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***At and og* in Danish spoken language – a description**

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Skifter om Samtalegrammatik (SoS) er en serie arbejdspapirer om samtalegrammatik som udgives af forskergruppen *DanTIN* ("Danish talk-in-interaction"). *DanTIN* består af studerende og forskere fra og omkring Lingvistik på Aarhus Universitet. *DanTIN* bestyrer hjemmesiden *samtalegrammatik.dk*. Udgivelserne i *Skifter om Samtalegrammatik* er arbejdspapirer, studenteropgaver, rapporter, afhandlinger og andet som beskriver og analyserer samtalegrammatiske fænomener.

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Billedet til forsiden (*Kyssepelikaner*) er taget af Eva Hellesøe Nielsen og redigeret af Sidsel Mosegaard Holm.

Redaktionsgruppen for dette nummer består af Ehm Hjorth Miltersen, Katrine Garly og Jakob Steensig.

Redaktionel kommentar

Da vi startede det samarbejde mellem studerende og forskere som senere skulle blive til DanTIN tilbage i 2009, var én af de første ting vi observerede, at skriftsprogets ord "og" og "at" havde en anden fordeling i samtaleproget end i skriftsproget. Dette var selvfølgelig ikke en original opdagelse. Selv *Den Danske Ordbog* (uden årstal) noterer at "infinitiv-partiklen "at" udtales [ʌ]". Men ingen har hidtil redegjort for den anderledes *grammatiske* systematik der findes i samtaleproget i forhold til skriftsproget når det gælder udtalen og brugen af infinitivpartikler og forskellige typer konjunktioner.

Dette er præcis hvad Andrea Bruun gør i dette nummer af *Skrifter for Samtalegrammatik*. For at forklare problemstillingen tager Andrea Bruun udgangspunkt i skriftsproget, men i resten af skriftet tager hun udgangspunkt i de former ordene rent faktisk har i samtaledata. Der ved får vi præcise formuleringer af hvordan det forholder sig med ordene *a* [a], *at* [ad], *å* [ʌ] og *og* [ʌw], hvordan de fordeler sig på ordklasser og hvordan de bruges i dansk samtaleprog.

Editorial comment

There are two words in written Danish, "og" ('and') and "at" ('that' or 'to') which have totally different realizations, belong to different word classes and perform different functions in talk-in-interaction. Some of these differences have been noted in dictionaries and grammars before, but until now, no systematic investigation of the corresponding words in Danish talk-in-interaction has been carried out.

This is what Andrea Bruun does in this issue of *Skrifter i Samtalegrammatik*. She describes the systematic distribution and functions of the words *a* [a] and *at* [ad] ('that'), *å* [ʌ] (infinitive particle and 'and') and *og* [ʌw] ('and') based on data from Danish talk-in-interaction.

***At* and *og* in Danish spoken language – a description**

by ANDREA BRUUN

1 Introduction

The idea behind the orthography of any given language is to depict the sounds of the spoken words of that language. That is why letters correspond to sounds in an approximation of phonemic transcription of the spoken language (Jervelund 2007). The spoken language is fluid and changes and develops all the time where the orthography is often more stationary due to orthographic rules. Over a period of time this can create a gap between the spoken language and the written language where the orthography is no longer representing the spoken language. This gap is one of the reasons why it is interesting to create a description of the spoken language.

This paper will describe the two words *at* and *og* as they are realized in Danish spoken language. This will be done by using their orthographic representations as the basis for the analysis and look in authentic conversations for possible variations of these words. The description will contain a brief overview of the words' distribution in the written language and then the distribution in the spoken language.

2 Method and data

The data used in this paper is different authentic Danish conversations from the corpus SamtaleBank (2018). When showing examples from this corpus, these will be glossed loosely after the Leipzig Glossing Rules (2015). The conversations in the SamtaleBank are already transcribed, but the extracts used in this paper are altered so that some features such as intonation markers are not present. This is done to ensure clarity of the examples, and because these did not seem relevant for this analysis. The corpus has been searched for instances of the two words *at* and *og* in order to describe their distribution in the Danish spoken language and in total there are over 300 occurrences.

This paper is a basic grammatical description with elements from Conversation Analysis (CA). This paper will not look at specific CA elements such as the conversational sequence where you look at the construction and organization of turns. Examples occur more or less free

of context but context is still considered to the extent that it is necessary in order to say something about the particular phenomenon.

