

Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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Om leksikonet: https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om_leksikonet.pdf

Muntlig tekst

Budskap som kommer fram via menneskets stemme; “viva vox” (latin for “den levende stemme”).

Både på gresk og på latin betyr verbet for *å lytte* også *å lese*: gresk “akouô” og latin “audire” (Bouquiaux-Simon 2004 s. 49).

Det dreier seg oftest om “composition in performance” (Schanze 2001 s. 286), situasjonsavhengig og fleksibelt. Andre ganger kan en muntlig replikk eller et muntlig innlegg (f.eks. en tale) være nøye og detaljert planlagt.

“[L]istening to spoken words forms hearers into a group, a true audience, just as reading written or printed texts turns individuals in on themselves.” (Ong 2000 s. 136)

“Muntlige tekster er tekster der muntlig kommunikasjon er den dominerende uttrykksformen, men der også andre modi som stemmebruk, tonefall, dialekt, kroppsspråk, klær, musikk og bilder vil være sentrale for å forstå samspillet i teksten. [...] Kjennetegn ved muntlige tekster [er:]

Bruk av stemme og hørsel

Et viktig kjennetegn ved en muntlig tekst er at stemmen er hovedmediet, og vi må bruke hørselssansen for å avkode teksten. En muntlig tekst vil derfor være auditiv. Noen ganger er stemmen vår mediet, andre ganger blir det brukt medier som tv og radio for å formidle den muntlige teksten.

Stor grad av spontanitet

I en samtale har vi liten tid til å planlegge det vi skal si. Vi kan reagere umiddelbart på noe som blir sagt, og samtalen trenger ikke å vare mer enn et par minutter. Muntlige tekster er lite planlagte, spontane og lite varige, men det gjelder ikke alle typer muntlige tekster. I en nyhetssending på radioen vil nyhetsoppleseren ha et ferdigskrevet manus, samtidig som det kan være innslag av intervju der nyhetsoppleseren ikke kan planlegge alle detaljer.

Bruk av ikke-verbal kommunikasjon

To venner som snakker sammen kan se hverandre og ha en dialog. Underveis i samtalen kan de bruke mimikk, kroppsspråk og tonefall når de snakker med hverandre. Ved å heve stemmen kan de markere uenighet, ved å nikke med hodet kan de markere enighet. De kan avbryte hverandre og stille spørsmål når de ikke forstår.

Bruk av småord

Å snakke som man skriver er vanskelig. Når vi snakker, bruker vi småord som “liksom”, “på en måte”, “skjønner du”, “ikke sant”, eller nøleord som “eh..”, “hm...” og vi uttrykker oss mer uformelt. Flere av ytringene kan også være ufullstendige, men sett i sammenheng med resten av samtalen og som en del av en større kontekst, vil de likevel gi mening.

Bruk av tilpasset muntlig språk

En muntlig tekst vil ha et muntlig språk, men språket må tilpasses sjangeren og konteksten, slik det må i alle tekster. Tenk deg at dagens nyhetssending starter slik: “I dag har det, eh, på en måte, vært en slags ulykke liksom, et eller annet sted, jeg husker ikke helt hvor, tror jeg...” Dette er språkbruk vi tenker på som privat, og som vil passe til en samtale mellom to venner. I en nyhetssending er språkbruken offentlig. Nyhetsoppleseren skal formidle nyhetene til mange mottakere, og det stiller visse krav til språkbruken. Språket må være formelt, korrekt og presist, og avsenderen har tid til å forberede det som skal bli sagt.

Sosiale faktorer spiller inn

Måten vi bruker språket på henger også sammen med sosiale faktorer som makt, kjønn, alder, sosial bakgrunn og økonomisk bakgrunn. Ungdommer har sin måte å bruke språket på, gutter og jenter bruker ikke språket likt, og også innenfor ulike yrker blir språket brukt ulikt.” (Torgrim G. Økland og Marita Aksnes i <http://ndla.no/nb/node/63254?fag=6118>; lesedato 09.11.16)

Såkalt “effective vocal delivery” har bl.a. disse kjennetegnene:

“Pronunciation

Pronunciation concerns how closely sounds conform to those assigned to words in a particular language variety. An audience-centered approach to speaking compels the speaker to pronounce words in a way that the audience will understand. A reciprocal approach compels the audience to learn new ways of hearing words pronounced. In any context, speakers and audiences can benefit from expanding their facility with language varieties different from their own.

