

IPA NEWS

ELECTION OF THE IPA COUNCIL AND PCICPHS REPRESENTATIVES

As prescribed in the by-laws of the Association and the Permanent Council for the Organisation of the International Congress of Phonetic Sciences, a call for nominations to elect the new IPA Council (2011–2015) and the IPA-elected representatives to the Permanent Council will start in August 2010. Both parts of the election will be held in November 2010. Twenty members of the IPA Council will be elected in November. The Council-elect will elect 10 additional members in March 2011. The new Council (30 members) will elect the Executive Committee in June 2011.

17TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHONETIC SCIENCES

The 17th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences will be held in Hong Kong, China, at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (<http://www.hkcec.com>), from 16 August to 20 August 2011. It is organized by the phoneticians in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. The deadline for FULL-PAPER SUBMISSION to ICPhS 2011 Hong Kong will be in February 2011. Further information is available at <http://www.icphs2011.hk>.

GÖSTA BRUCE: 1947–2010

We deeply regret to announce the death of the President of our Association, Professor Gösta Bruce, in Lund on 15 June 2010, at the age of 63. Professor Bruce was elected President of the IPA in 2007. His death is a great loss to the Association, and to the linguistics and phonetics community. An obituary notice will appear in the following issue of *JIPA*.

IN MEMORIAM

Eli Fischer-Jørgensen (1911–2010)

On 27 February 2010, Eli Fischer-Jørgensen, Emeritus Professor of Phonetics at Copenhagen University, passed away peacefully at her home in Virum, Denmark, only two weeks after her 99th birthday, mentally active to the very last, even if physically weakening. She had lived for, and worked in, phonetics for 80 years, enriching it with her insightful publications and stimulating discussions; during her last couple of weeks, she still talked for hours about phonetic research with her former student and colleague Hans Basbøll, and recorded a feature on ‘Sproglaboratoriet’ for Danish Radio.

Eli, as she is known throughout the phonetics world, took up studies of German and French at Copenhagen University in 1929, and she had to attend the traditional phonetics courses in these language subjects, which consisted of physiological descriptions of sounds and transcriptions from orthographic text. She did not like them much, because this method could not achieve proficiency in oral communication, the only *raison d'être* of such courses, as she ‘never heard nor pronounced a single sound’.¹ (Things have not changed much in

¹ Quotes from E. Fischer-Jørgensen, Fifty years with phonetics and phoneticians: A causerie given at the Institute of Phonetics 28.2.1981. *ARIPUC* 15, 61–75 (1981). [This is an English translation of a talk EFJ gave in Danish on the occasion of her retirement.]

language curricula the world over, the main difference being that students are now introduced to phonemic systems instead of production labels!) The result was that Eli became, above all, interested in general theoretical linguistics and an avaricious reader of all books on the subject she could lay her hands on, especially de Saussure, Meillet, Schuchardt and, of course, Jespersen. She was also fortunate in having outstanding professors in the two language subjects: Louis Hammerich, who taught her linguistic and philological method, Kristian Sandfeld, who impressed her ‘by his fine syntactic observations’, and Viggo Brøndal for ‘his bold and original theories and his philosophical perspectives’. It was thus a logical decision for her to join the Linguistic Circle of Copenhagen in 1933, while still a student. This membership proved to be highly influential for her scientific development, as it provided a platform for discussions of a very high intellectual level with brilliant people like Brøndal and Hjelmslev, characterized by openness to new ideas from outside.

Finally, Poul Andersen turned her on to phonetics through his ‘solid, phonetic method and observation’, when she attended his course in Danish phonetics. The early thirties were also the time when the first *Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Prague* appeared, which Hammerich lent her as soon as they arrived, and Eli read the articles by Roman Jakobson and Nikolay Trubetzkoy with ‘particular enthusiasm’, since ‘they meant an enormous widening of the horizon, a completely new way of looking at the sounds of language’. But she also felt that the Prague School passed too lightly over phonetic substance, relegating it to the natural science field which the first experimental phoneticians had created. So, she developed an interest in the integration of the new field of phonology and experimental phonetics, which determined her whole academic life.

