

The three climaxes of the year 2007 for the Danish National Research Foundation

LANCHART centre:

First climax

In the heat of June the LANCHART centre hosted the first international summer school of sociolinguistics at the University of Copenhagen. 22 Ph.D. students from four continents participated in the three day course taught by members of the LANCHART International Council Paul Kerswill, Dennis Preston, Lesley and Jim Milroy and the visiting lecturer at the centre Kathryn Campbell-Kibler as well as the centre's own Tore Kristiansen and Frans Gregersen. The spirit of enthusiasm and lively discussions, the hopefully lasting friendships between a new generation of talented researchers are among the anticipated long range results. The summer school was the final event in the second meeting with the centre's International Council. In contrast to the first meeting, the advice may be summarized as a succinct: 'Carry on your work. You've made some decisions which may of course be disputed, but the important thing is to follow through.'

Second climax

Taking this advice to heart, a group of 10 researchers from the centre went to the 4th International Congress for Language Variation in Europe to participate in two workshops on 'Style and Life-style' and 'Integration of levels in sociolinguistics'. The message that a robust and solid analysis of linguistic variation has to take into consideration how language attitudes and language use of the various variables: grammatical, discourse context and phonetic, co-vary, was well received. Old contacts were renewed and new contacts were forged so that the integration of the LANCHART thinking and results in European sociolinguistics was strengthened significantly during the sojourn in sunny Cyprus. A visit to the Turkish sector of the divided capital of Nicosia served to remind us of the violent past and tense present of this beautiful island.



Frans Gregersen in conversation with professor Maj-Britt Mosegaard, Manchester University during one of the coffee breaks at the ICHL in Montreal, from the photo-gallery at <http://www.ichl2007.uqam.ca/photos/index.html>

Third climax

One might very well discuss whether the participation of two of the centre's senior researchers Tore Kristiansen and Marie Maegaard in the prestigious American sociolinguistic meeting NWAV (New Ways of Analyzing Variation) in Philadelphia in October or the participation of a group of 8 LANCHART researchers in the 18th International Congress of Historical Linguistics in Montreal, 6th to 10th of August ought to rank as the third climax. Since the centre organized one of the most successful workshops at the ICHL, we pick this event, though not without mentioning the other one. The workshop on Language Change in Real Time had attracted 16 papers of which 11 were selected for presentation at the congress. Not least thanks to two excellent papers by professor Shana Poplack and her group from the University of Ottawa the workshop proved to be one of the most visited. The visit to Montreal renewed the contact with member of the International Council, the founding father of variationist sociolinguistics William Labov who attended three of the LANCHART papers.