

Introduction: A trip around the *Globe*

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Globe: A Journal of Language, Culture and Communication (henceforth, *Globe*) is in my opinion a success story. To me, it is very much a symbol of academia's victory over destructive external political forces. Basically a story of making lemonade when life hands you lemons, *Globe* was launched by a research group at Aalborg University amidst the chaos of very negative ramifications of many bad decisions made by the politicians governing (one is tempted to use "mismanaging" instead) the education and research sector in Denmark at the time.

In fact, the journal was directly inspired by one of the most embarrassing political failures in this sector and rose to become a beacon of the democratization of information within an academic context. On the occasion of the journal's tenth anniversary, I thought it would be fitting to take the reader on a trip around the *Globe*, so to speak, and have a look at its history, its role as an important open access publication channel nationally and internationally, and its contribution to the democratization of information in contemporary academia.

Without further ado, let us step into the proverbial DeLorean time-machine (80s kids will understand this reference) and travel back to the 2010s.

The embarrassing failure that was the Danish Bibliometric Research Indicator

In 2015, when the very first issue of *Globe* was published, the education and research sector in Denmark was in many ways like today, but in many ways also very different. Then, like today, the sector was characterized by constant reforms initiated by politicians who typically had absolutely no idea what they were doing due to a complete lack of understanding of the workings of research and education and were either oblivious – or, worse, they did not care – of the damage every single one of their reforms caused to this sector. Then, like now, the universities constantly underwent structural changes because of this incessant political flip-flopping. New political initiatives were launched at a pace that was very difficult to keep up with, while others just loomed threateningly on the horizon without anyone knowing when, or even if, they would actually be implemented. Political measures already in action could be terminated at any point, sometimes even unceremoniously.

One such political measure was the infamous *Bibliometriske Forskningsindikator* (Danish Bibliometric Research Indicator), or BFI for short. Introduced in 2009, the BFI was framed as a way to allocate university funding based on publication activities (Videnskabsministeriet 2009). However, many researchers suspected that the BFI was in reality based on politicians' distrust of researchers, whom the politicians saw as downright lazy buggers. In other words, the suspicion was that the BFI was introduced as an incentive to make researchers work harder. In a nutshell, publication channels such as journals, book series, and publishers were divided into two levels based on excellence: Level 1 represented "normal-level" publications, and Level 2 represented "high-level" publications; an optional third level, representing "excellent" publications was introduced for journals and book series as well. The logic behind the BFI was that publications in channels included in the BFI would earn the universities points, with Level 2 publications triggering more points than Level 1 ones (and, of course, where applicable, Level 3 ones would trigger more points than Level 2 ones); publications in channels not included in the BFI would trigger zero points. Each point was worth a particular amount of money (the exact amount would vary from year to year) that would be allocated to the universities after an annual tally. To be included in the BFI, a publication channel had to make use of legitimate peer reviewing as a type of quality assurance. The BFI was supposed to be dynamic such that new channels could be added, and channels already registered could be promoted or demoted between

levels and could even be removed from the system altogether. While there was no disagreement that quality assurance was vitally important, it meant in practice that more than sixty (!) groups of experts in all fields of research in Denmark would have to monitor publication channels and ensure that only legitimate channels were included, and so an incredibly complex hierarchy of groups was deployed to manage the BFI. As you can imagine, not only was this gamification of research highly criticized but so were the unnecessarily heavy and complex management of the BFI itself and its need for constant monitoring. For instance, researchers severely criticized the BFI already back in 2009, calling it badly organized, amateurish, embarrassing, absurd, and a downright waste of time (Tingstrøm 2009). While it did result in a radical increase in the number of publications by researchers at Danish institutions (Larsen & Ingwersen 2014), the BFI was criticized, among (many) other things, for deprioritizing Danish-language publication channels (Hoffmann 2018), devaluing research activities within the Humanities and Social Sciences (Meyer 2018), focusing on quantity over quality (Gad 2023), and contributing to the commodification of research as well as stifling collaborations in action research. Regarding this last point, for instance, Olesen (2014: 138), reflecting on a particularly complex action research project that involved collaboration with a hospital, writes:

I do not know if either they or I would dare to dive into such a project again because of the time used on working with the inclusion of different knowledge forms and on documenting the process to be used for further reflections on the ward led to fewer Danish national bibliometric research indicator registered, peer-reviewed articles. Something the hospital needed as much as the university to get future research funded.

