



Center for Advanced Study
in Theoretical Linguistics

Annual Report 2003



CASTL is a Norwegian Centre of Excellence (CoE).

The CoE scheme was initiated by the Research Council of Norway, and the designation in 2002 of 13 Centres of Excellence marked the conclusion of the most far-reaching selection process ever to envelop Norwegian research.

The scheme entails that outstanding research groups, operating under co-ordinated management and research plans, will receive long-term funding to engage in world-class basic research. The CoEs will receive annual grants from the Research Council averaging 10 to 20 million NOK for a maximum of ten years, based on host institution pledges to cover a considerable proportion of the Centres' expenditures. Moreover, the CoEs are free to raise funding from other sources.

The CoEs will be evaluated by international experts in 2006.

Organization

CASTL is housed at the Faculty of Humanities at The University of Tromsø. The Center exists alongside two other departments, and in close collaboration with the Department of Linguistics. It enjoys the full infrastructural support of the university, and a high degree of autonomy in budgetary and managerial issues. The Center has its own Board, and is run on a daily basis by the Director and its own administrative staff.

The University of Tromsø is the northernmost university in the world and serves as a vital source of research and education both nationally and internationally.

"This is a vibrant intellectual environment, with an impressive breadth and depth in the research taking place."

Rose-Marie Dechaine, University of British Columbia

"This is a young, energetic, research group, with fantastic facilities, and as a side-benefit terrific scenery and the Northern Lights if you're lucky (I was)."

Moira Yip, University College London

"CASTL is an extraordinary research environment, unique in Norway, and among the very best in Europe and elsewhere."

Guglielmo Cinque, Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia

A word from the leadership

The city of Tromsø has an honorable tradition of setting explorers to sail. On January 20, 2003, the University of Tromsø officially launched the Center for Advanced Study in Theoretical Linguistics (CASTL), a Norwegian Center of Excellence created by the Research Council of Norway.

Our work explores the properties of the human language faculty. This year, the projects carried out by our research teams have enhanced our understanding of the syntax and semantics of Slavic prefixes and moved us ahead in our views about the interface between phonology and morphology. We've investigated the properties of paradigms, and the nature of Saami consonant gradation; we've seen developments in modeling sign language phonology as well as vector space representations of prepositional semantics. And all this in our first year!

In addition to our research activities, other highlights from our inaugural year include our kick-off conference, a spring workshop, exciting new hires, and collaboration with some of the leading European groups in our field.

We're grateful to the Norwegian Research Council and the University of Tromsø for making this voyage possible. And if you have the chance this year...*hjer-
telig velkommen til Tromsø!*



Curt Rice
Director



Kirsti Koch Christensen
Chair of the Board of Directors



The Vision

At CASTL, we investigate one of the most important properties of the human mind, namely the language faculty.

Our investigations explore how languages vary. Research shows that cross-linguistic variation is not arbitrary; rather, it displays interesting patterns. Our goal is to understand such patterns as an interplay between universal and language specific factors. The universal factors which emerge from such study may themselves be rooted in properties of human cognition. Hence, to study language is to study a potential which is unique to humans and

uniform across our species.

Some properties of the human language faculty can be observed through detailed studies of individual languages. Other properties emerge through the method of microcomparison. This involves comparing closely related languages or dialects to achieve something like a controlled experiment. As many factors as possible are held constant while the effects of a single variable feature are examined.

'...Every language or dialect has a unique combination of properties, which is irretrievably lost if it dies out.'

However, in-depth studies of individual languages and closely related languages cannot answer questions about the extent of linguistic variation. Im-

portant discoveries have been made through a large-scale typological approach in which characteristics of many languages are catalogued. Patterns and implicational tendencies across languages are then identified and used to inform

the construction of linguistic theory. Even though the number of meticulous language descriptions is growing, many more are needed before this approach can rest on a sufficiently representative sample of the world's languages.