Articulation

Articulation is the clarity or distinction with which sounds are made. A speaker can articulate clearly while pronouncing poorly (or vice versa). A lack of articulation is often referred to as mumbling, which can be frustrating for listeners and cause them

to underestimate a speaker's credibility. Strong articulation can be achieved by giving sufficient support and space to consonants and vowels as you say them.

Volume

The volume of your speaking voice depends on the amount of air you project through your larynx (voice box). Effective speakers speak loudly enough for everyone in the room to hear them. Some contexts may compel a speaker to lower her volume (to create intrigue or mark a transition to a more serious topic). Effective speakers are attuned to their audiences: Are people leaning forward with one ear tilted toward you? Are they wincing?

Pitch

The pitch of your voice is determined by how fast the folds in your vocal chords vibrate. You may tend to speak with high, medium, or low pitch, but each voice has a range. In some communities, a high-pitched voice may be interpreted as tentative or weak and a deep voice strong or authoritative. Although these correlations are mistaken, speakers should be aware of these assumptions. Ask others how you sound and practice modifying your pitch.

Rate

Rate refers to how quickly or slowly you speak. There is no perfect speaking rate. If, however, you deliver your entire speech at a rate of fewer than 120 words per minute (too slow) or more than 180 wpm (too fast), your audience will usually lose interest. Nerves cause most people to talk too fast. Speakers who aim to speak more slowly than feels natural tend to settle into a pace that is actually ideal for the audience.

Pauses

Effective speakers use intentional pauses to signal transitions and important ideas and to give the audience time to think. A planned pause is an excellent alternative to "um" or "you know." Many speakers write the reminder "PAUSE!" in their speaking outlines. A well-timed pause can be more effective than the choicest word.

Variation

By varying your volume, pitch, rate, and pauses during your speech, you can underscore the meaning of your words and maintain the interest of your audience. Speakers who tend towards a monotonous delivery style often benefit greatly by practicing the speech with exaggerated variation." (Susan Beebe, Steven A. Beebe m.fl. i <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/sites/default/files/saw/docs/Effective%20Vocal%20Delivery.pdf>; lesedato 07.12.17)

“En som vil skape muntlig fortellerkunst må kvitte seg med holdningen at teksten er den egentlige fortellingen. Den egentlige fortellingen for den muntlige fortelleren er den fortellingen som fortelles muntlig i det øyeblikket og i den

sammenhengen den fortelles. En muntlig forteller må selv stå inne for fortellingen og skape, gjenskape, nyskape fortellingen både i sitt forarbeid og der og da. Fortellingen fortelles muntlig bare i et rom der forteller og tilhørere er tilstede samtidig. Det vil da si at fortellinger over fjernsyn, radio og cd strengt tatt ikke er muntlige. Disse medier kan fremstille muntlig fortelling, “vise” den frem, rapportere om den. Men for oss som sitter hjemme i stua er det ikke en muntlig fortelling, vi er ikke i en muntlig situasjon. En annen sak er at et muntlig uttrykk kan tilpasses disse medier. Men dette er igjen noe annet. En muntlig forteller må dermed ha evne til å være tilstede i en muntlig situasjon. Hun må tåle nærværet, ta publikum innover seg, ta imot deres energi og bruke den inn i fortellingen. Dette er ikke å legge seg flat for tilfeldige signaler og følelssvingninger og det betyr slett ikke at man møter uforberedt. Man må tvert imot ha forberedt seg godt for å kunne gå inn i og tåle et slikt møte. Fortellingen må stå stødig, men det må fortelleren også. Det behøves en personlig og mental forberedelse for å kunne ta inn og samle en gruppens energi og å gjenskape fortellingen i denne energien. En muntlig forteller må kunne improvisere. Men det er ikke den formen for improvisasjon som når man ikke gidder å forberede seg og heller “tar det på sparket”, eller som når du har glemt manus og fortvilet “ror deg ut av det”. Men i fortellingen, må være rom til et møte, et nærvær, og dermed et element av improvisasjon, stort eller lite. Det kan gå på stemmebruk, timing, rytmikk, valg av ord og tilpasning av styrken i uttrykket. Det handler om å se tilhørerne. Og da forteller man ikke på samme måte til to hundre mennesker i et kjøpesenter som til ti sjenerte barn i et bibliotek, selv om det er den samme fortellingen.” (Tone Bolstad Fløde i <http://www.fortell.no/index.php>; lesedato 23.01.17)