Moreover, universities started integrating BFI points in their employment strategies causing a considerable worsening of the overall psychological work environment (Mouritzen et al. 2018). I do remember much talk back then about the fear of ending up a so-called “nulforsker” (i.e., “zero-researcher”; that is, a researcher that for whatever reason failed to score any points over a period of two or three years) and what consequences that might have for one’s future employment. This fear was by no means an irrational fear, given that the entire publication process of, say, a monograph or even a single article can easily last two or three years. On top of that, the dynamic nature of the BFI meant that one could never really be sure whether one’s publications would be Level 1 or Level 2 publications or, indeed, whether the publication channel in question might end up being removed from the BFI altogether. Granted, it was never the intention that the BFI should be incorporated into employment policies, but, since the sector was severely underfunded back then, like it is now, it is hard to see any other outcome than universities incorporating BFI points as incentives – be it as a stick or as a carrot – to make their employees generate more publications and thus more money.

And, after much critique, a decision was made in December 2021 to discontinue the BFI, and it was unceremoniously terminated in 2022 (Uddannelses- og Forskningsministeriet 2023). Interestingly, Aalborg University chose to replace the BFI with a “homegrown” research indicator, inspired by the Norwegian *Kanalregistret*, used for internal distribution of funding among departments and faculties (Pasgaard 2023).

Making lemonade from lemons

As the reader will have noticed, the very first issue of *Globe* was published during the reign of the BFI. In fact, the BFI was a central catalyst in the establishment of the journal. Researchers at Aalborg University, like basically all other research institutions at the time, were under great pressure to generate BFI-registered research publications. Seeing the need for a serious publication channel, the members of the (now defunct) Languages and Linguistics research group at the (now defunct) Department of Culture and Global Studies, which was a department run as a collaborative effort

between the (now defunct) Faculty of Humanities and the (now defunct) Faculty of Social Sciences, decided to establish a legitimate open access peer-reviewed research journal focusing on culture, linguistics, and communication studies. Mind you, this was an era when open access publishing was marred by predatory journals doing fake peer-reviewing and charging hefty publication fees. Furthermore, as you can imagine, in an environment where research publication had become gamified and commodified, there was a real risk of researchers falling into the trap of publishing in predatory channels – be it out of desperation or, more likely, a blend of desperation and ignorance of the shady practices of predatory publishers. Needless to say, there was a genuine need for open access journals practicing real peer-reviewing and offering not just free open access to readers but also publication without fees for authors. Within the broad field of language studies, there were very few journals of this type in Denmark, exceptions being the journals *Hermes* and the now discontinued *RASK*, both of which moved their publications into the open access space quite early on.

The idea was the journal should serve not just as a publication channel for local researchers at Aalborg University but also researchers at other universities in Denmark as well as international researchers. The driving ambition was that the journal, like *Hermes* and *RASK*, would publish rigorously peer-reviewed, high-quality research articles that would serve as genuine contributions to their respective fields. It was also, and this was no secret, a hope that the journal would end up being registered in the BFI, as it not only lived up to the general principles of good practice within research publication but also to the BFI requirements. An editorial group was established, consisting of members of the Languages and Linguistics research group, and an international advisory board was assembled too. It was agreed that the journal, seeing that it was anchored in the Department of Culture and Global Studies at Aalborg University, should have a name that not only captured this affiliation but also reflected the intended international reach. *Globe* seemed like a suitably representative and catchy title, and the more descriptive sub-title, *A Journal of Language, Culture and Communication*, captured both the institutional affiliation and the journal's intended scope.

The first call for papers was issued, and after a rigorous peer-review process that took place in 2014, the outcome was the very first issue, which was published in February 2015. While the format and publishing schedule have changed slightly over the years, the inaugural issue set the scene for *Globe* as we know it today: a mix of thematically linked articles and stand-alone articles, all of which make valuable contributions to the study of culture, language, and communication. The inaugural issue thus consisted of a thematic section on language and identity featuring research articles on Italian dialects, language and generational change in the United Arab Emirates, personal pronouns and community construction, Tyneside English morphosyntax and phonology, identity construction in Danish and German contracts, and self-narratives and discourses in patients with brain injuries. The open section had three articles to offer: one on negative interrogatives in American English, one on scalar adjectival constructions, and one on speech acts in professional-to-layperson medical texts. To celebrate the launch of the journal, three celebratory essays by superstar linguists – namely, Hartmut Haberland, Per Aage Brandt, and Jacob Mey (sadly, Brandt and Mey are no longer with us) – were included in the inaugural issue as well. With the first issue published, the journal was assigned an ISSN and then registered in the BFI.

