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Borders of Discourse?

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Processes of collaboration are shaped by and shape the use of language. This is widely recognized scientifically as well as practically. Linguistic processes have also been given a lot of attention in studies named after this focus: Discourse analysis – recently often on poststructural terms emphasizing a focus on power structures. However the theoretical foundation for poststructural approaches includes the inheritance of a structuralist division between language structures and language use, even reaching beyond a classical Saussurian understanding of 'langue' and towards structures of meaning as boundaries for the perceived world. This becomes problematic when exploring development in everyday language use where subjects take part in coordinating and relating to projects, tasks and shared surroundings on grounds of experiences and perceptions based on more than language, but by using language. This article aims to discuss a fundamentally different approach to discourse analysis by using a pragmatic point of departure for understanding use of language. Using an empirical example from a construction project it is discussed how material as well as societal dimensions of collaboration functions as borders for transformations of discourse – and these dimensions are most often intertwined. This sets language as part of acting in the world together with others. The implication for the practice of discourse analysis concerned with everyday language use becomes a shift in focus from researching cores of dominating discourse to instead searching for and at the outlinings of concrete use of discourse which by being peripheral are also locus of potential development.

PERSPECTIVES, PRIORITIES AND PERCEPTIONS IN A SHARED PROJECT

In many fields and branches of labour more and more work is structured around shared projects; shared in the sense that the success or at least end of the project is dependent on the participation of others in some way. It is however central to understand shared projects as more than the common dependency on different people doing specific tasks that are connected – which then covers all work I can think of, and here I want to point to a more specific trait: In a shared project the participants all have specific interest not only in the fulfilment of a goal, but also in *how* this goal is fulfilled. This means that coordinating and negotiating perspectives and priorities of the different participants is a primary part of the collaborative work – if not the most central part to successfully end the project. This process enhances the need for development in each participant's perception of the project as the process of collaboration in the project unfolds. There is a pivotal interplay between contributing with a professional perspective and certain concrete priorities based on knowledge of the trade and also taking part in changing one's own understanding of the tasks of the project to move forward in the collaboration together with the other professionals. Typically this coordinative work is carried out by using language.

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THE NOTION OF DEVELOPMENT IN DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON POSTSTRUCTURAL TERMS

Investigating language as the issue of concern when shedding light on social structures and social life has been an almost dominating perspective in what could be labelled *the poststructural wave* where different approaches to discourse analysis has been especially prominent. The term of discourse is therefore now often connected with theoretical implications of poststructuralism. However this can be an unfruitful perspective when reaching to grasp the fundamental function of language as part of carrying out shared projects which entails development and hereby transformations in use of language.

The notion of change within poststructural views has been challenged by Harder (2007) in an attempt to clarify a pragmatic understanding of discourse. He criticizes the loosening of language structures from praxis in the world for resulting in change possible only as "(...) jumps between competing structures" (ibid., p.182) and describes how this is a problem inherited from the structuralistic set boundary between *langue* and the world, where the option of mediation between the discourse and the surroundings – material as well as social – is simply not there: "There is nothing 'behind' a discourse which can be used to problematize the discourse and thereby make a shared point of departure when the interlocutors shall try to reach a shared understanding." (ibid., p. 185). The difference to structuralism is however that the structure of langue is made plural into several structures. This is also a key point for Jørgensen & Philips in their overview of discourse analysis (1999). Even though there are differences and nuances in how a poststructural analysis of discourse is carried out and theoretically based there are also some very distinctive similarities and according to Jørgensen & Philips (ibid., p.21) these similarities can be summed up in four central points:

- Language does not reflect an already existing reality.
- Language is structured in patterns or discourses – there is not one general system of meaning as in the tradition of Saussure, but a number of systems, where meanings change from discourse to discourse.
- These discursive patterns are maintained and changed in discursive practices.
- The maintenance and change shall therefore be sought in those concrete contexts, where language is played out.

The difference from traditional structuralism is thus highlighted by being set as one of the four main characteristics of poststructural discourse analysis, but it is important to understand that the fundamental view of language is still structuralistic in the sense that signs get or obtain meaning in their relation to other signs (ibid, p.19). The difference is instead the notion of plural structures. This entails that change only occur, as stated in point three, when discourses 'meet' other discourses, and this is part of a shared foundation in constructionism. Introducing the field of discourse analysis Jørgensen & Philips also present nuances between poststructural approaches especially that they are more or less radical in how the relation between the world and language is understood, and they present it as a continuum ranging

from those who view discourse as fully constitutive – using Discourse Analysis of Laclau & Mouffe as example – to less radical and more dialectic approaches naming Fairclough as example (ibid., p.29)¹. The dialectics in Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (1992) is embedded in his *three-step-model*, where social practice is viewed as encompassing discursive practice in which actualized text is unfolded. However it can be difficult to comprehend how this domain of social practice is to be handled and included in the analytical practice when working with Fairclough's approach (Jørgensen & Philips, 1999, p.101)

