new situations, we reuse knowledge, such as genre knowledge, that we bring with us from previous situations. In opposition to Bruce, I argue that this knowledge only gains new relevance in social situations—and the way in which our former experiences are put to renewed use is strongly influenced by the specific context. We do not carry about fixed, prototypically cognitive genre structures; rather, both of the kinds of genres that Bruce describes are socio-cognitive. They are both attached to language in time and context, and they are both conventional lines of action and thought. That

being said, I find Bruce's distinction between the two kinds of genres use-
ful for descriptive purposes. My solution, therefore, is to distinguish be-
tween socio-cognitive genres, which describe full texts, and socio-
cognitive genre values, which as ways of thinking cut across genres while
adjusting to the context of specific genres and texts. The concept of "genre
values" is inspired by Bhatia (2004), who uses the term "generic values"
about rhetorical actions such as arguments, narratives, descriptions, expla-
nations, and instructions (p. 59-60).

   ESP and RGS tend to pay attention to what I call socio-cognitive gen-
res, whereas members of the Sydney School focus to a greater extent on
the socio-cognitive genre values, which they categories as genres. For ex-
ample, Martin and Rose (2008) describe the recount, the narrative, the
report, and the explanation (p. 52, 141), whereas Devitt (2004) analyses
different genres used by tax accountants including nontechnical corre-
spondence, administrative memoranda, engagement letters, and proposals
(p. 68). By shedding light on research genres such as the PhD dissertation
and the PhD defense, Swales (2004) does describe genres, but he also
points to genre values, e.g., the narrative (p. 111).

   In spite of this major difference between ESP and RGS, on the one
hand, and the Sydney School on the other, the three schools bear many
points of resemblance. All criticize the traditional conception of genre for
restricting itself to describing recurring textual and structural features. In
addition, there is agreement on viewing genres as social entities. Genres
are context-bound actions, and genres match specific purposes and goals in
a particular context. In the Sydney School, such contexts are described
within M.A.K. Halliday's theory about variations of situations.[5] These
variations are described as variations in register (field, tenor, and mode)
and in the three corresponding language metafunctions (ideational, inter-
personal, and textual) (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 11). All three approaches

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[5] See Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004.

emphasize the addressee, the context, and the occasion (Freedman, 2008, p. 104); all describe genre as both providing standards and etiquettes for how things are done and, at the same time, permitting a fair amount of freedom of choice. Genres allow "constrained creativity" (Gregersen, 1998, p. 115)[6] and "accommodate both stability and change" (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1993, p. 481). The changes are due to the fact that the conditions of use of the individual genre change from situation to situation. There can be changes in the material conditions, community membership, technology, disciplinary purposes, values, and systems of accountability (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p. 79). There is also always variation among the people who use genres. Pierre Bourdieu uses the term "habitus" to describe dispositions, inclinations, character, sensibilities, schemata, and the individual's taste (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1996)—conditions that all affect the use of genres.

Genres are of great importance, and not only for analytical purposes (Devitt, 2000, p. 703). They are the tools used and played with in all kinds of everyday interaction: at work, at school, in newspapers, on television, in ceremonies, and so on. But genres not only express norms; members of all three schools agree that they also merge with the ideology of the discourse community. Here, for example, is the RGS point of view, as formulated by Berkenkotter & Huckins (1993): "Thus genres themselves, when examined closely from the perspective of those who use them, reveal much about a discourse community's norms, epistemology, ideology, and social ontology." (p. 501)

Nevertheless, despite these similarities in their overall approach to the conception of genre by ESP, RGS, and the Sydney school, there are considerable differences among the three international genre schools with respect to genre description and genre pedagogy. This will be illustrated in the next two parts.

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[6] My translation.

GENRE DESCRIPTION

Flowerdew (2002) agrees with Hyon's division of pragmatic genre theory into three schools, but suggests a further subcategorization into linguistic and non-linguistic approaches. ESP and the Sydney School are linguistic schools, whereas RGS (New Rhetoric) takes a nonlinguistic approach. The goal of their analyses differ because the two approaches focus their attention differently: "Putting it another way, the linguistic approach looks to the situational context to interpret the linguistic and discourse structures, whereas the New Rhetoric may look to the text to interpret the situational context." (pp. 91-92)

The linguistic schools have text-focus and RGS context-focus. Flowerdew's description corresponds with that of Swales (2004) and that of Bawarshi and Reiff (2010), except that they both exclude the Sydney School from their division. Bawarshi and Reiff call attention to the fact that whereas ESP emphasizes the communicative aspect of genre, RGS emphasizes the social aspect (pp. 57-58). Swales (2004) similarly characterizes ESP as a "text-first" linguistic/ESP approach, and RGS as a "situation-first" new rhetoric approach (p. 72-73). These differences become very clear when one examines the three schools' concrete studies and analyses. At root, Martin and Rose's (2008) analysis can be described as a social semiotic study of the linguistic patterns of different genres, or as I call them, genre values. The linguistic patterns are described with the use of Systemic Functional Grammar. Swales (2008) analyses the textual features of the English style research article, and Devitt (2004) focuses primarily on the relationship between genre and community (pp. 66-67).[7]

