

Project description

“Care work as language work: Affordances and restrictions for speakers of Swedish as a second language”

The project “Care work as language work: Affordances and restrictions for speakers of Swedish as a second language” pays attention to the communicative and literacy practices in the elderly care sector in Sweden.

The background of the study lies in the increasing documentation demands witnessed in workplaces in the last decade as a result of new socioeconomic structures, discussed under the term “The new work order”.

A special focus is casted upon those carers whose first language is not Swedish and are therefore more likely to face challenges when participating in central work tasks that include communication and paperwork.

The study takes place in three elderly care centres in Sweden and is conducted by using ethnographic methods of data collection, including observation, video and audio recordings, informal interviews with carers and participation in workplace meetings.

The aim of the project is to deepen our knowledge about written and oral interaction in the working life of carers. What strategies and techniques do the carers develop that help them complete their work effectively and overcome possible language and literacy-related problems? A close co-operation between practitioners and researchers is intended to result in a more effective communication at the workplace which in turn will benefit the residents.

Project leader

Gunilla Jansson

Co-workers

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Financier

Forskningsrådet för socialvetenskap och arbetsliv (FAS)

Department of Scandinavian Languages



Financier period

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Publications

Jansson, Gunilla, 2011. Samverkan mellan språkforskning och arbetsplats i äldreomsorgen. [Co-operation between linguistics and work place in the elderly care.] In Ylikiiskilä, Antti & Westman, Maria (eds.), Språk för framtiden. [Language for the future]. Papers from the ASLA symposium in Falun 12-13 November 2010.

Jansson, Gunilla. Bridging language barriers in diverse care settings. To appear in a special issue, "Multilingualism at the work place", in *Multilingua* 2013.

Jansson, Gunilla (Co-author Zoe Nikolaidou). Developing membership roles as outsiders in a demanding workplace setting. (Under peer review.)

Jansson, Gunilla. En etnografisk metodansats i samtalsstudier i äldreomsorgen [An ethnographic approach to the study of staff-resident interaction in a nursing home.] (Under peer review.)

Network

Talk, Text and Tools (3T) Scandinavian Interdisciplinary Health Communication Research. <http://hj.se/hhj/forskning/natverk/talk-text-and-tools-3t.html>

Conference presentations

Interdisciplinary Conference on Discourse and Interaction, Aalborg University, Denmark. 17-19 November 2010. (Co-workers: Zoe Nikolaidou and Anna-Malin Karlsson.). Title of paper presentation: "Swedish as a second language in the elderly care sector. Communicating and documenting a day at the workplace."

Paper presentation at the ASLA symposium in Falun, November 2010. "Om forskarroll och etnografi i praxisorienterad forskning i arbetslivet." [Researcher role and ethnography in praxisoriented research in working life.]

Panel, "Multilingualism at work". International conference "Context and meaning", Bristol 13-15 April 2011. Title of paper presentation: "Bridging language barriers in emotional interaction in the elderly care."

Workshop at Södertörn University 27 May 2011, "Språk i hälsosektorn, forskning om text och samtal i yrkeslivet, särskilt inom vård och omsorg" [Language in Health Communication.



Research on Text and Talk in Working Life]. Paper presentation: "Konfliktfyllda vårdssituationer i äldreomsorgen" [Conflicting goals in caretaking of the elderly].

Workshop at Karlstad University 13-14 October 2011, "Myndighetsspråk som kulturbärare" [Official Language as Culture Bearer]. Paper presentation "Den språkliga mångfalden i äldreomsorgen i ett språkpolitiskt perspektiv" [Linguistic Diversity in the Elderly care – A Language Policy perspective].