Briefly the nuances of poststructural approaches presented here can be seen as a debate of an ontological or an epistemological constructionism; of whether the world is fully constituted by the way it is spoken of – setting language as sole foundation of any perception of the world – or whether the foundation is that only with language can we gain any access to the world, arguing that perception and language is so deeply intertwined that any understanding of the world is discursive. The latter being the less radical approach, since a world existing outside language is included but only reachable through discourse. The arbitrariness of language to the world remains as characteristic of the different poststructural approaches, but since the notion of change is embedded in shifts between different structures of discourse it can seem a greater gap to the surrounding world actually appears than in classic structuralism. As Klempe (2013) discuss the Saussurian system of language was based on an understanding of social convention and not essentialism and therefore "(...) the meaning of a word then, is not fixed and given once and for all. The meaning is developed through conversations in terms of specifying something." (p.5). Hereby the notion of change or development in Saussurian structuralism is related to more than jumps between or clashes of discursive practices, but related to situations where 'some-thing' is unfolding. Even though a structuralist view of language is evident in poststructural approaches, the focus is on limitations of perceptions rather than on the potentiality of meaning in linguistic structures (ibid., p. 8).

To sum up poststructural discourse analysis is problematic when exploring everyday language use due to consequences of maintaining a structural view on language even if it is made into plural *structures*. The plurality in some ways furthers the distance between language and meaningful situations where subjects use language to make sense of things. The possibility for change or development becomes something that can happen in the meeting of discourses, which overlooks or at least underemphasizes the notion of the language users developing in and across praxis also changing themselves in relation to tasks undertaken.

USING AND TRANSFORMING DISCOURSE – A PRAGMATIC VIEWPOINT

Taking use of language as point of departure is central in the tradition of pragmatics, which was developed as part of a critique of formal logic (Henriksen, 2007, p.8; Yule, 1996, p.6). It has its foundation in speech act theory introduced by Austin (1962), whom realized that language is used for more than making representative statements about the world, but also to

¹ The continuum also encompasses approaches viewing discourses as constituted, but only mentioned in brackets, probably due to their focus on poststructural approaches. A focus I therefore follow when presenting their work here.

act in the world. To begin with Austin distinguished between *constatives* and *performatives*, however in later lectures decided to view also representative statements as actions done with language and left this separation (ibid., p.138). This shift is central to the theoretical discussion of maintaining language as part of human praxis, it is elaborated by Grice (1975) formulating the *cooperative principle* to emphasize that not only do we act by using language; we act together with others – we take others into account when using language and arguably develop our use of language in relation to the ongoing impact of others. It is an approach to language with focus on usage by subjects acting together.

Within this line of thought Harder (2007) takes steps to formulate a functional pragmatic approach to discourse analysis. His reason for this is the focus that poststructural discourse analysis has had as a way to research societal dimensions of language (ibid., p. 179) – he stresses that important light has been shed on dynamics of enforcing power by using language and hereby setting stepping stones for problematizing specific power structures, but also deeply critiques the loosening of discourse from acting subjects in an everyday life in the fundamental view of language: "(...) if you try to set a primordial scene where it is language that speaks through the subject as opposed to the subject that speaks language, then you have put the cart before the horse." (ibid., p.186). Harder argues that the term **discourse** should not be patented by poststructural approaches and therefore cautiously draws up four dimensions to explore when unfolding any discourse analysis – highlighting that it is not a set definition, but a meant as a recognizable configuration (ibid., p. 183):

- A linguistically defined way of speaking about reality (speech style, jargon) including a characteristic vocabulary
- which belongs to a certain set of mutual related concepts (conceptualization)
- as manifested in a certain worldview (ideology)
- and sequences of concrete utterances

It is important to remember that the dimensions summed up here are analytical, and the purpose of the article wherein they are presented is to discuss problems that can arise in the analytical work due to the fundamental theoretical understandings of language on which the analysis of discourse is based. As part of discussing the structuralist distance between language and language users and hereby the world they inhabit, he instead argues to view language as part of a "*functional circuit*", where utterances – use of language – are part of processes involving change in the sense that social as well as material surroundings impact or can problematize the conceptualization or worldview expressed (ibid., p.186). It is clear that the notion of ideology mentioned next to the dimension of worldview especially encompasses the focus on power structures in most poststructural approaches. Therefore I will place attention to the dimension of conceptualization, to explore how this – not only theoretically, but also in the analytical practice – changes the possibility to shed light on development and transformations in a concrete shared everyday project. I will of course not abandon the notion of worldview, but return to discuss connections between conceptualization and worldview and how these connections often point directly to the matter at hand in the current process.