As a consequence of their different focus, the three schools use different kinds of data in their investigations. In addition to analyses of written texts, Devitt includes analyses of interviews. Her data collection and analyses are in line with Miller's recommendations. Miller (1984) pleads for

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[7] The study was first published in Devitt (1991).

genre studies that explicate the knowledge that practice creates, e.g. by using an ethnomethodological classification that takes the de facto genres of everyday language at face value (p. 155). Devitt uses such a classification (2004, pp. 67-68). Martin and Rose (2008), by contrast, use their own labels, and suggest that the users themselves are short of genre categories (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 1; 5). Meanwhile, Swales (2008) warns analysts against unreflectively and uncritically adopting the communities' own genre categories, which might be ambiguous, changing or non-existent (pp. 54-57). Miller (1984) regards genre studies as culture and history studies instead of aesthetic studies (p. 158). As is captured in the quotation in the preceding passage, Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), who are part of RGS, agree with Miller and Devitt that the analyst must investigate the users' understanding of genres. Like Devitt, they collect and analyze both interviews and text examples (pp. 28-29). By contrast, both Martin and Rose (2008) and Swales refrain from interview studies, focusing solely on their text corpora.

IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT GENRE PEDAGOGIES

> Genres are not just forms. Genres are forms of life, ways of being. They
> are frames for social action. They are environments for learning.
> (Bazerman, 1997, p. 19)

In this poetic definition of genre, Bazerman indicates that genres are places to situate one's attention when learning to read and write. Genre is, indeed, a focal point in some portions of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). The movement's programs combine two strands: writing to learn and learning to write in the disciplines. The first is concerned with teaching students to use writing as a tool for discovering and shaping knowledge; the second focuses on students learning the specific genres and conventions of a discourse community (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, pp. 206-207).

WAC has particularly tried to improve the teaching of writing at the university (Russell, Lea, Parker, Street, & Donahue, 2009, p. 395). Over the years, it has functioned as both a practical and a theoretical movement (Bazerman, Little, Bethel, Chavkin, Fouquette, & Garfis, 2005).

Adherents of both implicit and explicit genre teaching can be found in WAC, but most members regard the implicit method of teaching, in which students learn to write new genres through writing in authentic contexts, to be most effective. This implies that students primarily learn to write just by writing, and that the teacher's job is to encourage writing by setting up feedback, revision, and repetition (Russel et.al., 2009, p. 408-409). In *Genre and Cognitive Development: Beyond Writing to Learn* (2009), Bazerman delivers an implicit criticism of this pedagogy when he explains why his own view on explicit teaching of grammar has changed. Over the years, Bazerman has distanced himself from direct grammatical instruction in writing pedagogy because studies such as Hillocks (1986) reveal the ineffectiveness of traditional grammar teaching.[8] But based on Vygotsky's account of how learning encourages development (1978; 1987), Bazerman argues that even though grammatical instructions have no transfer value when children first learn to read and write, that knowledge changes their comprehension in the long term. Through development, explicit grammatical knowledge will blend with how the learner perceives and construes sentences. According to Bazerman (2009), explicit teaching should therefore begin at an early point and consist of both grammar and "other levels of composing, such as text structuring devices, genre expectations, audience and situation concerns, and activity consequences within larger social systems." (p. 288)

Just as in WAC, the relevance of explicit genre teaching has also been discussed in RGS. One of the most quoted critiques of explicit teaching is

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[8] Sawyer & Watson, 1987, advocates for a Hillock inspired approach towards genres.

that of Aviva Freedman. Freedman (1993) argues that teachers can never give an exhaustive interpretation of a given genre and "the complex web of social, cultural, and rhetorical features to which genres respond" (p. 225). Explicit teaching is therefore impossible and unnecessary. Even sophisticated genres can be learned in their original setting without explicit instruction because "*Genre Knowledge Is Tacit*." (p. 231).

Another kind of critique comes from representatives of progressive pedagogy, who believe that explicit genre knowledge impedes the writer's creativity and the use of his or her personal voice. In the debate book *The Place of Genre in Learning: Current Debates* (1987), John Dixon calls genres "mind-forg'd manacles" and "algorithmic sequences," which students must exceed when they write (1987, pp. 9-10).

The Sydney School introduced its explicit genre pedagogy in the 1980s as a response to progressive pedagogy, which at the time was growing increasingly influential in Australia. Inspired by Basil Bernstein (1979; 1996), the Sydney School criticizes the fact that with progressive pedagogy, children are locked into accounts of everyday personal experience without developing powerful representations of thought suitable for communication with the surrounding society (Chouliaraki, 2001). This tendency, the Sydney School has argued, is most noticeable among children who are brought up with other kinds of cultural practices than those recontextualized in school. As Frances Christie (1985) puts it, to have what it takes to perform well in school is "largely a language matter" (p. 21). It is a matter of possessing the resources that are necessary to interpret and manipulate the various kinds of school discourse. Some children are brought up with genres similar to those that are used in school, and these succeed very readily; others are not, and for them school becomes a struggle. As Martin, Christie, and Rothery (1987) put it, these students are left with their own words, which:

cuts them off absolutely from any real understanding of what the humanities, social sciences and sciences are on about and denies them the tools these disciplines have developed to understand the world. These tools are fundamentally linguistic ones—the genres and varieties of abstract and technical language associated with each discipline. Education cannot make access to these tools a viable goal unless it deconstructs the language involved and the ways in which such language can be taught. (64)