“In one of his most famous experiments, [Frederic Charles] Bartlett evaluated subjects’ abilities to recall a story that had been read to them. Over time, elements were both lost and gained. With each recalling, the stories became more coherent, “better” stories, with a clearer plot, more distinct characters, and heightened drama. Bartlett demonstrated that we most readily recall our “attitude” towards past events, not the actual events. We then construct a story whose point or meaning justifies our remembered attitude. What we remember, it seems, is the story that “should” have happened, not what actually did.” (Mayer 2014)

“The material dialectics presented by digital and in other ways variable writing trouble certain long-standing distinctions made by linguists and philosophers alike, between spoken, written, and printed words. Chief among these is the notion that the spoken word is alive, nimble, temporary, and immaterial, whereas the written word is stable, immutable, permanent, and fixed. The finer points of this distinction were argued in Plato’s *Phaedrus*, composed around 370 BCE. In this dialogue, Plato argues through the written voice of his teacher Socrates that, whereas speech is ‘written with intelligence in the mind of the learner, which is able to defend itself and knows to whom it should speak, and before whom to be silent’ (Fowler, 1925: 276a), words written in ink through a pen ‘cannot defend themselves by argument and cannot teach the truth effectually’ (276c). In *Orality & Literacy: The*

Technologizing of the Word, Walter J Ong articulates the distinction between spoken and written words in temporal terms: ‘The spoken word is always an event, a movement in time, completely lacking in the thing-like repose of the written or printed word’ (Ong, 1982: 75).” (Carpenter 2017)

“Oral or preliterate cultures are those without a written language. Virtually all communication must be face-to-face, and this fact helps to define the culture, its structure, and its operation. Whether they existed thousands of years ago before writing was developed or still function today (for example, among certain Eskimo peoples and African tribes where griots, or “talking chiefs,” provide oral histories of their people going back hundreds of years), oral cultures are remarkably alike. They share these characteristics:

The meaning in language is specific and local. As a result, communities are closely knit, and their members are highly dependent on each other for all aspects of life. Knowledge must be passed on orally. People must be shown and told how to do something. Therefore, skilled hunters, farmers, midwives, and the like hold a special status; they are the living embodiments of culture.

Memory is crucial. As repositories of cultural customs and traditions, elders are revered; they are responsible for passing knowledge on to the next generation.

Myth and history are intertwined. Storytellers are highly valued; they are the meaning makers, and, like the elders, they pass on what is important to the culture. What does the resulting culture look like? People know each other intimately and rely on one another for survival.

Roles are clearly defined. Stories teach important cultural lessons and preserve important cultural traditions and values. Control over communication is rarely necessary, but when it is, it is easily achieved through social sanctions. [...] In oral or preliterate cultures language was local and specific; knowledge, history, and myth were transmitted orally; memory was crucial; and elders and storytellers, as repositories of cultural values and beliefs, occupied positions of elevated status.” (http://www.highered.mheducation.com/sites/dl/bar27580_ch02.pdf; lesedato 23.11.16)