3 at

3.1 Written language

In written Danish language *at* has two functions and only one form. The different functions will be described below.

3.1.1 Conjunction

<at> can function as a conjunction to a subordinate complement clause (Christensen and Christensen 2009:231-232) and corresponds to the English *that* (GRO 2018). The function of the clause is typically nominal and <at> is positioned first. Below are examples of <at> used as a conjunction (1, 2, 3)(Christensen and Christensen 2009:231-232):

- (1) Jeg mener **at** han havde sko på
 I mean-PRS that.CON he had shoe.PL on
I believe that he was wearing shoes
- (2) Damen sagde **at** jeg bare skulle tage en kage
 lady-DEF said that.CON I just should take-INF a cake
The lady said that I should just take a cookie
- (3) **At** han har løjet er en kendsgerning
 that.CON he have lie-PERF be.PRS a fact
That he had lied is a fact

3.1.2 Infinitive particle

<at> can furthermore function as an infinitive particle positioned before the infinitive verb in an infinitive phrase with nominal function (Christensen and Christensen 2009:155) and is translated into the English *to* (GRO 2018). This means that the infinitive phrase appears as subject, object and prepositional complements and it can furthermore function as a post-positioned attribute to a noun (Christensen and Christensen 2009:176). The infinitive verb is formed by adding an *-e* suffix to the root and by that creating agreement between the particle and the verb. <at> is obligatory when the infinitive form occurs in the infinitive phrase with nominal function (Christensen and Christensen 2009:155). Below are examples of <at> functioning as an infinitive particle (5, 6, 7). Notice the last example (7) where the verb *sy* gets no infinitive suffix. When a root ends with a vowel the *-e* is omitted.

- (5) Han begyndte **at** danse
 he began to.INF dance-INF
He started to dance
- (6) Vær klar til **at** hoppe!
 be ready to.PREP to.INF jump-INF
Be ready to jump
- (7) Hun elsker **at** sy
 she love to.INF sew.INF
She loves to sew

3.2 Spoken language

In Danish spoken language *at* shares some of the same functions with the orthographic <at> but it has different forms. From the instances of *at* that have been investigated, three different forms appear: [a], [ad] and [ʌ] (the phonemic form is used due to orthographic limitations). Each form will be described below.

3.2.1 [a]

<at> is most often realized as [a], where it has the same function as the conjunction in the written language. It is positioned first in a subordinate complement clause as well. In the transcript a simple *a* will be used to represent this form. Example (8, 9, 10) shows this function:

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM2/SAMFUNDSSKRIVE/L190
- (8) AST: jamen det jo sådan **a** alle
 CON it PAR ADV that.CON everyone
 betaler e↘næsten topskat...
 pay almost top:tax
Yes but it (is) in that way that everyone pays top taxes...
- SAMTALEBANK/SAM2/SAMFUNDSSKRIVE/L198
- (9) AST: men så det så bare **a**
 but then it PAR just that.CON
 lønningerne var ste:ge
 salary-PL-DEF was risen
But then it (is) just that the salaries had risen

SAMTALEBANK/SAM2/PREBEN_OG_THOMAS/L1417-1418

(10) THO: det var så fordi jeg sku til Thailand
 it was PAR because I should to Thailand

a je:g holdt et års
 that.CON I held one year-GEN

pause
 break

It was (particle) because I was going to Thailand that I took a one-year break

In these examples it is clear when listening to the conversations that the <t> from the written language is not realized. However, some examples might be ambiguous about whether a /t/ sound is present or not due to the environment where they appear. An ambiguous environment is where [a] is followed by a [d] consonant (alveolar plosive). But these examples (11, 12) follow the same pattern as showed above: only the vowel, [a], is realized and the ambiguity is due to the following word starting with a [d] consonant.

SAMTALEBANK/SAM3/MADLAVNING/L191-192

(11) JOR: je::g jeg tror ikk jeg har været ude
 I I think NEG I have been out

for **a** der var nogen der sagde
 PRÆP that.CON there was anyone there said

nej
 no

I, I do not think I have experienced that there was someone who said no

SAMTALEBANK/SAM4/MØDREGRUPPE1/L485-487

(12) DO: å- å vedkommende kørte
 and and person:concerned drove
 (0.6)
 så langsomt **a** det begyndte å
 so slow that.CON it started to.INF

blive farligt
 become.INF dangerous

And- and that person was driving so slowly that it was starting to get dangerous

So on basis of these findings the claim is that in Danish spoken language the vowel [a] is the normal way to express the conjunction <at> from the written language which means that the <t> from the orthographic representation is not realized.