After she had received her MA in 1936, she wanted to go to the countries whose languages she had studied, and to combine these visits with further studies in phonetics and phonology. A scholarship allowed her to go to Germany for two semesters, and since she intended to tackle ‘a phonological description of German dialects . . . partly due to my admiration for the Prague phonologists’ she chose Marburg, the centre of German dialectology. But she did not find much stimulation there. So, she moved on to Paris to study phonology with André Martinet and experimental phonetics with Marguerite Durand. In between the two visits, in 1938, Eli attended the Third International Congress of Phonetic Sciences at Ghent, where she met Eberhard Zwirner, who had developed similar structural ideas as the Prague phonologists, and Hjelmslev in his glossematics, and insisted that instrumental phonetic analysis is only worthwhile if it is linked to sound classes that distinguish meaning. The presentation of his Phonometry at the Congress provided the key to her study of the interplay between phonetics and phonology. So, she accepted his invitation to come to Berlin to study with him, which she did in April 1939, returning home only two weeks before the outbreak of the war. She later stressed the importance of her stay with Zwirner for her phonetic career by saying ‘it was from him that I learned phonetic method’.

Back in Copenhagen, she became a teaching assistant in Hammerich’s German Department, and in 1943 was appointed lecturer in phonetics, a newly created post attached to the chair of linguistics of Louis Hjelmslev, with whom she was able to exchange long arguments about phonology and phonetics within the glossematic framework of form and substance. This became the subject of her 1964 paper ‘Form and substance in glossematics’, *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia* 10, 1–33, and when Louis Hammerich, Roman Jakobson and Eberhard Zwirner, the editors of her first *Festschrift*, on the occasion of her 60th birthday, chose ‘Form and substance’ as its title,² they aptly captured Eli’s goal in phonetic science, and related it to her roots in European linguistics.

After the war, upon Hjelmslev’s advice and with a scholarship from the World Federation of University Women, she went to London, where she attended Daniel Jones’s and Mille

² L. L. Hammerich, R. Jakobson & E. Zwirner (eds.). *Form and substance: Papers presented to Eli Fischer-Jørgensen*. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag (1971).

Coustenoble's classes at University College, as well as courses in Yoruba and Chinese phonetics and lectures by J. R. Firth at the School of Oriental and African Studies, all of which she greatly enjoyed. She returned to Copenhagen after a stay in Holland.

Lack of modern instrumentation, especially of the sonagraph for acoustic analysis, which had been developed in America during the war, severely restricted Eli's experimental phonetic work at home. In 1952, a Rockefeller scholarship gave her the opportunity to spend several weeks at Cambridge, Mass., and at Haskins Laboratories, then in New York. Back in Europe, she started a close cooperation with Gunnar Fant, who was on his way to becoming the international authority on acoustic phonetics, and able to provide modern technical facilities for her. This cooperation led to her being appointed the official faculty opponent at Gunnar Fant's defence of his doctoral thesis *Acoustic Theory of Speech Production* in Stockholm in 1960.

The sixties marked the start of a period of growth of phonetics at Copenhagen. First, a post was established to teach regular courses in general phonetics for students of modern languages, subsequently increased by another five. Then in 1966, a chair of phonetics was created for Eli, and a separate institute with a proper laboratory and a technician was set up. Finally in 1968, an MA in phonetics as a main subject was instituted. The seventies saw an expansion of research facilities, with the move to new premises in 1975, specially built to the requirements of phonetics, and of research activities, documented in the widely quoted contributions to the Institute's Annual Report ARIPUC. This expansion resulted from a communal effort of all the members of the Institute. To this end, Eli was able to put into practice her experiences from the Linguistic Circle of Copenhagen, where she had participated in groups working towards the same common goals of linguistic theory and analysis. She was finally able, on home ground, to carry out the empirical research program of amalgamating a structural paradigm with experimental phonetics, which she had been striving at during all her travelling years, and she was highly successful. 'The secret of this success seems to lie in the mixture of explicit leadership and informal cordiality . . . When Eli ran the Institute, no one was in doubt who was in charge and at the same time this was, as it were, "no big deal"'. It was a simple consequence of the breadth and depth of her knowledge.³ It worked extremely well because a common scientific goal united highly motivated people, creating a well-founded and well-funded home for phonetics. This is fundamentally different from soft-money researchers in a broad spectrum of disciplines working on a great variety of phonetic topics.

