

Welcome to our TAL! Conference Special Issue. Taking place in October of 2021, the TAL! Conference was a cooperation between the National Center for English and Foreign Languages in Education (Foreign Language Center) in Norway, the Department of Pedagogy, Didactics and Educational Studies at Uppsala University in Sweden, and the National Center for Foreign Languages, NCFE, in Denmark. The conference focused on the teaching and learning of oral language, and the articles in this issue reflect that focus. As a result of the Nordic collaboration, the articles in this issue are written in Norwegian, Danish, Swedish and English. This editorial offers brief descriptions of the articles in English, but additional information in the Scandinavian languages about the perspectives and challenges for English and foreign language education in a Nordic setting can be found in the article by Anderson, Kjærgaard, Nybøle, and Hellqvist immediately following this introduction.

Eva Thue Vold's article, "Interaksjonsmønstre i språkklasserommet: Hvordan tilrettelegge for læring og bruk av målspråk?" ("Interaction patterns in the language classroom: How to facilitate the learning and use of the target language?") investigates the opportunities for oral language production presented to pupils enrolled in French and English classes in Norway. Examining data collected from English and French classes, Thue Vold discusses how different patterns of interaction are made available to the pupils in the respective language classrooms. These patterns of oral interaction can strongly impact the process of language acquisition. The study hopes to shed light on how these usage patterns and the follow-up given by in-service teachers can provide learning opportunities for pupils studying languages.

Anne Holmen's article "Mundtlighet og translanguaging" ("Orality and translanguaging") focuses on the impact multilingual approaches to language teaching have on learners' 'willingness to communicate' and thus on their ability to develop a productive spoken language. As a social-psychological concept, the 'willingness to communicate' combines communicative

behavior with an affective-cognitive dimension and other key aspects of learners' motivation. The multilingual approach to language teaching in Holmen's article is presented through the concept of translanguaging. The author argues that focusing on all the learners' language resources will reinforce their language confidence and contribute to their willingness to engage in oral communication and interaction.

“Oral skills and learner agency in the foreign language classroom” by Maria Håkansson Ramberg and Henrik Bøhn discusses the importance of self-regulated learning (SRL) and formative assessment (FA) in language education. Håkansson Ramberg and Bøhn argue that SRL and FA are important for the development of proficient oral skills in language education settings but remain understudied in a Nordic context. Specifically, the authors call for more empirical studies of SRL in Nordic language classrooms.

In Gudrun Erickson's article, “Bedömning och återkoppling – med fokus på muntlighet” (“Assessment and feedback – with a focus on orality”), the main focus is on the assessment of oral proficiency in a foreign language and the feedback provided based on that assessment. The author emphasizes the importance of systematic quality work, individually and collaboratively, on assessment, evaluation, and grading issues in language teaching and learning. The article presents a plethora of examples and concrete cases within formative and summative assessment, assessment of oral production and interaction, analytical and holistic assessment, and subjectivity and objectivity in assessment.

In their article, “Mundtlighed, CLIL og arrangerede sprog- og kulturmøder – to undervisningsforløb set fra motivationsforskningens perspektiv” (“Oral language, CLIL and arranged language and culture meetings – two teaching courses seen from the perspective of motivational research”), Petra Daryai-Hansen and Natalia Morollón Martí explore the question of motivation of language learners to communicate orally in French, Spanish and German. The authors investigate two approaches, namely Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and language and culture encounters and explain the potential and limitations of these approaches from a motivation research perspective. The basis for discussion is two teaching examples from two different pedagogical contexts; the first one focuses on CLIL and comes from primary school level, the second one focuses on language and culture encounters and comes from university level. Finally, Daryai-Hansen and Morollón Martí underline that both

approaches can potentially strengthen learners' oral proficiency as one of the central objectives in foreign language teaching.

“Teacher cognition in the foreign language classroom: A literature review from Norway and Sweden” by Xavier Llovet Vilà and Fredrika Nyström examines the published literature on Language Teacher Cognition (LTC) in Norway and Sweden. Their literature review found that a wide range of LTC topics are being studied in both countries, with multilingualism in Norway and assessment in Sweden being particularly well-researched, but a lack of collaborative studies between the two countries. In addition, Llovet Vilà and Nyström find that while LTC topics motivate a number of MA projects in the two countries, that research is rarely published.

In the Forum section, Mette Skovgaard Andersen and Hanne Wacher Kjærgaard, Steinar Nybøle, and Birgitta Hellqvist discuss English and foreign language education in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, suggesting areas for future research and educational collaboration. We hope that the articles contained in this issue inspire future joint projects in these countries.

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