Progressive pedagogies that focus on students' playful ways with words and on renewal of the language are also criticized from a different angle. Gunther Kress (1987) points to the fact that genres are deeply embedded within cultures: "Challenging genres is therefore challenging culture." (p. 44). Students always write in the context of genres. Hence to succeed, their creativity must, according to Kress, be in agreement with at least some of the existing genre expectations. Bakhtin (1986) offers a similar description of the relation between genre and creativity: "(…) to use a genre freely and creatively is not the same as to create a genre from the beginning; genres must be fully mastered in order to be manipulated freely." (p. 80).

Disagreement about explicit teaching of genre, grammar, composition, etc., is a preoccupation only for members of RGS and WAC. Since the Sydney school and ESP emerged out of a pedagogical imperative, both schools argue for the necessity of explicit genre teaching based on text analysis by means of grammatical and discourse semantic categories. Here the aim is to make the ideologies, norms, and genres of both school and society visible to all students.

THREE EXAMPLES OF EXPLICIT GENRE PEDAGOGY
Starting in 1989, the Sydney school has introduced several teaching models (Martin, 1999, p. 126). The general idea is to create a pedagogy that operates with a high degree of teacher management and guidance in some

stages, and with a less authoritative teacher, and more student control over student work, in others. These models all include three main phases in the work devoted to learn a new genre: "deconstruction," "joint construction," and "independent construction." "Deconstruction" is concerned with exploring the genre's context, both cultural and situational. It also incorporates grammatical analysis of the purpose, the features, and the contents of the text, as well as the roles of and the relationship between the writer and the recipient. In "joint construction," the teacher will create a text on the board together with the students. "Independent construction," finally, is the phase in which students compose a text in the same genre, but now on their own. They get feedback both from other students and from the teacher, supporting the individual writer in his or her writing process.

The Sydney school's models incorporate a critical orientation to genre that is inspired by progressive pedagogy's critique of explicit teaching. In all three phases, the teacher is supposed to prepare the ground for a critical approach to the genre in question. The students are not only supposed to learn how to read and write genres, but also to use genres creatively—to change them over time (Martin, 1999, p. 131). In concrete teaching courses, the three phases can be interchanged in order to meet the needs of the specific class, students, and subject.

In *Genre Analysis* (1990/2008), Swales describes a teaching model that is more loosely designed than the Sydney school's model. The target group differs as well: whereas the Sydney school is mostly concerned with primary school children, Swales describes the teaching of curriculum genres at the university, especially to students with English as a second language. The essential elements in Swales' pedagogy are language-learning tasks. His definition of a task reads as follows:

> I suggest that we might think of *task* as: One of a set of differentiated, sequenceable goal-directed activities drawing upon a range of cognitive and communicative procedures relatable to the acquisition of pre-genre

and genre skills appropriate to a foreseen or emerging sociorhetorical situation. (p. 76)

Beyond the language-learning task itself, there are three other "access routes" that a class instructor may use to create appropriate instructional activities. The most important is that students obtain knowledge about the discourse communities. This is done through ethnographical studies by observation, participation, interview, and questionnaire. The targeted discourse community is the community that course participants are trying to join (p. 68).

Swales gives four examples of language-learning tasks, and from these it is clear that he, like the Sydney school, links reception and production. In the first task, the students are supposed to analyze text examples of a genre; in the second, they are asked to rewrite two of the texts that they have examined. This constant movement between reception and production is a characteristic feature of all four exercises (pp. 80-81).

Amy Devitt, who is part of RGS, recommends—as does Bazerman—explicit teaching of genres. Like Freedman, Devitt (2009) is conscious of the fact that teaching decontextualizes genres by moving them from their authentic surroundings to a school situation. She regards this as a condition, but not as an insurmountable obstacle: "If we teach a genre explicitly, we will inevitably teach it incompletely, but students will understand more about it than they would have if we had taught them nothing about it at all." (p. 341).

Devitt's teaching model contains many of the same elements as Swales' and Martin's do. Her target group, like Swales', is university students; but whereas Swales is occupied with the teaching of curriculum genres, Devitt describes how she teaches genres in composition courses at university. One of her main aims is to give students insight into the rhetorical situation and the speech community. She teaches genre knowledge in three different ways: first, "genre as particles," which means treating genre

as separate entities, as subject, structure and form; second, "genre as waves," aiming to learn how to build on prior genres when learning new genres; third, "genre as fields or context," where the goal is to learn how to criticize and change genres (p. 345). In all three stages, reception and production are firmly linked (p. 349). To build critical awareness, it is important that students investigate the context of the genre:

> If we are to use genre theory effectively in our teaching, whether of literature or language, speaking or writing, it seems clear to me (…) that we must teach contextualized genres, situated within their contexts of culture, situation, and other genres. (Devitt, 2004, p. 191)

Devitt's goal is to prepare the students to meet new genres:

> Combined, these three elements help students to understand genres as created, dynamic, and ideological constructs. When they learn a new, antecedent genre, I hope they thereafter learn it with some consciousness of genres' rhetorical nature and of their potential for adapting to writers' particular purposes and situations. (Devitt, 2009, p. 348)

This genre-based teaching not only gives students knowledge of the genres taught in school; it also opens their eyes to all the genres they meet both in school contexts and in society at large.