In order to address some of the shortcomings of the above approaches, CASTL is committed to advancing a

'...Our hope is that selective global comparison will give a better picture of the extent to which languages can vary. The results will be strong predictions about the nature of the human language faculty.'

newer method called selective global comparison. In selective global comparison, the number of languages investigated is held strategically low. Various features are kept constant across

the sample, as with micro-comparative studies. At the same time, a balanced areal and genetic distribution of languages is sought, as with the typological studies. Our hope is that selective global comparison will give a better picture of the extent to which languages can vary. The results will be strong predictions about the nature of the human language faculty.

Once we have a significant body of reliable empirical generalizations, we employ the basic methodologies of formal linguistics to interpret them. These generalizations will capture interdependencies among the components underlying natural language. The next step is to explain these generalizations: Why do these interdependencies hold? What is the nature of the cognitive system combining primitive grammatical elements into complex linguistic expressions? How

'...CASTL's commitment includes raising awareness about the value of linguistic diversity and the legitimacy of all human languages.'

does this system yield linguistic universals?

Unsolved riddles about the human mind may be answered through the study of linguistic variation. But variation also presents social and political

challenges. It is a source of inequality, since millions of people speak languages which have little social prestige, have no written standard, and are never used in education. Yet every language or dialect has a unique combination of properties,

which is irretrievably lost if it dies out.

These challenges demand a response from linguists. We must contribute to practical applications of our research. These may include language planning, language documentation, the development of new techniques for language learning, and the creation and standardization of writing systems.

We also have a responsibility to bring the results of our research into public discussions. CASTL's commitments include raising

awareness about the value of linguistic diversity and the legitimacy of all human languages. In this way, we hope to contribute to solutions for the linguistic challenges that are vitally important for our world today.

'...Unsolved riddles about the human mind may be answered through the study of linguistic variation.'



The People

Senior Researchers



Professor Curt Rice

Phonological theory, OT, metrical theory, comparative Germanic phonology.



Professor Peter Svenonius

The semantics-syntax interface



Professor Knut Tarald Taraldsen

Syntactic theory, Scandinavian and Romance syntax



Associate Professor Ove Lorentz

Phonological theory, OT, Scandinavian and Saami phonology



Professor Anders Holmberg

*(Adjunct Professor)
Syntax*

Postdoctoral Research Fellows



Bruce Morén

Phonological representation, feature theory, weight theory, tone theory, consonant-vowel comparison, phonetics-phonology interface, Sign Language linguistics

Øystein Nilsen

Syntax, semantics, lexical categories

Research Fellows (Ph.D. students)



Kristine Bentzen

Comparative syntax, the relationship between syntax and morphology, first language acquisition



Sylvia Blaho

Phonological representation, voicing-related phenomena, syllabic consonants

Madeleine Halmøy

Comparative syntax, nominal predicates, NP/DP-structure

Staff



Asbjørn Bartnes

Senior Executive Officer



Affiliates

Merete Anderssen, *Research Fellow (Ph.D. student)*
Berit Anne Bals, *Research Fellow (Ph.D. student)*
Patrik Bye, *Associate Professor*
Þorbjörg Hróarsdóttir, *Postdoctoral Research Fellow*
Patrycja Jablonska, *Ph.D. student*
Marit Julien, *Postdoctoral Research Fellow*
Chantal Lyche, *Professor*
Tore Nessel, *Professor*
Eugenia Romanova, *Ph.D. student*
Gillian Ramchand, *Associate Professor*
Kaori Takamine, *Research Assistant*
Trond Trosterud, *Researcher*
Mai Tungseth, *Research Fellow (Ph.D. student)*
Øystein A. Vangsnes, *Postdoctoral Research Fellow*
Marit R. Westergaard, *Associate Professor*



Board of Directors

Professor Kirsti Koch Christensen, *University of Bergen (chair)*
Professor Peter Svenonius, *CASTL*
Professor Rolf Gaasland, *University of Tromsø*
Associate Professor Paula Fikkert, *Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen*
Professor Höskuldur Þráinsson, *Háskóli Íslands*

Alternate:

Professor Guglielmo Cinque, *Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia*

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The Output

Published articles in refereed journals:

Holmberg, A. & Hróarsdóttir, T. (2003). Agreement and movement in Icelandic raising constructions, *Lingua* 113.10, 997-1019.

