

### Overview

This volume contains the papers presented at the first of a series of symposia about linguistic problems in Scandinavia, initiated and supported by the Secretariat for Nordic Cultural Cooperation under the Nordic Ministers' Council. The aims of the symposia are the exchange of views and experience between Nordic linguists and others working with language, and the planning of research on a common Nordic level.

The first symposium was held at Schæffergården near Copenhagen from the 2nd to the 6th October 1978. The theme of the symposium was "The Problem of Linguistic Correctness - the Norms", and the leader was Erik Hansen assisted by Peder Skyum-Nielsen.

The conference proceedings were arranged under the following headings:

- 1) Norms in general and linguistic norms.
- 2) Linguistic norms: linguistic levels, spoken and written language.
- 3) Institutions and authorities behind the linguistic norms.
- 4) The school.
- 5) Discussion and status of linguistic norms in Scandinavia.
- 6) Initiating of research.

The papers in this volume are presented in the same order as they appeared at the symposium.

(1) Klaus Gloy, especially invited from Germany, submits a norm theory from a philosophical point of view emphasizing the social implications of norms. Ulf Teleman's paper deals with the relation between linguistic norms and comprehensibility. He shows that adherence to the public norm is not necessarily a prerequisite for comprehensibility of texts, and draws some pedagogical conclusions from this observation. Peter Harms Larsen deals with the conflict between spoken and written language and suggests an interpretation based on Habermas' theory of the bourgeois public sphere. He shows how pupils are linguistically impeded by switching from private sphere to public sphere language.

(2) Erik Hansen discusses the linguistic and social nature of the official

language norm in Denmark, which must be distinguished from other kinds of linguistic norms. The official norm, the standard language, is only a subset of the norm taught in the schools. Eskil Hanssen deals with the problem of spoken, as opposed to written language and argues, on the basis of empirical material, that pragmatic norms should be more strongly emphasized in the teaching of language than the traditional formal norms.

(3) Jóhann Hannesson describes the language situation in Iceland as background to a discussion of the influence on language of popular radio programmes dealing with linguistic problems. Jørn Lund presents a study on the linguistic norms of the mass media, especially the Danish broadcasting service, and discusses the standardizing effect of the media. Mikael Reuter gives an account of the organization of the Nordic language committees and their influence on the languages in Scandinavia. Peder Skyum-Nielsen gives a survey of Danish institutions (such as schools, advertising, the press, broadcasting services, publishing firms) which can be supposed to influence the linguistic norm, and he suggests an effort to coordinate and intensify the linguistic education on different levels. Solveig Slinde deals with the very special kind of language normalization that is practised by speech therapists. The treatment of speech defects must be based on some norm-conception, but speech therapists generally do not seem to be aware of their own normalizing activity and the problems involved.

(4) Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen presents the thesis that it is first of all the spoken language that expresses the social experience of the pupils, and that standardization therefore hits them hard socially. At the end of her paper she draws some conclusions of pedagogical relevance from this view. Hans Jørgen Schiødt gives an outline of the development of linguistic norms in the Danish public school system during the last 20 years. He shows that the requirements concerning formal correctness have been relaxed, and that the mastering of a norm is now considered the result of a functional, non-formal teaching. Margareta Westman shows that in traditional writing courses certain text types are favoured, e.g. the argumentative, generalizing essay. Fulfilling the rules of the traditional genres often restricts the pupil's writing capacity. The teacher should

realize that there are other text types, obeying different rules, which would be less restraining for the pupils and thereby stimulate their writing ability.

(5) Geirr Wiggen makes a comparison between standards and standardization of the mother tongue in the Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian schools, and relates his observations to the situation elsewhere in Scandinavian society.

(6) The last chapter contains a survey of linguistic topics which the participants of the symposium considered to be relevant and important as subjects of future Scandinavian research into the problem of language norms.