Genre teaching makes it possible to combine macro- and micro-analyses of language, and to link analysis of language and analysis of context; it invites the students to join a wide spectrum of discourse communities; and it makes it possible to combine reception and production in class, to relate and compare genres with each other, and to assume a critical perspective of genres. Finally, putting genres in focus also makes it possible to combine oral and written genres (Gregersen, 1998).

I will now turn to the genre-based teaching practiced in Danish in the Danish high school (Stx). I will articulate and discuss the understanding of genre theory and pedagogy expressed in the official document regarding the three written examination genres. I will also draw on a study of how genre pedagogy is employed in four different classrooms.

THE THREE EXAMINATION GENRES

The three genres discussed in this article were introduced by the Ministry of Education in 2005, and have been employed as high school examination genres in Danish (Stx) since 2008. Instead of redefining the written part of the subject of Danish, the three new genres—*kronik*, literary article, and essay—serve as an explication of the ways in which students have traditionally been expected to write.

In my investigation, I include three different perspectives on the genres:

1) **The ministry's perspective:** official documents about the three examination genres—literary article, *kronik*, and essay—that have been issued by the Ministry of Education since 2005. The material consists of the departmental order, guidelines for teachers, other kinds of formal descriptions of the three genres produced for the teachers, a PowerPoint for educational purposes, a handout for students, examples of students' papers, and reports from external examiners.[9]

2) **The teachers' perspective:** observations from four different classes. I followed three of the four classes during the entire three years of up-

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[9] Ministry of Education (2010a). Ministry of Education (2010b). The first copy was issued in 2005. Herskind, 2006. Herskind, 2007. Mose, 2009a. The first draft was sent out in 2007. Mose, 2008b. Mose, Hansen, & Hansen, 2008. Mose & Eriksen, 2011. Mose, 2007. Mose, 2008a. Mose, 2009b. Mose, 2010. Mose, 2011.

per secondary school, and the fourth for the last two years. In addition to observing and collecting of teaching materials used in the Danish classes, I also interviewed the four teachers each year.

3) **The students' perspective:** collection of about 600 papers handed in by 42 students from the four observed classes. Apart from the papers, I also collected the teachers' comments on the papers, and conducted focus group interviews with the students each year.

In the following analysis I will draw on data from the first two data sources.

THE CONTEXT OF THE THREE EXAMINATION GENRES

The three examination genres are defined in relation to an imagined context. The Ministry of Education describes the same situation type for the three genres. It is defined by a sender and a recipient. The ideal sender is defined as "the professionally skilled and commonly oriented candidate," and the intended recipient is defined as "the literary and generally culturally interested reader." (Mose, 2009a; Mose & Eriksen, 2011, p. 4; 13).

The definition of the recipient in the official description strongly accentuates that neither the teacher nor the external examiner should be considered the addressee or audience; rather, the recipient is thought to be an outsider. In the assignment, the student must bring in textual material that is handed out as a part of the exercise, and the definition of the addressee makes it necessary for the students to represent this text material to the reader (Mose & Eriksen, 2011, pp. 5-6). The goal is to transform the purpose of writing from demonstrating academic knowledge and textual observations to the teacher and the external examiner, into a professional communication skill in a more authentic writing situation (Herskind, 2007, p. 14). However, the former ministry's consultant for high school Danish teaching modifies this view when, later on in the same article, he con-

cludes that students are not intended to enter into a fiction in which their paper makes an authentic contribution to a newspaper or journal (p. 16). This contrast with one of the more recent documents, in which the following passage can be found: "the student must imagine writing in "a publication channel of common interest." (Mose & Eriksen, 2011, p. 4; 13). The teacher guidelines express a similar view: "In the text production, language correctness, grammatical correctness, command of language, and communication skills to a wider audience are especially emphasized." (Ministry of Education, 2010b, p. 1).

    In addition to the uncertainty about where and to whom students should address their writing, the description of the situational and cultural context seems rather vague, as the individual contexts for each of the three genres are nowhere described. Nor is the social purpose of each genre mentioned either. My investigation of the second portion of my data has shown that, as a result of these gaps in the official material about the three genres, teachers do not discuss or problematize the context or purpose of the genres. They present the brief definition of the recipient from the official handout to the students without elaborating on how texts written in the three genres address themselves to an audience.