Holmberg, A. (2003). Introduction, *Nordic Journal of Linguistics* 25.2.

Holmberg, A. (2003). Yes/no questions and the relation between tense and polarity in English and Finnish, *Linguistic Variation Yearbook* vol. 3, 45-70.

Julien, M. (2003). Dobbelsupinum og irreal modus. *Norsk Lingvistisk Tidsskrift*, 21, 135-161.

Lyche, C. & Andreassen, H. (2003). La phonologie du français contemporain: le vaudois en Suisse, *La Tribune Internationale des Langues Vivantes* 33, 64-71.

Lyche, C. & Girard, F. (2003). La phonologie du français contemporain dans le Domfrontais: un français en évolution, *La Tribune Internationale des Langues Vivantes* 33, 166-175.

Lyche, C., Durand, J. & Laks, B. (2003). Le projet 'Phonologie du français contemporain', *La Tribune Internationale des Langues Vivantes* 33, 3-9.

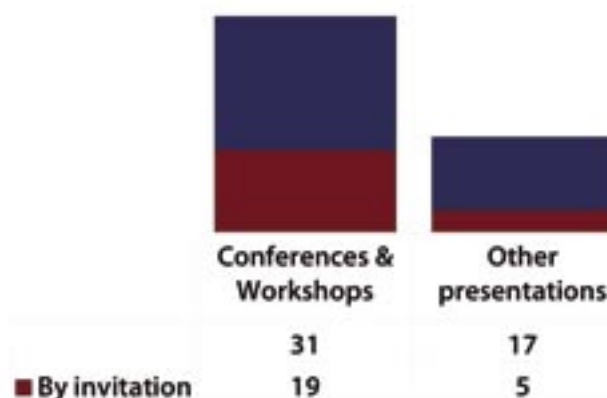
Ramchand, G. (2003). Predication and Equation, *Linguistic Inquiry*, 24.3, 325-360.

Westergaard, M. R. (2003). Word Order in WH-questions in a North Norwegian Dialect: Some Evidence from an Acquisition Study, *Nordic Journal of Linguistics*, 26.1.

Westergaard, M. R. (2003). Unlearning V2: The Acquisition of Word Order in English by Norwegian Children, *Eurosla Yearbook*.