“What Is A Preliterate Culture? The term “preliterate” refers to a society that has not yet (or may never) develop a written language. Many modern societies have spoken languages or dialects without a written equivalent. An example is the Creole language of Honduras; Garifuna people learn to read, write, and speak Spanish, but speak a Creole that is not written. In preliterate cultures, lore is passed on by oral traditions. Children memorize long treatises of history or folklore, and shamans are the ultimate arbiters of spoken elements which bind a society together. The languages of many preliterate cultures have been transliterated, often inaccurately. Body language and facial expressions are a big part of oral tradition,

and these are lost in written translation. Although writing is used to convey most concepts, laws, and economic exchanges, literacy is not a requisite for an “advanced” civilization. The Incas of South American had one of the most vast empires in history, yet their only “written” language was the quipu, as series of specially knotted strings that conveyed numbers. The high cultures of West Africa lacked writing, as did the Aztecs of Central Mexico. Still both societies maintained vast governmental and trade networks. American Indian people had a complex system of laws, without the benefit of writing.” (Patricia Devereux i <http://education.blurtit.com/83227/what-is-a-preliterate-culture>; lesedato 14.11.16)

Den amerikanske antropologen Melville J. Herskovits, “emphasizing the dramatic quality of story-telling practices among African peoples, reports that these occur chiefly at night, sometimes during wakes and again to the accompaniment of audience participation characterized by frequent interpolation of assent. Katherine Luomala found particularly elaborate raconteur behavior to exist in parts of Oceania, where among some peoples special training of raconteurs was institutionalized and where individuals were expected to specialize in narratives about a single favorite character. Another form of specialization is reported from the Hawaiian courts where raconteurs actually held contests, literary tournaments, as it were, with the lives of the losers at stake. In Samoa, the hallmark of a well-born chief was his ability to indulge in lengthy orations with an abundance of allusions to the established repertoire of folk tales, while in the Marquesas and the Society Islands the dramatic dimension of raconteur styles had been elaborated to the point where narratives were interlaced with chants and dramatic presentations of specific episodes of the tale – such performances being staged in special parts of the villages set aside for the purpose.” (Henry Carsch i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/40969921.pdf>; lesedato 24.05.23)

“In a primary oral culture, to solve effectively the problem of retaining and retrieving carefully articulated thought, you have to do your thinking in mnemonic patterns, shaped for ready oral recurrence. Your thought must come into being in heavily rhythmic, balanced patterns, in repetitions or antitheses, in alliterations and assonances, in epithetic and other formulary expressions, in standard thematic settings (the assembly, the meal, the duel, the hero’s ‘helper’, and so on), in proverbs which are constantly heard by everyone so that they come to mind readily and which themselves are patterned for retention and ready recall, or in other mnemonic form. Serious thought is intertwined with memory systems. Mnemonic needs determine even syntax” (Ong 2000 s. 34).

“In an oral culture, to think through something in non-formulaic, non-patterned, non-mnemonic terms, even if it were possible, would be a waste of time, for such thought, once worked through, could never be recovered with any effectiveness, as it could be with the aid of writing. It would not be abiding knowledge but simply a passing thought, however complex.” (Ong 2000 s. 35-36)

Chinua Achebes roman *No Longer at Ease* (1961), “which draws directly on Ibo oral tradition in West Africa, alike provide abundant instances of thought patterns of orally educated characters who move in these oral, mnemonically tooled grooves, as the speakers reflect, with high intelligence and sophistication, on the situations in which they find themselves involved. The law itself in oral cultures is enshrined in formulaic sayings, proverbs, which are not mere jurisprudential decorations, but themselves constitute the law. A judge in an oral culture is often called on to articulate sets of relevant proverbs out of which he can produce equitable decisions in the cases under formal litigation before him” (Ong 2000 s. 35).