The notion of *conceptualization* already in the term itself entails the acting of subjects due to it being a verbal noun – that is it entails the process of someone *conceptualizing*. The notion is explained further by Harder (2010, p.16) pointing to its roots in cognitive linguistics, where it

traditionally referred to all subjective experience, but clarifying that in his perspective the notion requires a representational content – that is a *representational mental content*. To handle the division caused by a cognitive understanding of mental content and social content he has established what he calls a crucial differentiation between *competency concepts* as individual and *niche concepts* as socially conventionalized ways of categorizing (ibid., p. 12). Both are developed by using the structure of language, which is seen as constituted of *affordances* – a term Harder gets from Gibson to “(...) cover factors that are available in the environment for individuals to use (or not use)” (ibid., p.10). In this way language is viewed as a factor of the environment together with other factors as part of the previously mentioned functional circuit. Still some problems remain I would argue in combining the cognitive perspective, however social it might be, with the ecological approach developed as a critique of the dualism of cognitivism by Gibson (1986 – see also Costall, 1995). But for now the pivotal aspects of the functional pragmatic view on language and hereby discourse as presented here is those fundamental of action and of cooperation in a world that also can impact the linguistic process. To understand how language is a coordinative part of the development of shared and changed perspectives and perceptions takes place in the project of collaboration this approach will be the departure.

RESEARCHING A CONSTRUCTION PROCESS IN A SMALL PARISH

In a small countryside village on Sealand a building project was put in competition in 2008. All public building projects by law has to undergo the process of competition; the aim is to retrieve an optimal plan for the final construction. Optimizing in this regard relates to aspects such as aesthetics, functionality and economy etc. Concretely it is a primary part of the initial process to determine which aspects are central to define the project as optimized – this becomes the ground for choosing to assign a company to design and lead the building project. After choosing a proposal and hereby a company, the process of defining and refining the project continues as a negotiation between the builder and the professionals of the company. The building project to be discussed here is the construction of a new parish community center in the small countryside village. Near the old church in the middle of the town there was an existing parish center, which had previously also been the village school. But it had to be torn down for several more and more pressing reasons. Therefore the parish council had worked through a long process of being granted money from the deanery to finance the construction of a new house for the community. It was clear during an interview with the chairman of the parish council, that this grant also made them very aware of the constraints it would put on other surrounding parishes, since money was distributed on a principle of solidarity – meaning that no one else would be able to apply for financing for a while. Because of the history of the existing building, the hardships of the process of being granted the financial opportunity to replace it and also the expected function and meaning of the new building, the process of deciding and negotiating the details of the construction of the new parish community center was a very special and esteemed project for the parish council. They had been working with the idea and all its practicalities for nine years.

I was able to follow the collaboration and negotiations on the project of the new parish community center for a period of eight months while working as research assistant and writing my master thesis (2011)². This was part of the research project: *Building and design as social praxis* lead by prof. Axel (2008). I had access to all initial documents of the building project and gathered more during my participation. Also I carried out participatory observations of the regular meetings between the builder and the professional participants, and did three qualitative conversational interviews: One with the chairman of the parish council, one with the lead architect and one with the builder advisor, who was hired by the parish council to consult them and take part in representing them in negotiations during the project. The exploration here will be focused on the analysis of two specific and important documents for the first decisions in the project; however insights about the project from observations and interviews are included when relevant for contextualization.

The examples from the empirical documents are translated for the purpose of this article and the original text can be found in endnotes. The name of the village is fictional for anonymity.

MARKING UP THE GROUND: A TEXTUAL SITUATION

The formal beginning of the competition of the construction is the release of a text: The competition program. In this case it was authored by the parish council with assistance from Arkitektforeningen (union of architects), who have taken part in releasing more than 1500 competitions (source: www.arkitektforeningen.dk). The document of the program for the parish community center was announced on the union's homepage. The amount of similar events makes it reasonable to consider 'Programs for Architectural Competitions' a genre. This consideration here mainly serves to be aware of certain standards being used in the production and consumption or perception of the specific document. I use the term of standards to sum up Bazermans (1994) discussion of genre as "*typified actions*" (p.79) in the sense of being maintained social structures that both encompass and enable separate instances of mediating meaning. In this case the genre allows for the parish council to express specific needs and standpoints in their project in a manner organized and delimited by the experience and institutionalized formal and informal arrangements of the union.

To start the analysis where the program starts, the title of the document is: *New parish community center by Kjærby churchⁱ* – with the subtitle: *Competition programⁱⁱ*, this last part clearly marking the genre mentioned above. The title of the document is important, it is characteristic for this genre that the title literally points out a place in the world by naming the site of construction having the function of evoking any experience or knowledge that are or could be relevant for understanding the main body of the text. Following the arrangements of the genre the specificity of mentioning of the village church places the building on the map for the reader and hereby brings up any knowledge of this area – be it either of the landscape or its cultural and ethnographic relations and explicating the church building provides an

² The analysis draws on parts of the analytical work presented in my thesis, but the aim of this article differs and the theoretical discussion presented is part of current ongoing research of the framework for my dissertation.

immediate reference for understanding the social and societal function of the coming parish center. The focus of the headline is the introductory adjective *new*, which presupposes either the existence of an old parish community center or at least a change of the site. I have already revealed that an old school building was torn down to clear the site, but this adjective is a marker hinting at a temporal conceptualization mediated by the sender.