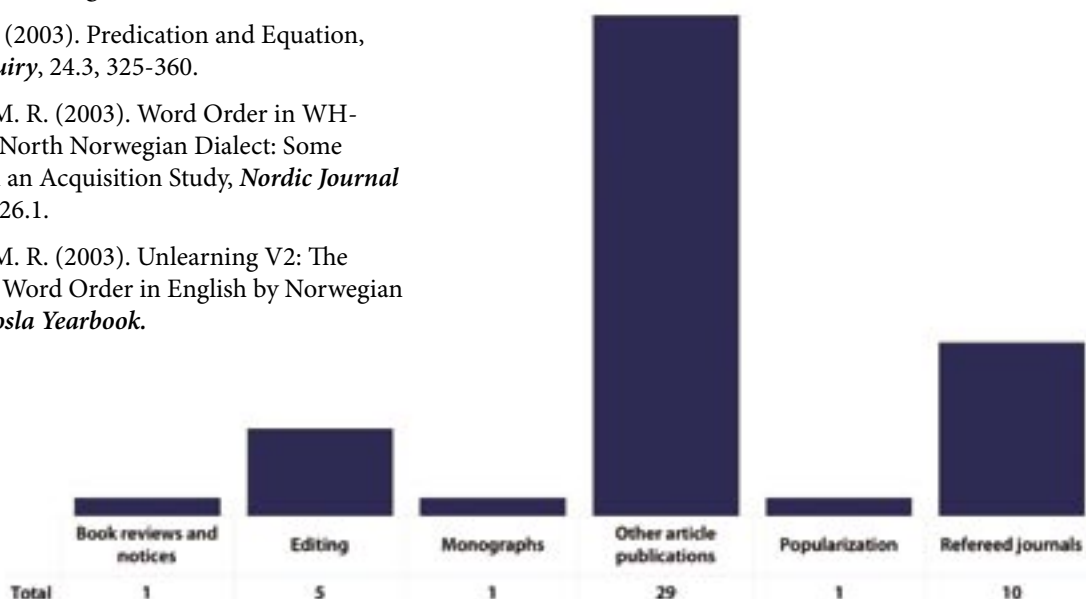
Presentations

Total in 2003: 72



Publications

Total in 2003: 47



For complete listings, please visit <http://castl.uit.no/>

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The Activities

Conferences and workshops

Morphology at the Interface: Research Training Seminar (May 25-27)

This intensive course was held in combination with the Workshop on Morphology. The course was taught by Jorge Hankamer (UCSC), Paul Kiparsky (Stanford), Alec Marantz (MIT), and Peter Svenonius (CASTL). 25 students attended the lectures.

Workshop on Morphology (May 30-31)

An open series of lectures in formal morphological theory. The invited speakers were Alec Marantz (MIT), Keren Rice (University of Toronto), Jorge Hankamer (UCSC), Rose-Marie Déchaine (University of British Columbia), and Paul Kiparsky (Stanford University).

This workshop was organized and sponsored by CASTL, the Department of Linguistics, and the Faculty of Humanities. It is connected to the Spatial and Aspectual Prefixes project.

30 students and faculty attended.

The CASTL Kick-off Conference (October 2-4)

The CASTL Kick-off Conference marked the first year of CASTL's operation. The themes of the conference were central issues that CASTL aims to investigate. The invited speakers were Mark Baker (Rutgers), Hagit Borer (USC), Joan Bresnan (Stanford), San-

dra Chung (USC), Guglielmo Cinque (Venice), George N. Clements (CNRS), Katherine Crosswhite (Rochester), Stuart Davis (Indiana), Richard Kayne (NYU), Hilda Koopman (UCLA), Paul de Lacy (Cambridge), Armin Mester (UCSC), Norvin Richards (MIT), Tobias Scheer (Nice), Michal Starke (NYU), Donca Steriade (MIT), and Moira Yip (UCL).

The local speakers were Patrik Bye, Marit Julien, Gjert Kristoffersen (Bergen), Ove Lorentz, Chantal Lyche, Bruce Morén, Øystein Nilsen, Curt Rice, Peter Svenonius, Knut Tarald Taraldsen, and Øystein Vangsnes.

84 linguists from around the world attended the conference.

The Acquisition of Grammar: Research Training Seminar (October 20-24)

The Acquisition of Grammar was a one-week intensive course in language acquisition, intended primarily for students at the doctoral or advanced master's levels. The course was financed by *Nasjonale forskerutdanningskurs - Humaniora* (National Researchers' Education Programs for the Humanities) and CASTL. The course consisted of two sub-courses: The Acquisition of L1 Phonology and The Development of L2 Syntax. The phonology course was taught by Claartje Levelt (University of Leiden) and Paula Fikkert (University of Nijmegen), and the syntax course was taught by Manfred Pienemann (University of Paderborn). The course attracted 35 linguists, 17 of whom were doctoral students.



"The efficiency, organization, and thought that went into the CASTL Kick-off Conference made it one of the most enjoyable and rewarding academic meetings I have attended."

Paul de Lacy,
University of Cambridge



Seminars

The CASTL Colloquium Series

The CASTL Colloquium Series is a series of Thursday evening lectures held by both locals and invited speakers.