3.2.2 [ad]

In some instances the <t> is realized through [d] giving the form [ad]. [ad] has the same function as [a] being a conjunction in subordinate complement clauses. The [ad] form is typically used in spoken language before hesitations in utterances. A typical hesitation marker in Danish is *øh* (Samtalegrammatik 2014). Another hesitation marker is simply a pause causing silence in the utterance. So when [a] occurs before a hesitation marker as *øh* or a pause it will be realized as [ad]. In the transcript *at* will be used to represent this form. This is shown in the examples below (13, 14, 15, 16):

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM2/ANNE_OG_BEATE/L45-49
- (13) ANN: det er fordi **at** ø::h
it is because that.CONJ uh
(1.2)
ham der min vejleder er med i ø::h
him there my counsellor is with in uh
(1.8)
et national projekt→
a national project
- It is because that guy, my counsellor, is in a national project*

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM2/ANNE_OG_BEATE/L66-67
- (14) BE: men så:øh (0.5) reagerede han så å
but then:uh react-PRT he ADV and

sagde **at** øh de var ikke på
said that.CONJ uh they were NEG on

arbejde
work
- But then uh he reacted and said that uh they were not at work*

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM3/POLITIFORHØR/L76-78
- (15) P2: så nytter det ikk noget du siger **at**
 then help it NEG anything you say that.CON
 (0.3)
 jam det der der har jeg været alene
 but it there there have I be-PERF alone
It is no use (that) you say that "but that thing there I have been alone

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM3/MADLAVNING/L373-374
- (16) HAN: ø::h nu- (0.7) for eksempel har
 uh now for example have.PRS

 jeg hørt **at** (0.4)
 I heard.PERF to.INF

 hvis man går ind å arbejder me:dmed (.)
 if you walk in and work-PRS with with

 foderudnyttelse
 fodder:utilisation
Uh now, for example I have heard that if you go in and work with with fodder utilisation

In these examples something equivalent to the <t> from the orthographic representation is present. The reason is probably that when hesitating you tend to stretch sounds, indicating some kind of trouble in an utterance (Couper-Kuhlen and Selting 2018). The trouble in these examples would be a word search where the speaker is trying to find the right word(s) to use (Schegloff et al. 1977). So when a speaker needs to stretch *a*, [a], it becomes *at*, [ad]. The *a* form does not seem to appear in this position in the data.

Furthermore *at* can be used when a speaker wants to emphasize the complement clause. This is seen in the examples below (17, 18):

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM3/GAMLEDAGE/L212
- (17) LIS: nej men alene det **at** hun gjorde det
 no but alone it that.CONJ she did it
No but only the fact that she did it

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM3/POLITIFORHØR/L314
- (18) P1: **at** gennemsnitlig så laver du
 that.CONJ average then make-PRS you
- et indbrud (.) hver anden °dag°
 a break-in every second day
- That in average you do a break-in every other day*

3.2.3 [ʌ]

The third form of <at> found in the data is the vowel [ʌ]. This form functions as the infinitive particle within the infinitive phrase with nominal function. In the transcript *å* will be used to represent the [ʌ] vowel as shown in the examples below (19, 20):

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM2/PREBEN_OG_THOMAS/L1081
- (19) THO: så ka han risikere **å** stå uden noget
 so can he risk-INF to.INF stand without anything
- Then he can risk ending up without anything*

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM2/ANNE_OG_BEATE/L89
- (20) BE: jeg skal aflevere den
 I must deliver it
 °for **å** komme til eksamen°
 for to.INF come to exam-DEF
- I must hand it in to go to the exam*

To briefly sum up this gives us three forms of the orthographic <at>: *a*, *at* and *å*. *a* is the standard way to express the conjunction and *å* is the normal way to express the infinitive particle. *at* is only used in special places such as before hesitation markers. An overview of the forms and functions is seen below. It can be seen as an alternative visualization of the rules of realization for *at*.

ORTOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION	FUNCTION	FORM	ENVIRONMENT
<at>	conjunction	a [a]	in complement clauses
		at [ad]	in emphasized complement clauses before hesitation markers in complement clauses
	infinitive particle	å [ʌ]	before the infinitive verb

This means that the written <at> is realized through three forms (*a*, *at* and *å*) being in complementary distribution where *at* only occurs in the special environments listed above, *å* only before the infinitive verb and *a* elsewhere.

This corresponds to somehow to what you can find when looking at *at* in The Danish Dictionary (DDO) but it has not been investigated in the same way in a conversational corpus. Furthermore DDO claims that *at* is used as the infinitive particle when positioned first in the clause. It has not been possible to find such an example in the corpus. So in order to say something conclusive about this a greater corpus must be examined. Finally Christensen and Christensen (2009:155) claim that the conjunction *at* is often pronounced with audible final sound claiming that /t/ is often present in the spoken language. On the basis of the data examined in this paper, I claim the opposite.

4 og

4.1 Written language

In written language <og> functions as a conjunction between coordinate clauses (Christensen and Christensen 2009:152) and translates into the English *and* (GRO 2018). The examples below show this function (21, 22, 23):

(21) Hun elsker hunde **og** katte
 she love-PRS dog-PL and cat-PL
She loves dogs and cats

(22) Manden har hue **og** vanter på
 man-DEF has hat and glove-PL on
The man is wearing hat and gloves

(23) Der er ost **og** mælk i køleskabet
 there is cheese and milk in fridge-DEF
There is cheese and milk in the fridge

4.2 Spoken language

4.2.1 [ʌ]

In spoken language *og* is realized as the vowel [ʌ] and has the same function being a conjunction between coordinate clauses. In the transcription the vowel *å* will be used to show this. Its function is showed in the examples below (24, 25, 26):

- (24) SAMTALEBANK/TELEFON/BILEN/L140
BO: så ringet jeg til lægen mandag **å** fik
then called I to doctor-DEF Monday and got

penicillin
penicillin

Then I called the doctor Monday and got penicillin

- (25) SAMTALEBANK/SAM3/POLITIFORHØR/L100
P1: hvor du stjæler kaffe **å** kopper
where you steal coffee and cup-PL
Where you steal coffee and cups

- (26) SAMTALEBANK/SAM2/SAMFUNDSKRISE/535
AST: det var kun når vi sku til fyn
it was only when we should to Funen

å så noget
and such something

It was only when we were going to Funen and stuff like that

4.2.2 [ʌw]

Å is the normal way to express the <og> conjunction but another form is also found in the corpus: [ʌw]. It has the same function as *å* being a conjunction but it seems to occur under specific circumstances in conversation. This form will be transcribed as *og* in the following examples. The corpus does not have that many occurrences of the *og* form so the following will be preliminary observations that need to be investigated further.

Og seems to be used to emphasize the fact that there are two coordinated elements. This is seen in the example below (27). In this example the underlining from the transcription is included to show that the speaker is stressing this specific word.

- (27) SAMTALEBANK/SAM4/MØDREGRUPPE1/L336-337
SUS: [menden-]den je::g købte til dig det
but it it I bought to you it

var chokolade og nødder
was chocolate and nuts

But the one, the one I bought for you that was chocolate and nuts

In this example the speaker Susanne (SUS) is emphasizing that the coffee she bought the recipient Dorte was not only with chocolate, but it was with chocolate *and* nuts. So as a tool for emphasis *og* can be used instead of *å*.

Og can also be used before hesitation markers such as *øh* and pauses. This is seen in the examples below (28, 29):

SAMTALEBANK/SAM3/KARTOFLER_OG_BROCCOLI/L863-867
 (28) TI: ja hvor hun skal ind på prøve
 yes where hun shall in on trial

(0.4)

TO: °o°kay↗
 okay

(.)

TI: **og** ø[:h]
 and uh

Yes where she is going in on trial. Okay. And uh

SAMTALEBANK/SAM4/MØDREGRUPPE1/L878-879
 (29) SUS: jamen der var to hundrede **og** (0.3) tre
 well there was two hundred and three

hundrede otteogtredive
 hundred thirty:eight

tilmeldt
 registrer-PERF

Well there were two hundred and (pause) three hundred and thirty-eight registered

But *å* occurs in this position as well (30):

SAMTALEBANK/SAM3/MADLAVNING/53-54
 (30) ANN: med ø:::h hverdagsituationer **å:::**
 with uh everyday:situations and

(0.9)

with uh everyday-situations and

This means that both *å* and *og* can appear before hesitation markers. In order to say something conclusive this needs to be investigated further in a bigger corpus, but as a preliminary observation both forms can appear in this position.