The temporal outlining is the sender's way of mediating their perspective on of the building to be constructed, this is the way they see and understand it. It is an arrangement that is construed further throughout the text whereby it becomes a factor of coherence in the overall conceptualization – or functional discourse – of the construction that the architects are to compete about building. After the headline an invitation to take part in the competition follows. Then already in the first paragraph of the following main body of text an elaboration on the concrete meaning of *new* in this particular text is laid out:

*The parish community center (...) is considered outdated. Moreover the building by its location and size deprives visibility to and from the church and is therefore desired demolished.*ⁱⁱⁱ

The new parish community center is to replace an existing one and it is made clear by the builder that demolishing the existing building is actually part of the overall project. Two different reasons are given for the desired action and both are part of developing the conceptualization of temporality, but in different ways: In the introductory invitation to the architects from the parish council it was presented that their intent was to create a *contemporary building*^{iv} for the village. The concepts of *contemporary* and *outdated* are values used by the parish council to convey their perception of relevance in replacing the old school building with the new community center. It enhances the temporal outlining of their perspective and adds facets to the mediated conceptualization. The other reason presented for demolishing the old parish community center is its deprivation of visibility to and from the church. This too is elaborated through oppositional values in a later chapter:

"Kjærby church, the oldest building in the parish, was erected in approximately 1150. This was the time of bishop Absalon. A hill in the southern part of Kjærby parish and in the northwestern outskirts of the village was chosen as the most suitable site of construction for the peoples' church. At this place it could be seen from the streets and alleys of the village as well as from the open fields and the neighboring villages (...)."^v

The development of the small village has implied changes to the original idea of a church as a building to be seen. The opposition here is sociohistorical, where the reason of 'outdatedness' mediated the agreed perspective of value by the parish council. Most churches in the countryside are placed on high sites in the landscape to be seen from afar and traditionally also to create an experience of greatness; separating the church from worldly life in a distinct material manner. The existing parish community center, the old school, is blocking the preservation of this tradition. The opposition of traditional visibility and the developed blockades of housing therefore relate the temporal outlining of the new building to spatial and material borders of the site deeply entangled with sociohistorical development. The border of

the site is not separating the inhabitants of the village from the church, rather it implies the connectivity of the traditions of the place of the church embedded in parish, but it is also constraining the current surrounding buildings. In this sense the site is 'borderland' in all its ambiguity and contradictoriness as it is described by Marsico *et.al.* (2013, p.53) and this holds potentiality and resource for the development of direction of use of discourse in the project. A few other important markers in this last example from the chapter about the church – which is remarkable long compared to all other chapters – has to be mentioned in relation to these sociohistorical points. Since the density of discourse references from what arguably is an ecclesial worldview – an ideological aspect of the functional discourse – is especially prominent here. The mentioning of bishop Absalon and the terming of the church as *the peoples' church* presupposes specific cultural knowledge. However it would likely be a challenge to find someone in Denmark who does not know anything at all about bishop Absalon (especially after a recurrent Christmas show was named after him in 2006). Absalon grew up as stepbrother to Valdemar the Great, and became his advisor when Valdemar was made sole King. Even more important for the notability of Absalon is probably his castle, since the ruins still lie beneath the Danish Parliament, and he is often said to be the founder of the capital of Copenhagen (even though this is disputed and debated among historians). The term *the peoples' church*^{vi} is a reference to Grundtvig; a renowned and esteemed figure in national history still cited by politicians and his texts still taking much space in the Danish book of psalms. The movement of grundtvigianism advocated religious freedom and freedom of interpretation for the people by the motto: Human first, Christian then – which at the time was a radical break with the traditions of the previous state church. This brief elaboration of these two discourse referents serves also to present how the conceptualization of the change in the little village – the new building – is in a subtle way is being bound to a much more grand history of the entire country. This is part of the outlining of temporality, which is crucial for the functional discourse – the perspective of the parish council to be negotiated. There are no specific reasons or needs presented as ground for why these references are relevant, however perceiving and relating to the information requires a background knowledge that sender obviously expect the reader to have. It is a way for the parish council to share their perception of this specific church in Kjærby as important and not 'just any village church' in a way that connects the ecclesial worldview with their current conceptualization of the new building by also stressing the material embeddedness – this is highlighted again later in the same chapter:

“Already from the beginning of the thirteenth century the church got – as one of the first village churches – a tower. It was built of chalk from the cliff of Stevns with an ornamental braiding of medieval bricks. This tower is still preserved up until the current sound holes. In the sixteenth century the tower was increased up until the current 19 meter.^{vii}”

Quite clearly the parish council considers this church to have significance not only due to its socio-historical relations, but also motivated by its place in architectural history. In the same manner as when referencing historical figures, details of the construction of the church is mentioned without further elaboration; details that require the reader to have some extended

knowledge of the technical terms of ecclesial buildings. It is worth remembering that the union of architects took part in advising on and editing the text of the program and they took part in estimating this as understandable by professional architects. Still it is also a vivid example of how the ecclesial worldview by discourse referents is being intertwined with the temporal outlining of the site mediated as the perspective to comprehend and further work with when construing the new building. The conceptualization becomes bordered by the site literally and in the sense of almost every material object and detail of it being valued in relation to a historical development of the area, the village, the parish or the church.