Det finnes svært mange sjangrer innen muntlig diktning (“oral poetry”) som har en relativt lokal forankring. Et eksempel er hainteny på Madagaskar, et slags dikt fullt av metaforer. Franskmannen Jean Paulhan oppholdt seg på Madagaskar i 1908-10 og ga i 1913 ut en samling nedskrevne haintenyer. “[T]he most common form of hainteny is actually the love poem, which might as well be the most common form of the entire world’s poetry for the infinite amount of times it has been re-created, the subject over-analyzed while remaining elusive. The unique thing about hainteny, however, is that it uses the imagery of animals, plants, landforms and even natural processes to describe that most intense of all human emotions, or on a literal level, the contracts and negotiations of marriage. The scope of this craft is a powerful one. These descriptive techniques work to shine a rare light on a culture that is truly unlike any other in the world.” (Elly Bookman i http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/122/; lesedato 03.02.17)

“Det gjelder forøvrig for skriftligheten generelt i antikken at tekstene oppfattes som notasjon *av* eller *for* muntlig tale. Frasen om “tekstens iboende muntlighet” har en umiddelbart innlysende gyldighet for antikken.” (professor Øivind Andersen i *Norsklæreren: Tidsskrift for språk og litteratur*, nr. 3 i 1998, s. 6) Grekeren Homer, kjent for eposene *Iliaden* og *Odyseen* (antakelig nedskrevet ca. 700-600 f.Kr.) var en muntlig dikter/sanger som sannsynligvis verken kunne lese eller skrive. Eposene ble framført muntlig, og mange forskere tror at framføringene skjedde med syngende stemme og med store variasjoner fra gang til gang. Homer kan ha inngått i et laug av epossangere. De brukte antakelig lyre som instrument mens de framførte sine fortellinger.

Såkalt “kveldsete” i bondesamfunnet var når mange mennesker var samlet om kvelden og deres hender, men ikke deres tanker var opptatt. De gjorde da ofte rolig, rutinemessig arbeid (i dagens siste arbeidsøkt) og tankene var frie til å lytte til en fortelling. Kveldsete var vanligvis ved huset ildsted som et sosialt samlingssted. Kvinner og menn drev med ulike sysler, f.eks. syng og skoreparasjoner. Under kveldssete (“la veillé”) var det fram til 1500-tallet i Bretagne i Frankrike vanlig at det ble fortalt eventyr mellom de voksne, og noen steder i Tyskland var eventyrfortelling mellom voksne vanlig helt fram til ca. 1870 (Noonan 2020 s. 22).

Antonio Roazzi, Ann Dowker and Peter Bryants artikkel “Phonological abilities of Brazilian street poets” (1993) “deals with *repentistas*: oral poets in the northeast of Brazil, most of whom have had limited schooling. Twenty-four *repentistas*, 27 non-*repentistas* from a similar background, and 38 university students were given a rhyme production task. The *repentistas* produced about three times as many rhymes as the SES-matched non-*repentistas* and over one-and-a-half times as many as the students. [...] Thus, the rhyming ability of the *repentistas* appears to be both highly developed and dissociated from certain other language skills.” (<http://journals.cambridge.org/>; lesedato 06.05.16) “I Nord-Brasil eksisterer det visstnok en gammel tradisjon for såkalte “*repentistas*”: gatepoeter og sangere som forsøker å overgå hverandre i improvisert diktetekunst med strenge formprinsipper. De improviserte diktene kommenterer hendelser eller personer som passerer – og humorfaktoren er høy!” (Tiril Broch Aakre i <http://www.bergen.folkebibl.no/litteratur/lydpoesi/lydpoesi.html>; lesedato 27.10.05)

Ruth Finnegan's bok *Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Context* (1977 og ny versjon i 1992) “is about oral poetry – its nature and its social context and significance – treated comparatively. [...] It deals with various approaches to the study of oral poetry and its composition, style, performance, transmission, distribution, and publication. The book also includes chapters on oral poets and their audiences, and on the poetry’s context, function, and links with society. The author addresses many much-debated questions like whether there is a distinctive form of oral composition and a special oral style. [...] In her introduction Finnegan deals with the important issue of defining oral poetry. Finnegan’s opinion on this issue is worth quoting: “The three ways in which a poem can most readily be called oral are in terms of 1) its composition, 2) its mode of transmission, and 3) its performance. Some oral poetry is oral in all these respects, some only in one or two. It is important to be clear how oral poetry can vary in these ways, as well as about the problems involved in assessing each of these aspects of “oralness.” It emerges that the “oral” nature of oral poetry is not easy to pin down precisely.” [...] Citing concrete examples, Finnegan finds that:

1. the nature of oralness is relative and often ambiguous;
2. a fairly wide approach should be taken to the concept of oral poetry – it would be unrealistic to confine it to more restrictive definitions;
3. more stress should be laid on the aspect of oral performance;
4. oral poetry is constantly overlapping into “written poetry.”