The sixties were also the time of establishing close exchanges across the Sound with the phoneticians in Lund, for example each group attending the other's seminars and colloquiums. And Copenhagen became a hub of phonetics in Europe, attracting researchers from all over the world. For example, Hajime Hirose and Seiji Niimi from Tokyo were guest researchers in the Institute's EMG project (in return Eli went to Japan), Tony Anthony from Edinburgh visited the Institute in connection with airflow studies, John Ohala from Berkeley spent a sabbatical there, Elizabeth Uldall from Edinburgh renewed old affiliations, the Kiel phonetics people regularly visited the Institute, and Bill Barry, in particular, spent several weeks there using Rischel's speech synthesizer for investigations in connection with his habilitation 'On the processing of acoustic information in speech perception' at Kiel University. This international focus culminated at the 9th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences in 1979, which was one of the best the phonetics community has ever had, and again it was the result of a successful collaborative organization by the whole Institute, with Eli as the *primus inter pares*. Two years later, she had to retire from her university position at the age of 70.

Eli's research activities during this heyday of phonetics at Copenhagen were broad and manifold. She worked on all aspects of speech in general, as well as on Danish, German,

³ Quotation from F. Gregersen & U. Canger, *Honoris causa: Tribute to Eli*. In N. Grønnum & J. Rischel (eds.), *To honour Eli Fischer-Jørgensen. Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Copenhague* 31, 36. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel (2001).

French, Dutch and Gujarati (ranked by magnitude) in particular; and she published in Danish, English, French and German. The comprehensive bibliography of her publications gives an overview of this wide spectrum.⁴ But I would like to single out five areas that deserve special mention as representatives of her wide interests ranging from phonetics to phonology and historical philology. There is first and foremost her intensive study of the phonetic manifestations of the Danish *stød* in its various physical parameters, part of which was published in *Phonetica* 46 (1989), 1–59, and her multi-parametric analysis of stop consonants in Danish and French in a number of publications in the sixties and seventies, stressing the need to go beyond VOT measurements in coping with differences between lenis and fortis. Then there is the overview of phonological theories,⁵ and her study of stress in Old Danish,⁶ which she picked up again in German in a talk for a German–Danish Colloquium on the Investigation of Spoken Language⁷ on the occasion of receiving an honorary doctorate from the University of Bayreuth in 2001. Finally, I need to mention her long-time interest in sound symbolism and ‘hearing colours’, which had been kindled by Roman Jakobson, and which she first wrote about in a *Festschrift* for him,⁸ then again in a *Festschrift* for Bertil Malmberg,⁹ and quite recently in a *Festschrift* for Hans Basbøll.¹⁰

Eli served as a member of the Editorial Board of *Phonetica*, Eberhard Zwirner’s foundation, for many years. She was a Life Member of the International Phonetic Association, and a member of the Permanent Council for the Organization of International Congresses of Phonetic Sciences from 1961 to 1991 (from Helsinki to Aix-en-Provence). She received numerous distinctions honouring her academic achievements. In 1968, she was admitted to the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, the first woman to become a domestic member. Her 90th birthday was celebrated by a symposium and a delightful dinner in an excellent restaurant in the centre of Copenhagen, at which I saw Eli for the last time. A second *Festschrift* was also published on this occasion, edited by Nina Grønnum and Jørgen Rischel.¹¹ She also received honorary doctorates from the Universities of Aarhus (1978), Lund (1978), Bayreuth (2001); Copenhagen, where she had become a professor without defending a doctoral thesis of her own, recognised her outstanding academic distinction by conferring one in 1993.