As well as cooperating on mediating needs, wishes and visions for the new parish community center the parish council and the union of architects mediate an understanding of themselves as well as the reader as part of choosing which information is required to later receive promising proposals for further collaboration. In the analysis of the program I have pointed to an ecclesial discourse, which could be argued to dominate the perspective presented in the program because of its impact on the structure of presuppositions and especially in the way the significance of this church is given prevalence in the sense that it has to be accepted to collaboratively comprehend the text. This is also part of the perspective of the parish council. However I will claim that this view, even though it is at the core of the text presented, is only an aspect of a more prominent conceptualization occurring in the textual situation of communication – the textual situation is a term I use to maintain focus on the act of relating to the text either of the sender or the reader. The historical details of architecture and of social development of the use of the landscape are part of a temporal outlining of the coming building being set from the very beginning of the text. This the parish council's mediated perception and priorities of the project being presented for further collaboration and this conceptualization functions as a broader coherence in the text than the ecclesial worldview, which it encompasses. The conceptualization is related to their current experience and their acting upon it and it is connected to the materiality of the site bordering the shared task. They are not enforcing their perspective, but rather sharing their perception and knowledge of the place in an manner connected to their understanding and expectancies of the collaborative process that will unfold – expectancies consisting primarily of visions of the new building as a continuation of the development of the historical place, but also of a process of coordination and negotiation of the requests and requirements that are part of the program.

COLLABORATION ON DEVELOPING DISCOURSE: A CROSSTEXTUAL CONCEPTUALIZING

To participate in the competition the architects also have to produce a document; one presenting their proposal. This is before presenting any finalized architectural drawings. In the winning proposal a few ground plans are included together with graphics made to imitate photos that eventually could be taken around the proposed building. The title of the proposal is '*Kjærby Parish community center*'^{viii} with the subtitle '*The key to the community*'^{ix}. The title signals that the document is a reply to the program of competition. In a simple manner labeling the whole text after the new building functions to set it as a possible reference in the rest of document without continuing the distinction of new; even though the building is still imaginative it is by the architects from the beginning handled as existing so that in the textual

situation it can from now on be presupposed. The subtitle is less simple. The community mentioned could be that of the parish or that of the village – it is left open for interpretation whether it points to worldly or ecclesial life even though the determined form of *'the'* points to a presupposed shared knowledge of which community it concerns. But either way it makes it clear that the building is to function as a connection between these domains; a connection that is key. The ambiguity could be viewed as the architects' preliminary comprehension of the contradictoriness of this specific site. But since they are not representing the church nor the village, but competing for the opportunity to take part in changing and developing the area in a way that encompasses their perspective as well they simply further the perception of the place as borderland in a manner adding specific but still vague value. This is part of the potentiality of the sociomaterial meaning of the site.

Connecting the village and the church in a way that enhances the more traditional visibility of the church was as shown a priority for the parish council and following this priority the very first paragraph in the proposal concerns the placement of the new parish community center. It is another than the existing one as desired by the parish council and the new placement is reasoned for with arguments of closeness to the church as well as connecting it to the village in a way that preserves specific green areas and a path leading children to school. This way the architects bring also the areas surrounding the church into presence from the beginning of the text in a manner that allows them to mention other current uses of the hill in the social life in the village. They respond to the priority of maintaining the site as bordering traditional values but take care not to make the worldly and ecclesial transition an opposite to other parts of village life – social as well as institutional. They do this by relating their perception of the area to the historical temporal outlining presented by the parish council:

“The church is placed high due to an original desire of visibility. The wall of the cemetery and the prominent gate of entrance is a strong and visible element in the area. Big trees set a powerful contrast to the white church wall.”

There is an echo of the program in the way that the visibility is described. It is not word for word, but paraphrastic and this is a trait that is ongoing throughout the descriptions of the area, the site and the building in the proposal. Taking up not specific formulations, but instead reformulating as a way to act on the understanding of the parish council's perspective that the architects developed from reading the text can be viewed as a signal of learning through engagement (Hermansen, 2011). By engaging in the text mediating the parish council's conceptualization of the place, they develop the grounds for the collaboration in and on their own text in a way where the architectural perspective is given prominence. The architects unfold this by prioritizing a relation to the temporality of the conceptualization that they are replying to the spatial markers that were briefly mentioned in the program concerning the placement and materials of the church and then continuing this beyond the matters mentioned by the parish council. By mentioning the detail of the gate, but also by bringing in the contrast of surrounding trees to the wall – a contrast consisting both of colour, but also a contrast of culture and nature, the architects make the space the point of relevance. Their perspective is mediated by a spatial outlining characteristic for their perception of the place

and also for their conceptualization of the new parish community center done in a manner that constantly reminds and develop of the councils temporal outlining of the site:

"The brickfacades will be chalked inside as outside to tell of classical constructions, which have solidity and long validity. Openings in the facades are partly holes in the walls in varied sizes and partly connecting bigger openings. The little openings convey a poetic pattern of light into the rooms.^{xi}"

The notion of *classical* – alike the notion of *original* in the program – encompasses but slightly transforms the historical perspective on the building that the architects are intending to develop. They even comment this explicitly but by revolving it around the materials as central; they point to buildings or constructions in this sense part of history show *solidity* and *validity*. Since it is rather odd for a building to be valid, this must be understood as a signal of their acceptance of the long time importance of the church, which the analysis of the program showed to be necessary for cooperatively comprehending the text. This is however set as secondary to the prevalence of the place and its relevant materials using the term of *solidity* to connect their perception as a transformative continuation of the parish council. The making of holes in the walls can be understood as a direct reference to the sound holes in the church tower to be manifested materially mimicking the transference of the sound made by the chimes but instead transferring 'light as poetry' as the architects conceptualize it.