    The loose definitions of the receiver and of the publication for which students must imagine writing are connected to a general shortcoming in the documents: a failure to specify the kind of discourse community that students must write within and for when they produce texts in relation to the three genres. In some of the descriptions, the community at issue is "the subject of Danish." (By "the subject of Danish" I refer to Danish as the branch of scholarship from which the curriculum of Danish in high school borrows its authority.) In all three genres, for example, students must use relevant professional knowledge from the subject of Danish to a greater or lesser extent (Ministry of Education, 2010b, p. 27; Mose & Eriksen, 2011, pp. 15-20). As mentioned previously, the addressee is described as "the literary and generally culturally interested reader"—that is,

somebody who is familiar with the curriculum of Danish instruction. Meanwhile, as shown earlier, in other parts of the description the discourse community is a wider cultural community: students are supposed to write to "a wider public" and demonstrate "broad communication awareness." (Mose & Eriksen, 2011, p. 6).

The final way in which the three genres are situated in a context in the official documents is by linking the examination genres to three genres that are described as authentic genres in society (Herskind, 2007, p. 16; Mose, 2011, p. 5):

Examination genre:
Literary article

Examination genre:
kronik

Literary article

Kronik

Examination genre:
Essay

Essay
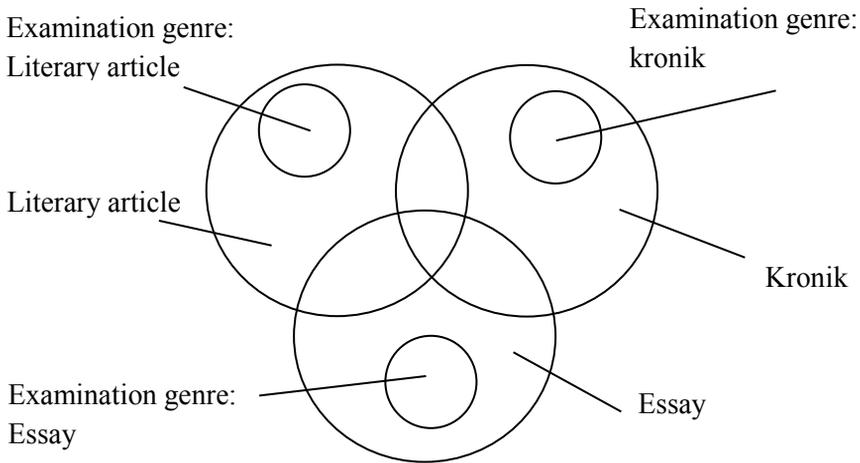
The three writing genres are defined as core representatives of the principal genres (Herskind, 2007, p. 16). The model visualizes that they are more well-defined than the three authentic genres and, unlike the latter, do not overlap. The point of this separation is to give the student an opportunity to establish a clear understanding of the differences between the

genres, and to make it easier for the teacher and the external examiner to evaluate the level of the genre comprehension in each paper (Mose & Eriksen, 2011, p. 4).

As with the definitions of the recipient, the publication context, and the discourse community, this account of the three authentic genres also blurs the communication situation of the three examination genres. The description does not specify whether or not the three examination genres belong to the three authentic genres and their communication types and discourse communities, or if they function as genres in totally different school settings.

In the first part of this article, I argued that the connection between genre and context—both situational and cultural—is central in the genre descriptions of RGS, ESP, and the Sydney School. In the Danish genre construction, the context of the three examination genres is only described vaguely, and in several places even ambiguously. This means that the teachers are not given a platform to build on in their classes, and the result is that not one of the four teachers I have observed in my investigation made context an explicit topic in teaching by giving the students tasks that concerns the relation between genre and context.

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE EXAMINATION GENRES

The three examination genres are further described by means of a number of "writing acts" in the material from the Ministry of Education. These writing acts are specific ways of writing that can be used in different cultural contexts. They are examples of what I call genre values. The following is a list of the various writing acts (Mose & Erikson, 2011)[10]:

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[10] The accentuated words are those that are used in the written exercise.

<u>Literary article</u>
Introduce
Analyze
Substantiate
Interpret
Put into perspective (genre or literary history)

<u>Kronik</u>
Introduce
Explain
Characterize
Discuss
Argue
Conclude

<u>Essay</u>
Introduce/open
Search
Investigate
Consider
Reflect on
Round off

As genre values, each of these writing acts are used in a number of genres. Analysis, for example, is used both in literary articles in high school and in other genres such as marketing analysis of the customer base or scientific articles. Instead of accentuating this, the ministry omits any further definition of what kinds of units writing acts are, thereby giving the impression that they should be interpreted as static.

As mentioned, Martin, Swales, and Devitt all recommend investigation of the relationships between both genres and genre values when working with a genre. In *Genre Relations* (2008), Martin and Rose describe the

mapping of several different genres/genre values, and give suggestions as to how genres and genre values can be linked and compared in teaching. In *Research Genres* (2004), Swales, as a representative of ESP, compares PhD dissertations, PhD defenses and other kinds of scholarly talks. They all seem to agree on Devitt's point about the didactic gains of comparing genres:

> In learning genre awareness, students inevitably also learn new genres. Those new genres can serve as antecedent genres for students as they move on to other contexts. The notion of genre antecedents provides a powerful new perspective on the issue of transferability and the value of composition courses. (Devitt, 2004, p. 202)

The description of the three writing examination genres in the subject of Danish in Danish high schools calls attention to these different ways of mapping genres. It does so in two ways—but none of them succeeds. The first has to do with the writing acts, the second with the connection between the three examination genres and the authentic genres. I will return to the latter in the next part of the article.

