In honour of Magnar Brekke

Before listing the key publications of Magnar Brekke, I would like to present some of his academic activities. For reasons of space only some snapshots of his long career will be given here. His career started in the early 1980s at the English Department, University of Bergen, before he came to the Norwegian School of Economic and Business Administration (NHH), Department of Languages (now Department of Professional and Intercultural Communication) in 1990. His research interests have always been focused on English linguistics in a broad sense and especially at the interface with modern language technology.

Magnar Brekke has headed several research projects funded by the The Research Council of Norway (NFF). At the end of the 1980s he was involved in establishing The **B**ergen **E**nglish for **S**cience and **T**echnology (BEST) Corpus. The outcome of the pilot study included both quantitative findings of sentence length and pronoun incidence in this corpus, as well as discussions of the findings and plans for follow-up projects. At the same time Magnar (together with Roald Skarsten) was responsible for developing a machine translation program, named **E**nglish-**N**orwegian **TRA**nslation (ENTRA), intended to make it possible to analyse linguistically English and Norwegian LSP syntax. He described in his article "Automatic parsing meets the wall" (1991) the challenges and constraints of machine translation and concluded that machine translation still has to cope with difficulties like interpreting lexical ambiguity of the so-called chameleon words.

As already stated, Magnar came to NHH in 1990 where his research interests continued to be machine translation, translation of LSP texts and LSP in general. One of his major activities in this respect was as head of the organizing committee responsible for the *9th European Symposium on Language for Special Purposes*. Together with the rest of the committee he in 1994 edited the Proceedings of this conference (*Applications and Implications of Current LSP-Research,* Vol. 1-2). The papers in these two volumes show the great variety in LSP research at the beginning of the 1990s, not only in Europe, but world-wide.

Magnar has always been looking for opportunities for interdisciplinary cooperation between (LSP) linguistics and modern language technology which may lead to reciprocal, fruitful results of research, both theoretical and applied. One aspect he has been particularly concerned with is terminology, both as discipline and in the sense of LSP vocabulary. Within LSP research, terminology in the latter sense has traditionally been regarded as a characteristic feature of language use in LSP texts. In the NHH environment it was natural for Magnar Brekke's focus to be on contrastive English-Norwegian language use in domains specific for such an institution, such as economics, finance etc.

It is commonly acknowledged that a prerequisite for good LSP translations is solid knowledge about and insight into form and content of a linguistic expression in a specific domain. When such texts are machine-translated, the machine translation software needs sophisticated coding systems in order to match the cognitive abilities of a human being. As responsible for the project KnowledgeBank for Economics (KB-N), a 3-year project funded by the NFF and completed in the summer of 2008, just before Magnar retired, he once again dealt with the interface of LSP and modern language technology. He presented the outcomes of the project so far at the LREC-conference in Marrakech in June 2008, while at the same time indicating possibilities for further development of his approach. The purpose of this project has been "to develop, refine and integrate computational strategies and N[atural]

L[anguage] P[rocessing] tools" (Norges Forskningsråd s.a:17) which could be used in the context of, e.g., research in and the teaching of economic-administrative domains. To do so, "a concept-based text- and term-based knowledge management system" has been established (Brekke/Innselset 2005a:80; my translation). The applicability of language technology tools to "**translation**, documentation, publication, as well as e-learning, teaching and mediation (ibid; my translation and emphasis) is seen as important to further machine translation in the context of professional communication in English and Norwegian. At the same time it is argued for the development of Norwegian as an LSP language in domains of "vital importance for Norwegian business and society" (KB-N Prosjektbeskrivelse; my translation) with the established electronic platform.

During his years at the Department of Professional and Intercultural Communication Magnar Brekke has been very influential in the Department's professional development and its adaptation to new challenges, both in the pre- and post-Bologna context. On behalf of the Department he has accepted several administrative burdens. Magnar's list of publications reflects the broadness of his contributions, and I invite the reader to take a closer look at the list overleaf.

Bergen, August 2008

Ingrid Simonnæs
Editor in Chief

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