When understanding how the spatial outlining is construed as a development of the temporal perspective of the parish council but also as a separate conceptualization connected with a different worldview it is important to take note of the agency being distributed to the materials and the site itself by using semantic roles in the proposal:

"The vineyard is carved in the body of the building (...) The yard connects and mediates the transition from the church square to the foyer. The vineyard creates a space as a step to assist the one who arrives to resonate with the place. There is calmness in the vineyard.^{xii}"

In the previous example it was the wall *telling*, and in this example it is the vineyard that *mediates* and *creates* – this perception functions and is given prominence by metaphorically presenting the building as a living acting organism. It is referenced as *body* both here and for example in the technical facts when the measurement of square meters is briefly mentioned as the *footprint* of the building. The embodied building is part of what could be termed an architectural worldview – or ideology. It as an aspect of the discourse focused on materials used to spatially conceptualize the vision of the parish community center as already a part of the living village taking part in the development on site and materially even referencing the church, whereby it is a continuance – or resonance in their words – of the history of the place.

DEVELOPING PERSPECTIVES ON A SHARED PROJECT: PERCIEVING THE MATTER AT HAND

These documents presented in the analysis to discuss their connection are only the very beginning of a long process of collaborating on the new building. But they therefore also have

the primary function of being where the cooperation begins; they are actions that commit the participants of the project to each other and to certain coming actions on the ground. By committing the participants to each other they also function as signals of the expected engagement and knowledge by presuppositions – with Yules words the texts are an “*expression of relative distance*” (1996, p.3). When the parish council publish their program it is a declaration opening the competition, which commits them to evaluate and take part in optimizing and developing the proposals they receive and to work together with the authors of the proposal they choose, and it is made clear that by submitting a proposal the architects commit their company to be able to draw and construct the building within the given budget. The actions of the documents have and are entangled with many different economic, public and judicial premises and effects. This is why Bazerman (1994) argues that standards of the genre should be considered when comprehending specific acts, conceptualizations and perspectives within long and complex texts (p.89) – what I have called in textual situations. The documents are in this pragmatic line of thought not separate entities in the sense that they are realizations or effectuations of developed and developing praxis.

Focusing on the cooperative aspects of the texts has not shadowed the fact that the two different documents are presented from two quite different views on the world and hereby on the shared project of constructing the building. I have summed up these two ‘ideologies’ in the analysis with the terms of ecclesial worldview and an architectural worldview. However since the discussion here concerns also the practice of analyzing discourse, it is necessary to elaborate on what I mean by this; it could be misunderstood as following a poststructural line of thought and pointing to perspectives dominating the view on the shared project. But what I have also aimed to present in the analysis is that these views are cooperatively shaped in relation to the matter at hand – the current project at a specific site that is the reason for and the connection between the actions of the participants. In the documents they are employing their respective perspectives and priorities of their worldview to conceptualize the building as the central thing in the actions that they are and will take further part in. What I see as central in the analysis of the documents to the discussion of discourse analysis is that the outlinings of the coming building – in a way the periphery or edge of the conceptualization is the functional discourse: It is encompassing the central activity and is the locus of change and transformation. The relation of the temporal outlining that becomes more and more embedded in the spatial outlining of the architects is pivotal in what is the groundwork for a common way of communicating about the project. This is the process of developing a shared perception of the project that the partaking participants can work with and further transform. To use the terms of Harder they take point of departure in the niche concepts they are familiar with where actions, responsibilities and connections to and in the world unfold on an everyday basis. But in the process of cooperating with the other participants their concepts of competency develop as they familiarize themselves with relevant aspects of the niche of the others. This development is part of the transformation of the project. Still the project entails the condition of ending and the participants will part. It is reasonable to claim that the niches of their daily life will have been impacted by the collaboration – and probably more for the parish council for whom this is an experience that occurs only once and they will have a new building to relate to, for the architects collaborating on shifting projects is their professional