   The intention is that the teacher must introduce the different writing acts and build on them before the three examination genres are introduced after a year or more (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 21; Mose, 2008, p. 15. But the material from the Ministry of Education does not mention that there are relations between the writing acts—that there are similarities, for example, between "analysis" and "investigation," and between "reflection" and "discussion."[11] This has to do with the missing description of the writing acts as genre values with purposes, typical contexts, structure elements, and content.

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[11] Only the differences between discussion and reflection are pointed out (Mose, 2012).

These shortcomings in the official material are reflected in the four classes that I observed. The four teachers set out the writing acts explicitly, especially in relation to the literary article and the *kronik*. In relation to the *kronik*, all four classes worked with "argumentation." One class worked with the journalistic summary as related to "explanation," One class worked orally with "discussion"; one class read about "explanation" and "discussion." All four teachers explained in interviews that "analysis" and "interpretation" were what the students had done orally in class all three years. The two writing acts had therefore been discussed and used orally in an extensive manner. In addition to this, two of the teachers gave the students a self-written example of an analysis to illustrate the writing act further. All four classes read essays, but the writing acts of the genre were not made explicit during the analysis.

In line with the official documents, the teachers did not relate the writing acts to one another across the three examination genres through concrete examples. And just as there is no recognition of this in the official documents, the teachers did not treat the writing acts as recurrent entities in different genres, and as something that takes on the colour of these changing surroundings. Only once—by relating the journalistic summary and the explanation—did a teacher compare one of the writing acts of the three examination genres to a writing act or genre value of another genre.

THE RELATION BETWEEN RECEPTION AND PRODUCTION

According to the Ministry of Education, it is possible to connect reception with production by relating the examination genres to authentic genres. It is recommended that teachers read and analyze examples of the three authentic genres with the students when they teach the examination genres (Mose & Eriksen, 2011, p. 4). This firm link between reception and production is in line with the international genre schools and the pedagogical programs of Devitt, Swales, and Martin. But the extent to which the authentic genres resemble the examination genres must be discussed further.

First, the students' knowledge of the three authentic genres must be questioned. The introduction of the three authentic genres in the description of the three examination genres is perhaps clarifying for the teachers, but most students do not know these genres from outside school. The three genres are absent in the discourse communities that most students are part of; instead, these genres are best characterized as genres practiced by members of the academic community (Rienecker & Jørgensen, 2007, p. 17). Therefore, in order to be able to draw on the knowledge about the three authentic genres when learning the three examination genres, it is very important to teach these genres as particle, wave, and context.

Three of the four teachers whose classes I have studied explain that texts from the authentic genres differ too widely from the examination genres to serve as examples. For this reason, these teachers only rarely give the students examples of authentic genres. Two teachers read one essay with the class, and discussed the examination genre in connection with this; one read two, and another as many as seven. Only one read a couple of *kronikker*, while the other three did not read any. None read literary articles. There are no comparative studies of the six defined genres, but the fact that the contexts of the three authentic genres are essentially different from those of the three examination genres indicates that the three teachers have a very good point.

However that may be, it would be didactically advantageous to keep the three examination genres separate from the authentic genres by reading both kinds of genres. Not surprisingly, the three examination genres are described more fully than the authentic genres in the official documents. In addition to the characteristics already described, the Ministry of Education provides a comparative description of the three genres' individual focus, integration of academic knowledge from the subject of Danish, layout, and use of references (Mose & Eriksen, 2001). However, the Ministry of Education does not recommend that the teachers should read and analyze examples of the examination genres. In line with this, my investigation

shows that actual genre analysis of the examination genres is entirely absent in the four classes. The teachers gave very few and very fleeting examples from students' papers. One teacher once asked a student to read a paper aloud in class; another once illustrated an example on the board, and yet another teacher did so this twice. Altogether, the students did not get to see many examples of the three examination genres and the related authentic genres. To most of the teachers in my investigation, the connection between the reception of authentic genres and the production of examination genres that the Ministry of Education describes is not logical. They find the gap between, for example, authentic *kronikker* and examination *kronikker* so profound that it is difficult to gain any didactic advantage by comparing them and claiming a connection between them. In keeping with the recommendations of the Ministry of Education, the four teachers do not combine reception and production by analyzing examples of the three examination genres. This contrasts with the recommendations of the three international genre schools.

GENRE, CONTEXT, AND CRITICAL AWARENESS

Devitt's and Martin's goal to build critical awareness in the students is nowhere to be found in the Ministry of Education's description of the three written genres. None of the material mentions that genres embed ideologies, even though—as we have seen—this is a common assumption in international genre theory. This absence in the official documents must be understood in relation to the vague and ambiguous description of the connection between genres, contexts and discourse communities. As a result, the context in relation to the ideologies of the three genres was not discussed in any of the four classes in my investigation.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this article I have introduced and discussed three major international schools within the field of genre theory. All three schools feature interest-

ing discussions about pedagogy, and they have all developed rather detailed teaching programs for different groups of students. In the last part of this article, I have used this knowledge about how genre-based teaching in writing is understood internationally to analyze how genre-based teaching in writing is put into practice in the Danish high school in the subject of Danish.