This was indeed a case of “when life gives you lemons, make lemonade”: the lemons were the BFI and all its negative ramifications, and the lemonade was the inaugural issue of *Globe*. More lemonade was served in August 2015 in the form of the second issue which featured articles on metaphors, N-grams, Cameroon English proverbs, anti-feminist discourse, Kantian grammar, and stylistics. The next volume was a special issue in the form of a festschrift dedicated to Per Durst-Andersen containing papers originally presented at an event at Copenhagen Business School celebrating his 60th birthday. This would be the first of several peer-reviewed thematic issues, some of which served as conference proceedings and others as publication outlets for different types of research collaborations. Thus, *Globe* took on yet another important role in terms of open access

publication. It is thanks to *Globe* that contributions to an international conference on language contact in border zones and multilingual cities held at the University of Copenhagen were published in 2023 in article form in issue 15 of *Globe*; the same year, *Globe* also facilitated, in issue 17, the publication of a festschrift for Erling Strudsholm in celebration of his 70th birthday. Issue 10 from 2020 is entirely dedicated to Systemic Functional Linguistics and features papers presented at the 14th conference on Nordic Systemic Functional Linguistics, and issue 12 from the following year contains papers originally presented at a research symposium on typology and multilingualism held in Bergen in October 2019. The beauty of these special issues is that not only do they feature peer-reviewed quality research articles, but they also show that, despite the fact that political forces in Denmark have fostered – maybe inadvertently or maybe on purpose – a competitive milieu in the sector, researchers still collaborate across national universities.

***Globe* and the democracy of information**

Globe is not just a legitimate publication channel for research within culture, language, and communication. Operating with open access without imposing publication fees, the journal is in many ways a punch in the face of predatory journals and simultaneously also an alternative to the paywalled publication channels that are so commonplace in the industry of academic publishing. Think about it: publishing in journals like *Globe* is free, your articles will be openly accessible to all types of readers, ranging from interested lay people to students to fellow experts and specialists, and there is quality assurance in the form of peer reviewing. Thus, with journals like *Globe*, predatory publication outlets become irrelevant. Not only that, journals like *Globe* are also very much the epitome of the democratization of information within academia. True, there is still an idea among certain scholars that publishing in online channels is somehow not as prestigious as publishing on paper, but, when it comes to prestige versus outreach, I think the latter is much more important; in a way, then, *Globe* is also a slap in the face of the elitism that still haunts academia.

So exactly what type of research, then, is published in *Globe*? A bird's eye look at the journal's archive of articles reveals some very general areas, some of which are listed below along with a few representative articles:

- **Stylistics:** In many ways, stylistics bridges an unfortunate gap between linguistics and literary studies and may arguably be viewed as a truly philological discipline. It is a particularly important discipline in connection with the training of foreign language teachers who in their professional lives need to balance language teaching and literature teaching. Several articles falling under the rubric of stylistics have been published in *Globe*. One example is Jensen et al. (2018); applying methods from corpus stylistics and theory from cognitive stylistics, they find that distant-reading can help identify patterns of language use that would be difficult to spot through close-reading and that such an approach can help identify linguistic realizations of thematic motifs. Specifically, Jensen et al. (2018) link the frequent use of floronyms in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* to underlying metaphors throughout the narrative. Tackling sixteenth century German travel literature, Naiditsch (2015) meticulously maps the many linguistic dimensions of Daniel Ecklin's "Reiß zum heiligen Grab". Herrmann et al. (2017) study the use of non-standard varieties of English (more specifically the use of Scots) in the novel *Trainspotting*, and, drawing on theory from sociolinguistics, they find that it foregrounds not just stereotypes to support the characterization within the narrative but also that it foregrounds place and social class.
- **Discourse analysis:** Discourse analysis has long been a focal area of research at Aalborg University – be it critical discourse analysis or other types of discourse analysis – and thus it is no surprise that the journal has published multiple articles oriented towards the study of

discourse. For instance, Leung (2017) looks at what he calls the discursive positioning of the Falkland Islands in British and Argentinian discourses. Making use of corpus data and collocational analysis, Leung (2017) finds that, in British discourse, there is a tendency to position the Falklands as an independent territory while, in Argentinian discourses, the Falklands are positioned as part of the dominion of Argentina. While Leung (2017) makes use of the quantitative techniques of corpus-assisted discourse studies, Christiansen & Høyers (2015) analysis of anti-feminist sentiments in online settings is primarily qualitative and overtly positioned within the Faircloughian tradition of critical discourse analysis. More specifically, this article studies the use of the constructions “feminism doesn’t represent me, I am not a victim!, and I don’t need feminism because” in posts on a tumblr blog called *Women Against Feminism*, and it is found that these constructions represent a perception of feminism as aggressive and condescending, which ignores the many nuances of feminism as such.