employment. The development of competency is therefore arguable directed to ways: Towards to current project with all the acting participants engaged and towards the tasks and responsibilities that is part of the commission of their ongoing everyday practices. This is also part of why the development of a shared understanding is not random and the negotiation of the final conceptualization continues for a long time after the choosing of the proposal; the participants will be held accountable for the actions and priorities after going separate ways. The way they come to take part in each other's perception and hereby create the option to also impact the development of the other can as mentioned be viewed as a process of learning in the sense described by Lave & Wenger (1991) as the movement from peripheral participation towards more full participation. The point of bringing it in here is to further elaborate on how the development takes place when the participants in the building project are echoing the discourses of the other; that is the development of their own meaningful perspective as part of transforming it to engage and involve it in a shared project. In this sense it is a process reciprocity of sharing a professional perspective on the matter at hand and hereby taking part in developing the perception of other participants, but also changing and transforming one's own perception and hereby most likely some priorities. This process of development is a way of collaborating on transforming even ambiguous and contradictory relations of the project in perspectives of participants and also in the very materiality of the site. But viewing this as a process of reciprocal movement and transformation of perspectives diverges from the distinction of the individual competency concept and the social niche concept that Harder (2010) applies. Even though he introduces and use these analytical terms as interconnected, the problem remains as that of the competency concept – and following also his use of the term conceptualization is bound to mental representational content (p.12³). Here the documents undertaken for analysis mediate shared and agreed perceptions and are therefore not an expression of an individual – but still in discussing the fundamental approach to discourse analysis based on this empirical study it is worth considering applying instead insights from ecological and cultural psychology as already hinted at in the introduction and analysis. As also mentioned Harder does use the term of affordances stemming from the ecological approach of Gibson (1986) to place language as an available factor of the environment, but clearly do not apply all implications of this approach. Gibsons central concept of direct perception was developed in arguing against any sort of representationalism (Costall, 1995, p.468; 2013, p.86). The notion of mental is also problematic in this line of thought as Gibson was focused on the embodied activity and perception – as he according to Costall liked to put it: “The visual system has legs” (2004, p.75) or as Hodges states it: “Almost single-handedly, Gibson (...) changed perception into perceiving” (2014, p.94). Affordances are relational (Gibson, 1986, p.127; Costall 2013, p.85) and it is very interesting to take the view of language structure as affordance; it is however not the discussion that will be finished here, but the discussion following the analysis of conceptualizing the new parish community center on a specific site where the borders as affordances functions as potentiality of meaning as well as constraints for the developing perspectives.

³ See the footnote on same page for elaboration of the position on the division of external/internal Psychology & Society, 2015, Vol. 7 (2), 40 - 57

BORDERS OF THE PROJECT AS FRAMING THE USE OF LANGUAGE?

Different and even contradictory perspectives in the project stems not only directly from the participants involved; they grow out of the relations to the surroundings as well, both socially and materially. The parish council for example does not only make an effort to maintain a reminiscence of ideas of historical figures, they are also concerned with the present experience of the parishioners. As said the old parish community center had once functioned as the village school, and some of the inhabitants of the village remember this period. They are included in the process by being invited to public meetings by the parish council – because as the forewoman explained to me, they do not wish to act surprisingly to anyone and want to listen as well as explain their decisions (Hermansen, 2011). Matters from these debates are included in the collaboration with the architects, whom go to work every day in a company in the capital and have rather different current relations and references for understanding the demolishing and construction of a new community building. This is why recognizing the cooperative aspects of the negotiation on developing a common conceptualization are crucial to understand the transformation also when new contradictions arise by the changes on site. During the project of the parish community center this happened when part of the cemetery wall collapsed due to the digging on the building site. Samples had been done to test the density of the ground, but these samples are made with a few meters between them and a space with high amount of air had been missed. Spaces like this can evolve from old tree roots rotting in the ground. The wall of the cemetery was under subjugation to archeological conservation, since it was one of the older parts of the church and therefore of high cultural historical importance. Any changes to the wall were prohibited at the outset of the project. As the matter unfolded it did not require much time to come to a solution, the architect drew a suggestion by hand on the back of his notes during the meeting when it was discussed and related it to what they had already decided using the shared conceptualization – what they had worked on and planned for the place. The stone wall of the cemetery was now to be connected to the new white chalked walls of the new parish community center.

Changing the wall of the cemetery to connect to the new building did not require a big development of new plans; however it was an immense change of the borders of the project. The meaning of the place mediated in the collaboration by its socio-historical value was encompassed by the border of worldly and ecclesial life – materialized as an artificial or fiat boundary (Varzi, 2013, p.5; Marsico *et.al*, 2013, p.58) by the wall and gate of the church and cemetery. The placing of the church was also chosen because of the hill which could be argued to be a natural or bona fide boundary (Varzi, 2013, p.5) of the landscape affording this specific spot to be added value to by the parish. The site of the construction was on the edge of this hill, and therefore I have suggested in the analysis that the site is perceived as borderland in the sense of being at its clearest a space of transition. This is based on the landscape of the site, but also on the traditional conditions of a parish community centre: It is financed by the church, the parish council which the priest is part of – the other members are voted in by election – is responsible for maintenance and also use it as a daily place of work, but most commonly anyone living in the village or elsewhere in the parish also has a right to book and use the building for social or private purposes. It is a building that is both ecclesial and of the