The official papers collate school genres with genres outside school, which is a positive element from a genre-pedagogical point of view, just as the relation between genre values and examination genres is described. But, my investigation of the three examination genres has shown that the genre comprehension found in the various official documents does not place the three social genres in well-defined and well-described contexts and discourse communities. Furthermore, the formulation of the three examination genres does not engender a teaching practice that place genres in contexts or relates them to other genres. The resultant teaching does to some extent make the characteristics of writing acts explicit; but it has yet to combine the reception and production of genres.

To make up for these shortcomings, it is important to reformulate the three examination genres as social and cognitive writing genres of the subject of Danish. Such a pragmatic definition must foreground the action(s) performed in each of the examination genres—and also explain how these actions correspond with the ideologies of the subject. The focus on genre as action demands a thorough definition of the communicative purpose of each examination genre. This definition must be placed as the central element in the genre description of each of the examination genres. The definition of the communicative purpose will also elicit the necessary description of the relation between text and context by answering such questions as: "What kind of reaction does the writer aim at getting from the receiver?"; "What kind of knowledge does the writer expect that the reader possess?"; "Who are interested in this particular topic?" By accentuating that the examination genres are curriculum genres, this pragmatic genre de-

scription also underline that the examination genres correlate with, and must be understood in relation to, other written and oral genres used the subject of Danish (Stx)—and that all of these must be described explicitly. As curriculum genres, the examination genres can be further investigated by comparing them to other kinds of genres practiced outside school. Such comparative genre studies have a wide pedagogical potential, because they can lead students to discover that there are strong relations between text and context—relations among text, genre, communicative purpose, writer/reader positions, discourse communities, and ideologies.

Whether it is these three genres that should be sustained, or whether they should be replaced or supplemented, must first be discussed. Ellen Krogh (2007) suggests replacement of the essay with a genre where presentation of a subject matter is the core. This could be a journalistic genre (Krogh, 2007, p. 11). Rienecker and Jørgensen (2007) approach the three genres from another angle. They suggest that the examination genres of Danish in high school must be made relevant to the genres of academia. The three existing examination genres do not prepare students for writing at university. On the contrary, they have features such as weak structures, lack of meta-communication, and a literary language, contradicting genre expectations in the scientific and scholarly genres (p. 17).

If the three examination genres are maintained, I believe they must be seen as pure curriculum genres, and so as tightly linked to the norms that are prevalent in the subject of Danish. It is not only the context and the rhetorical purpose of the social examination genres that needs to be described; the context and the purpose of each of the genre values—the writing acts—must also be elaborated. This will make it possible to work with the genres as simultaneously particle, wave, and context, to deconstruct both genres and genre values, and to collect and reflect on explicit knowledge about the discourse community. As a starting point, the combination of reception and production may profitably be executed within one and the same genre. At the same time, teaching must incorporate and take

advantage of the practice of comparing different kinds of both genres and genre values.

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Frans Gregersen, b. 1949, Professor of Danish language, dr. phil., and Director of the Danish National Research Foundation's LANCHART Centre, University of Copenhagen 2005-2015. He has contributed to the study of sociolinguistic variation in Danish by editing volume 41 of the journal *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia* in 2009, including a presentation of the data and design of the LANCHART study, and is currently working on the history of Danish linguistics concentrating on the early periods of the 19th century, cf.: Gregersen 2013 (introduction to the new edition of Niels Ege's translation of Rasmus Rask's prize essay "On the Origin of the Old Norse or Icelandic Language 1814"), and Gregersen 2014 (on the first professor of Nordic N.M. Petersen (in Danish)).

Bo Jørgensen, b. 1966, MA, External Lecturer, the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics, University of Copenhagen. Selected publications: (2013) "Skyggens sprog—sprogets skygge. Om sprogbrugere og

sprogbrug i H.C. Andersens eventyr" (The Language of the Shadow—the Shadow of Language. On Language Users and the Use of Language in The Fairy Tales of H.C. Andersen), in: D. Duncker et al. (ed.) *Betydning og forståelse* (Meaning and Understanding), (2014) "At jonglere med sand. Dekonstruktion" (Juggling with Sand. Deconstruction) in: G. Larsen & R. Rasmussen (ed.) *Blink. Litterær analyse og metode* (Wink. Literary Analysis and Method).

Gorm Larsen, b. 1963, Ph.D, Associate Professor at Department of Communication, Aalborg University Copenhagen. He has for years studied and written on narratology and especially the act of narration in fiction in light of Bakhtin. Recently he has co-edited (2014) *Blink. Litterær analyse og metode* (Wink. Literary Analysis and Method). Currently he is doing research into shame and guilt in media and literature from a philosophical and social psychological point of view.