- Language and communication in organizational and professional contexts: An area that has received much attention nationally in Denmark and, of course, internationally is language and communication in organizations and other professional settings. No less than four universities in Denmark count this among their central areas of research (more specifically, Copenhagen Business School, Aarhus University, the University of Southern Denmark, and Aalborg University). Therefore, in addition to a few stand-alone articles, the thematic sections in issues 3 and 9 of *Globe* are dedicated to professional communication.
- Language and culture: As mentioned above, *Globe* was originally published under the auspices of the Department of Culture and Global Studies, and, thus, in the very early stages of discussing what the scope of the journal should include, there was agreement that the interaction between language and culture should be one of the cornerstones of *Globe*. Therefore, it is no surprise that several articles addressing this topic from many different perspectives have been published in the journal. For instance, Dam (2016) discusses the interplay between language use and social constructions, providing compelling arguments for combining cognitive-linguistic and social-constructivist theoretical perspectives in the study of socially relevant categories, such as gender categories, ethnic categories, and legal categories. Amoakohene et al. (2024) report on a study of presidential inaugural addresses in Ghanaian and American contexts and identify differences in cohesive discursive strategies, which they ascribe to the politicians’ different cultural backgrounds. Addressing humor in intercultural communication between Danes and non-Danes, Lundquist (2021) focuses on verbal humor and shows how it is linked to socialization processes and cultural values.
- Language teaching and learning: A number of articles addressing various aspects of teaching and learning language have seen publication in *Globe*, reflecting not only the importance and relevance of language didactics as a research field but also highlighting that, unlike what some scholars within other disciplines in the humanities mistakenly think, it is indeed a serious field of research. For instance, Gebauer et al. (2024) present the findings of a study pertaining to a teaching initiative called “German as an Additional Competence”, which focuses on teaching practical German to university students within a wide range of degree programs. Making use of semi-structured interviews, Gebauer et al. (2024) address the motivations of participants in this teaching program and identify a range of motivational factors. While this study is based on qualitative methods, Madsen (2020) applies inferential statistics to see if students’ grammar exam results can be predicted from their performances in home assignments throughout the course, which his results indicate to be the case. The findings also suggest that the final exam score is not necessarily determined by students’ entry level understanding of grammar but

rather how they progress during the course. All of this provides empirical foundations to support the idea that home assignments are indeed helpful to students' learning. Also addressing grammar, Haugaard & Jensen (2020) explore the use of young adult fiction as a way to increase upper secondary level learners' understanding of English grammar. Focusing on modal verbs in the *The Hunger Games* franchise, Haugaard & Jensen (2020) find that pupils not only gained a solid understanding of modality but also gained insight into how the use of modal markers contributed to literary characterization in that many of them found that modal verbs also made characters in the narrative seem hesitant and lacking in confidence. Linking their findings to the field of pedagogical stylistics, Haugaard & Jensen (2020) suggest that such an integration of grammar and literature nurtures a functional perspective on grammar in learners.