Another possible hypothesis of usage of the *og* form is when reading aloud in conversation. In these cases the speaker will correct the normal spoken language *å* to *og* maybe in order to reflect the <g> in written language. This could be a possible explanation for example (31) below. In this example the speaker Sebastian (SE) is reading a list of rules aloud from his computer.

- SAMTALEBANK/SAM4/STUDIEGRUPPE/L479-481
- (31) SE: ellers skal der være ro klokken toogtyve
 otherwise must there be quiet clock-DEF twenty:two
- å der må ikk ryges eller drikkes **og**
 and there may NEG smoke-PAS or drink-PAS and
- SE: medbragt .hhh[hhh] hvorfor må man ikk det
 bring:along why may you NEG it
*Otherwise there must be quiet at 22 o'clock and there must
be no smoking or drinking and bring along... Why can't you
do that*

Another possible hypothesis could also be that you sometimes put emphasis on the last conjunction when mentioning elements on a list. As mentioned before in this example the speaker is reading rules aloud and then the *og* could mark that the list is ending after the conjunction. Both of these hypotheses need to be investigated further.

To briefly sum up this gives us two forms of the orthographic <og>: *å* and *og*. *å* being the standard way to express the orthographic conjunction and *og* being a less frequent form e.g. used to indicate emphasis. An overview of the forms and functions is seen below.

ORTOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION	FUNCTION	FORM	ENVIRONMENT
<og>	conjunction	å [ʌ]	between coordinates elements
		og [ʌw]	before an emphasized coordinated element before hesitation markers between coordinated elements to reflect orthography/to indicate last element of a list

This means that the written <og> is realized through two forms (*å* and *og*) being in complementary distribution where *og* only occurs in the special environments listed above and *å* elsewhere.

Further, DDO (2018) claims that the written language <og> is represented as *å* in the spoken language. They mention the spoken language *og* as a representation but do not explain where this form occurs. This paper has given some preliminary explanations on where *og* could occur.

5 [ʌ]

The previous sections showed how <at> and <og> are represented in the spoken language. When comparing the forms from the written language with their forms in the spoken language, we saw that other forms were present. The results showed that in Danish spoken language there is no distinction between the infinitive particle *å* and the conjunction *å*. This means that in conversation the form [ʌ] represents (at least) two functions. This has caused a tendency in the written language where language users are in doubt whether they should write *at* or *og* (Ordnet.dk 2011, Reichstein 2015). This causes alternative writings such as the example (32) below:

- (32) Vi skal ud og spise
 weshall out and eat-INF
We are going out to eat

Technically, this example is not grammatically wrong. It is possible to have *og* separating *ud* and *spise* and by that seeing them as two coordinate clauses. But in most cases this is not the intended meaning by the language users. The intended meaning is that the *we* in the example wants to go out in order to get something to eat. If this is the intended meaning then the language user should write *at* instead of *og* if following the standard grammatical rules. This is a claim that the spoken language has infiltrated the written language. Furthermore

this could be an argument for changing the written language so that it to a higher degree reflects the spoken language.

Finally, it should be pointed out that *a* and *å* have several other functions in the spoken language beside those mentioned in this paper. *Å* can also represent <også> and *a* can furthermore represent the prepositions <ad> and <af> from the Danish written language. This means that there are even more forms to work with.

6 Conclusion

This paper has investigated how the two words <at> and <og> appear in Danish spoken language. <at> in the written language has only one form functioning as both a conjunction and the infinitive particle. In the spoken language *at* has three different forms: *a*, *at* and *å*. *A* and *at* function both as the conjunction from the written language with *at* only occurring before hesitation markers or to create emphasis. *Å* functions as the infinitive particle. <og> has one function in the written language. It functions as a conjunction between coordinated elements. In the spoken language two forms were found: *å* and *og*. Both forms function as conjunctions, but *og* seems to only appear under special circumstances. Such circumstances could be to emphasize that there is another clause, before hesitation markers or reflecting orthography or indicating the last element of a list. *Å* both represents the infinitive particle and the conjunction creating problems separating them in the written language.

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