worldly and therefore is also neither. That is the reason I suggest to understand the site and construction as borderland following since it is a “*zone of contact* while acting simultaneously as the *locus of division*” (Marsico *et.al.*, 2013, p. 54). To add to the complexity this entails that the borders of the construction site are the borders of a border? And in some way this is the case, however it is not the relevant question – but pondering it does entail interesting aspects of how this adds to the transformative and transitional value of the space. But the pressing question is: How does this ambiguous meaning of the site impact and afford certain directions of developing a shared conceptualization as part of a common discourse in the collaboration? The changes and transformations of the project described are handled also by the use of language. I write ‘also’ because for example the collapsed corner of the site was in all its practicality restored by the use of big excavators moving soil from other parts of the site to the very big hole. But the decisions on which soil to move where, and how to handle the challenge of the collapse in the stone wall had to be coordinated between the parish council, the builder advisor and the architect. Examples of these discussions would be part of furthering the exploration undertaken here. But the outlinings drawn up by the participants in the documents in the very beginning of the construction project can as shown be seen as coordinative – and hereby negotiable – edges of functional discourse and changing or transforming the use in the process of understanding each other and the possibilities of the place is part of the development on site. The ecclesial and architectural views are employed as part of elaborating, sharing and reasoning for the conceptualization developed – a conceptualization that is transformed to connect the temporal and spatial perspectives presented here as outlinings. It is a connection of values added by the different participants to a meaningful place. The process of adding value through distinction – as for example by distinguishing between outdated and contemporary – can be seen as a process of construing borders (Marsico *et.al.*, 2013, p. 52) and I have argued here that the distinctions chosen are afforded by the perceived meaning of the place both by the parish council and the architects.

SOME CONCLUSIVE REMARKS ON DISCOURSE BORDERS, CONCEPTS AND COORDINATION

The aim here has been to show problems that arise reaching to explain concrete development in discourses from a poststructural perspective and also present empirically how a pragmatic focus on conceptualizing leads to a different way of approaching the investigation of the intricate processes of changes and transformations in use of discourse when collaborating on a specific project. The pragmatic approach entails the incentive of cooperation in the fundamental understanding of language use. I have argued that this incentive in a concrete project is connected to the site of the shared task. Connecting this to a cultural and ecological understanding of incentives in the surroundings is fruitful for maintaining language as an aspect of collaboration and action. Introducing a focus on borders as relational, reciprocal and transitional provides grounds for discussing concrete material aspects in their connectedness with lingual construals. Exploring the theoretical connections has brought up questions that requires and deserves discussion. Concerning the analysis and discussion unfolded it has been evident that a focus on conceptualizing is bound together with reaching for an understanding

of the specific matter at hand – also for the researcher. This becomes central to the analysis of discourse, and is a concrete implication of viewing language as part of a *functional circuit*. This means researching use of discourse as part of specific situations and surroundings, which provide a fundamentally different ground for shedding light to use of discourse as cooperative and coordinative in social and material meaningful actions.

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ENDNOTES: TEXT EXAMPLES FROM EMPIRICAL STUDY IN ORIGINAL LANGUAGE

ⁱ [Nyt sognehus ved Kjærby Kirke]

ⁱⁱ [Konkurrenceprogram]

ⁱⁱⁱ [Sognehuset (...) anses for utidssvarende. Bygningen hindrer desuden ved sin placering og størrelse udsyn til og fra kirken og ønskes derfor nedrevet.]

^{iv} [tidssvarende byggeri]

^v [Kjærby kirke, sognets ældste bygning, blev opført omkring 1150. Det var på biskop Absalons tid. Man valgte en bakkekam i den sydlige del af Kjærby sogn og i landsbyens nordvestlige udkant som den bedst egnede byggeplads til folkets kirke. På dette sted kunne den ses fra landsbyens gader og stræder som ude fra de åbne marker og fra nabolandsbyerne (...)]

^{vi} [folkets kirke]

^{vii} [Allerede i begyndelsen af 1200tallet fik kirken – som en af de første landsbykirker – tårn. Det blev bygget af kridt fra Stevns Klint med et pyntebånd af munkesten. Dette tårn er stadig bevaret op til de nuværende glamhuller. I det 16. århundrede blev tårnet forhøjet op til de nuværende 19 meter.]

^{viii} [Kjærby Sognehus]

^{ix} [Nøglen til fællesskabet]

^x [Kirken ligger højt ud fra et oprindeligt ønske om synlighed. Kirkegårdsmuren og den markerede indgangsportal er et stærkt og synligt element i området. Store træer sætter en effektiv kontrast til den hvide kirkemur.]

^{xi} [Murfladerne kalkes indvendigt som udvendigt, så de fortæller om klassiske konstruktioner, der er solide og har lang gyldighed. Åbninger i facaderne er dels huller i mur i varieret størrelse og dels sammenhængende store åbninger. De små åbninger sender et poetisk mønster af lys ind i rummene.]

^{xii} [Vingården er en udskæring i bygningskroppen (...) Gården forbinder og formidler overgangen fra kirkepladsen og til foyeren. Vingården skaber et mellemrum som et trin, der hjælper den ankomne til at falde i takt med stedet. Der er ro i vingården.]

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