- **Text linguistics:** Several articles falling under the rubric of text linguistics (here understood in the broadest possible sense) have been published in *Globe* over the years. Like stylistics and discourse studies, text linguistics looks at the interaction between linguistic phenomena and larger textual and extra-textual structures. Specifically, text linguistics focuses on how linguistic units contribute to overall textual features such as, but not limited to, textual cohesion and coherence, topic flow, and information structure as well as contextual features (e.g., genre, intentionality, and participation structure). Larsen (2022) looks at the interaction between speech acts and textual macrostructures in German tenancy contracts. She shows that text segments are associated with particular speech act functions all of which feed into the overall function of a contract – namely, ENTER INTO AGREEMENT. Turning to a very different genre, Jensen et al. (2016) investigate politeness strategies in e-mail openings and closings across four languages – namely, Danish, Swedish, French, and Italian – and pinpoint a range of overlaps and differences, which they ascribe to underlying cultural differences. Haugaard & Laursen (2021) compare management forewords in Danish and Spanish annual reports and find salient cross-language differences in move structure in their data, which, like in Jensen et al. (2016), are ascribed to cultural differences.
- **Sociolinguistics:** Addressing the interplay between linguistic variation (or, more broadly, language use) and social identity, sociolinguistics was along with pragmatics for a long time one of the most important usage-oriented alternatives to Chomskian formal linguistics. While Chomskian linguistics has now largely lost its prominence, and other types of functionalist linguistics have joined sociolinguistics and pragmatics as influential approaches to language, sociolinguistics – be it variationist sociolinguistics or social constructivist sociolinguistics – remains hugely important today. *Globe* has seen its fair share of sociolinguistically-oriented articles. An early contribution is Meluzzi's (2015) study of the linkage between Italo-Romance dialects spoken in Bozen and speakers' constructions of identity. Making use of interview data, she identifies speakers' emic perspectives on domains of use showing a perception of dialectal features being used more often in familial settings than in broader societal settings. In an interesting exploratory study, Jensen (2017) uses Google Trends to track large-scale trends in the use of the dialect labels "Geordie", "Scouse", and "Cockney" as search terms. She shows that such trends seem to reflect patterns in users' interests with users searching for "Geordie" only being interested in the show *Geordie Shore*, while users searching for "Scouse" being mainly interested in Liverpool, and users searching for "Cockney" are the only ones seemingly interested in the linguistic aspect of the dialect label in question. Importantly, Jensen (2017) lists both the advantages and limitations of using Google Trends in sociolinguistic research. Of course, issue 15 of *Globe* in its entirety is solidly planted in sociolinguistics with its thematic focus on language contact, and there are no less than two thematic sections in issue 12 dedicated to another sociolinguistic topic – namely, multilingualism.

Of course, this does not mean that these are the only areas of research covered in *Globe*. Take a look at the archives, and you will find topics ranging from Kantian grammar to anti-Muslim discourse strategies to the discourse of banking to West-African Pidgin English. Note also that there is an interdisciplinary undercurrent to most of the articles highlighted as examples above which is also found in the majority of articles published in the journal throughout its ten years of existence. For instance, Haugaard & Laursen (2021) and Jensen et al. (2016), while dealing with text-linguistic phenomena, draw on insights from the area of language and culture, with the latter also looking to pragmatics. Conversely, Amoakohene et al. (2024) is just as much a text-linguistic study as it is a study of the interplay between language and culture. Haugaard & Jensen (2020), while addressing a topic relating to language pedagogy, is anchored in stylistics, and Herrmann et al. (2017) in reality combines stylistics and sociolinguistics.

With its open access model, *Globe* offers its readers direct access to a plethora of peer-reviewed research that not only addresses multiple different phenomena but also provides a multitude of perspectives, theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches. And it is all there, available to anyone who is interested. *Globe* truly is the epitome of the democratization of information in academia.

What about tomorrow?

There is no denying that *Globe* remains an important channel for publication of quality research both nationally and internationally. *Globe* was born out of the chaos caused by the utter and complete failure of the BFI. Not only that, *Globe* has outlived the BFI. It has survived multiple organizational changes at Aalborg University and has in fact outlived all the institutional organizations it was originally associated with. The Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences no longer exist, having been merged into the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, and the Department of Culture and Global Studies was absorbed into the Department of Culture and Learning. Even the Languages and Linguistics research group no longer exists as a separate entity as its members are now part of the research group Communication, Language, and Discourse.

It is truly remarkable that *Globe* has survived so many organizational changes, seeing that other journals, with longer histories, fell victim to similar circumstances. One tragic example is *RASK* which, anchored at the University of Southern Denmark, was discontinued in 2022. Its demise was a direct result of radical changes at the university which themselves were ultimately caused by the seemingly never-ending barrage of political reforms in the education and research sector.

Globe has shown extraordinary resilience in a volatile environment of constant restructuring and reform, both nationally and locally. I sincerely hope that Aalborg University will continue to support the journal because, as mentioned a couple of times above, it has become not only a nationally important publication channel but also a research channel with international reach. To me, *Globe* is a success story. Let's keep it that way! While, to quote Yoda, "difficult to see; always in motion is the future", one thing is for sure "more dumb decisions politicians will make" (that was me saying that, not Yoda), and so there will be a continued need for a journal like *Globe* many decades to come.

So, dear reader, please raise a metaphorical glass and join me in a metaphorical toast: here's to at least ten more years of *Globe*! "What are we drinking?", I hear you ask. Well, lemonade, of course – in the form of the articles within this very issue of *Globe*.

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