A total of 20 talks were held in 2003, four of which were held by invited speakers.

The Syntax Reading Group

The Syntax Reading Group is an informal discussion group which meets each week to discuss current papers in theoretical syntax. The SRG is organized by Peter Svenonius.

The Phonology Reading Group

The Phonology Reading Group is a weekly seminar with discussions on ongoing research and recent literature in phonology. The PRG is organized by Ove Lorentz.

The Language Acquisition Reading Group

The Language Acquisition Reading Group meets every week for informal discussions on current papers in language acquisition. In 2003, the focus has mainly been on monolingual first language acquisition. The LARG is organized by Kristine Bentzen.

The Semantics Reading Group

The Semantics Reading Group is a weekly seminar dealing with the model theoretical semantics of spatial prepositions. The SemRG is organized by Øystein Nilsen.

Research teams

The research at CASTL is organized into several subprojects. Each subproject has a clear statement of purpose which outlines the way in which it furthers the goals of the center. A subproject is carried out by a team including one or more Senior Researchers or Experienced Researchers, one of whom is designated as the team leader. Each team contains a stratified profile of the research community.

In 2003, the following teams were in operation (the primary project affiliation is given in parenthesis):

The CASTL Methodology Project

Team Leader: Curt Rice

Acquisition & Language Change

Team leader: Marit R. Westergaard

Assignment of Grammatical Gender, focus on Germanic and Slavic (Morphology)

Team leader: Tore Nessel

Morphology at the Interface (Morphology)

Team leader: Peter Svenonius

Morphosyntax of Spatial and Aspectual Prefixes, focus on Slavic (Morphology)

Team leader: Peter Svenonius

Prosodic Phonology and Morphology (Phonology)

Team leader: Curt Rice

Segmental Strength (Phonology)

Team leader: Ove Lorentz

The Organization of the Clause: VP (Syntax)

Team leader: Peter Svenonius

"You should go there if you can. They take their linguistics very seriously."

Stuart Davis, Indiana University

"Be prepared to talk about linguistics at any time and anywhere!"

Tobias Scheer, University of Nice

"For everyone who loves nature and linguistics, Tromsø is where you want to be".

Manfred Piene-mann, University of Paderhorn

"The amount of research activity going on in and around CASTL is very promising for the future. Being in Tromsø was great fun, but also very intense!"

Armin Mester, University of California – Santa Cruz

The Numbers

(All numbers in KNOK)

Income	Grant from The Norwegian Research Council	4 563
	Grant from The University of Tromsø	2 494
	Additional grants (from applications)	221
	SUM Income	7 277
Expenses	Labor costs	3 526
	Academic staff	3 118
	Administrative staff	408
	Operational expenses	1 229
	Research assistants	150
	Conferences and workshops	275
	Board meetings	126
	Hiring	73
	Travel	423
	Guest lecturers	10
	Various expenses	172
	Indirect costs	574
	SUM Expenses	5 329
	TOTAL	1 949

Comments

The budget surplus is necessary in order to cover future expenses that are not covered by the current grants. These expenses are of two kinds:

1) grants for positions have full effect for 2003, whereas the start date for new hirees was Sept. 1. Their contracts thus run longer than the grant period. Part of the surplus will cover these labor costs in 2013, when the grant period is over.

2) grants do not include compensation for price and wage inflation. In the budget, these are set to 4% and 2%, in accordance with the recommendations from the Research Council. Part of the surplus will cover these additional costs.

These expected costs currently amount to NOK 2 069 333, which means that the accounts for 2003 yield a deficit of NOK 120 814 when the entire 10-year period is taken into account.

<http://castl.uit.no/>



CASTL in 2004

February: Workshop on Null Subjects

March: The Lightfoot & Smolensky Lectures

June: The CASTL/Reykjavik Workshop

October: Research Training Seminar on Variation in Language

December: ConSOLE XIII

...and beyond:

January 2005: OCP2

April 2007: GLOW XXX