But Eli also excelled outside academia with her wonderful drawings and water colours of scenes she appreciated visually at home and on her many travels, and distilled into artful

⁴ Eli Fischer-Jørgensen’s publications 1932–2000. In N. Grønnum & J. Rischel (eds.), *To honour Eli Fischer-Jørgensen. Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Copenhague* 31, 54–73. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel (2001).

⁵ E. Fischer-Jørgensen. *Trends in phonological theory: A historical introduction. Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Copenhague* 27. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel (1975; 2nd edn. 1995).

⁶ E. Fischer-Jørgensen. *Tryk i ældre dansk. Sammensætninger og Afledninger* (Historisk-filosofiske Meddelelser 84. Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab/The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters). Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel (2001).

⁷ E. Fischer-Jørgensen. Die Entwicklung des Akzents in Zusammensetzungen und Ableitungen im Dänischen mit besonderem Gewicht auf dem deutschen Einfluss. In R. Harnisch (ed.), ... *das Ohr stets bei der Hand. Über Forscher und Forschungen auf dem Gebiet der gesprochenen Sprache* (Jahrbuch der Johann-Andreas-Schmeller-Gesellschaft 2004), 41–55. Bayreuth: C. u. C. Rabenstein (2005).

⁸ E. Fischer-Jørgensen. Perceptual dimensions of vowels. In *To honor Roman Jakobson*, 667–671. The Hague: Mouton (1967).

⁹ E. Fischer-Jørgensen. On the universal character of phonetic symbolism with special reference to vowels. *Sign and sound: Studies presented to Bertil Malmberg on the occasion of his 65th birthday, 22 April 1978. Studia Linguistica* 32, 80–90 (1978).

¹⁰ E. Fischer-Jørgensen. Vowels and colours. In H. Galberg Jacobsen, D. Bleses, T. O. Madsen & P. Thomsen (eds.), *Take Danish – for instance: Linguistic studies in honour of Hans Basbøll presented on the occasion of his 60th birthday, 12 July 2003*, 83–97. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark (2003).

¹¹ See footnote 3 above.

pictures, some of which she sent to friends and colleagues with greetings on various occasions. In June 1978, the University of Kiel invited her for a guest lecture during Kiel Week, the annual Sailing Regatta, and the Phonetics Institute turned this occasion into a little symposium on form and substance in phonetic research, together with Eberhard Zwirner and Eva Gårding. Within a short distance of our private home, there was a beautiful, impressive, old oak tree in the middle of the road, which Eli loved at first sight. A few days after her return to Copenhagen, a parcel arrived with a delightful drawing of the tree, which she had returned to make without us knowing. The tree is no longer there, it was sacrificed to traffic. But the drawing is still in my study reminding me of those days and of Eli, *grande dame de la phonétique européenne*.

Klaus J. Kohler
Kiel

Eva Sivertsen (1922–2009)

Eva Sivertsen, who was born at Trondheim on the 8th of July 1922, died there on the 22nd of November 2009. She read English at the University of Oslo and in 1951 wrote her Ph.D. thesis on a comparison of Cockney with RP. She collected data in London between 1949 and 1956 under the wing of University College London Phonetics Department, whose influence she acknowledged to have provided her with the basis for her studies citing especially Jones and Kingdon. She was also much indebted to the works of Charles Hockett, especially when writing her remarkable *Cockney Phonology* (Oslo University Press, 1960), which she described as ‘mainly an impressionistic articulatory study’. When in 1957 the Eighth International Congress of Linguists had taken place in Oslo, she single-handedly edited its large volume of *Proceedings*. She produced her *Fonologi* in 1967. She headed the Department of English at Trondheim University from 1960 and also undertook administrative posts there that culminated in her becoming its presiding Rektor. She maintained an interest in the teaching of English as a foreign language as well as English grammar and general linguistics. She gave the impression of being a rather ascetic personality as was witnessed by the punishing fitness regimes she followed but she was widely liked and respected.

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