Palle Schantz Lauridsen, b. 1955, Ph.D., Associate Professor in Media Studies at the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics, University of Copenhagen. Selected publications: (2014) *Sherlock Holmes i Danmark* (Sherlock Holmes in Denmark), (2013) "Verdens største show: Farver, formater og forstæder" (The World's Greatest Show: Colour, Format, and Suburbia), in: A. Halskov et al. (ed.) *Guldfeber* (Gold fever), (2011) "Welcome to fucking Deadwood—fortælling, sprog og krop i verdens vildeste western" (Narrative, Language, and Body in the World's Wildest Western), in: A. Halskov et al. (ed.) *Fjernsyn for viderekomne* (Advanced Viewers' Television).

Anders Juhl Rasmussen, b. 1979, Postdoc, Ph.D., in Danish literature at the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics, University of Copenhagen. Selected publications: (2010) "Arenamodernisme. Udvidelser af romanens genrefelt" (Arena-modernism. Transformations of

the Novel), in: *Kritik 196* (Critique), (2012) Ph.D. thesis, *Arena-modernisme. En position i dansk litteratur* (Arena-modernism. A Position in Danish Literature), (2013) "Den produktive modsætning. Friedrich Nietzsche som opdrager for Peter Seeberg" (The Productive Contradiction. Friedrich Nietzsche as Educator of Peter Seeberg), in: *Edda 2*.

René Rasmussen, b. 1954, Associate Professor, Ph.D., in Danish literature at the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics, University of Copenhagen. Selected publications: (2000) *Bjelke lige i øjet—om Henrik Bjelkes forfatterskab* (Bjelke Bull's-eye—on the Authorship of Henrik Bjelke), (2004) *Litteratur og repræsentation* (Literature and Representation), (2004), *Kognition—en liberalistisk ideologi* (Cognition—A Liberalistic Ideology), (2007) *Moderne litteraturteori 1-2* (Modern Theory of Literature 1-2), (2009) *Lacan, sprog og seksualitet* (Lacan, Language and Sexuality), (2010) *Psykoanalyse—et videnskabsteoretisk perspektiv* (Psychoanalysis—An Epistemological Perspective), (2012) *Angst hos Lacan og Kierkegaard og i kognitiv terapi* (Anxiety in Lacan and Kierkegaard and in Cognitive Therapy).

Anne Smedegaard, b. 1977, MA in Danish and Philosophy, Ph.D. fellow at the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics University of Copenhagen. Selected publications: (2013) "Hvem sagde hvorfor? Skolegenrers situationelle og kognitive forankring" (Who Said Why? Situated and Cognitive Embedded School Genres), in: *Viden om læsning 13* (Knowledge on Reading). (In progress) "Student and Teacher Constructions of the 'Generic Contract' in Upper Secondary School Essays".

Christel Sunesen, b. 1981, BA in Rhetoric, MA in Danish at the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics, University of Copenhagen. Selected publications: (2008) "Fortalens retorik—fra Arrebo til Oehlen-

schläger" (The Rhetoric of the Preface—from Arrebo to Oehlenschlä-ger), in: *Danske Studier* (Danish Studies), (2014, editor) *OEHL #1—Antologi for ny dansk litteratur* (OEHL #1—Anthology of New Danish Literature), (2014) "Grundtvig og rimbrevet" (Grundtvig and the Verse Epistle) in: *Ved lejlighed. Grundtvig og genrerne* (co-editor with Sune Auken).

Erik Svendsen, b. 1954, Associate Professor at the Department of Culture and Identity, Roskilde University (RUC). Selected publications: (1996) *Kieslowskis kunst* (The Art of Kieslowski), (1998) *Det Nye. Sonderin-ger i dansk litterær modernisme* (The New. Exploring Danish Literary Modernism), (1999, editor) *Detaljen. Tekstanalysen og dens grænser* (The Detail. Textual Analysis and its Limits), (2000, editor) *Ud af det moderne. Den kritiske tanke anno 2000* (Beyond of the Modern. Critical Thinking Around the Year 2000), (2007) contribution to *Dansk Lit-teraturs Historie. 1960-2000* (Danish Literary History. 1960-2000), (2011, editor) *Litterære livliner. Kanon, klassiker, litteraturbrug* (Literary Lifelines. Canon, Classic, and the Use of Literature), (2015) *Kampe om virkeligheden. Tendenser i dansk prosa 1990-2010* (Fights on Reality. Tendencies in Danish Prose 1990-2010), (2015, co-editor) Radio-verdener (Radio Worlds).

Ib Ulbæk, b. 1955, Associate Professor, Ph.D., in Danish language at the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics, University of Copenhagen. Selected publications: (1989) Ph.D. thesis, *Evolution, sprog og kognition* (Evolution, Language, and Cognition), (2001) "Pipelines and Pipelining: a Theoretical Discussion of a Concept to Explain Coherence Between Paragraphs", in: L. Degand (ed.) *Multidisciplinary Approach-es to Discourse*, (2005) *Sproglig tekstanalyse: Introduktion til pragma-tisk tekstanalyse* (Linguistic Text Analysis: An Introduction to Pragmatic Text Analysis).

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