[...] *Oral Poetry* does contain some concluding comments. These may be summed up as follows.

- a. There is nothing peculiar to “oral poetry” in nature, composition, style, social context, or function that radically distinguishes it from written poetry;
- b. Oral poetry appears in the most highly “literate” and industrial settings as a normal and valued manifestation of human artistic expression and activity;

- c. Many things can be learned about written literature by considering the “oral performance” element in oral poetry;
- d. The composers of oral poetry are active, imaginative, and thinking beings, not products of the “social structure”;
- e. To ignore the existence of the huge wealth of oral poetry throughout the world, in the present as well as in the past, is to miss one of the great sources and products of man’s imaginative, reflecting, and dramatic faculties – all of the things that make him a social animal.” (Syed Mohammad Shahed i <https://nirc.nanzan-u.ac.jp/nfile/275>; lesedato 08.02.17)

“Once they both exist, orality and literacy are never independent of each other. There are traces of oral composition in written and printed texts, and written structures appear constantly in oral speech. The detection of oral influences in written texts and of written forms in oral texts requires a precise sense of what constitutes “the oral” and “the written.” Making this distinction and applying it to special cases reveals cultural trends previously unnoticed. [...] Orality and literacy are interdependent in a variety of fascinating ways. [...] This interdependence cannot be discerned in purely textual studies. Texts might betray oral-formulaic attributes without disclosing what sort of correspondence existed between speech and writing in the formation of the text or afterward. [...] Stanley Tambiah in his pioneering study of literacy in a Thai Buddhist village (1968) has pointed to the complex interaction between mastery of written texts and oral improvisation in the Buddhist monks’ presentation of doctrine: the doctrine is perpetuated by ever-constant written texts being constantly recast in oral exposition. Tambiah explicitly rejected the “great tradition–little tradition” characterization, which would set the written words of the monks off against the oral words of the people (1970:370-72), but sees in the activities of the literate cadres a traditional interdependence between textual prescription and ritual performance. Charles Keyes (1983:8-9) has developed Tambiah’s argument, and together with other contributors to the volume on karma he coedited, has shown that this oral–literate interdependence is to be found in other South and Southeast Asian cultures, both Hindu and Buddhist.” (Richard M. Swiderski i http://journal.oraltradition.org/files/articles/3i-ii/7_swiderski.pdf; lesedato 10.01.17)

Den kenyanske forfatteren Ngugi wa Thiong’o var “ett av 24 barn i en polygam storfamilie. - Som mange andre afrikanere føler jeg meg nært knyttet til muntlig fortellerkultur, forklarer han. - Det begynte hjemme. Jeg hadde bokstavelig talt fire mødre, og hele familien samlet seg hver kveld i en av mødrenes hus for å fortelle historier. I memoarene sammenlikner han de fire mødrene med en regjering: én var fredsmegler, en annen arbeidsminister, en tredje forsvarsminister som tok seg av “utenriks”, det vil si forhandlingene med faren, og en fjerde var “kulturminister”, og ledet ofte fortellerkveldene. - Det gikk i to typer fortellinger: Litterære, fiktive historier, gjerne eventyr eller dyrehistorier. Og anekdoter fra hverdagen, der poenget var fortellerens evne til å dramatisere stoffet. Historien om Kain, for eksempel, som drepte broren sin og måtte gå med merke i pannen, har jeg aldri

kunnet glemme, fordi jeg ble så skremt. Første gang jeg hørte historien åpnet nemlig fortelleren med å si at han hadde truffet på Kain nær landsbyen vår. Han skildret et dramatisk møte med en gigant av en mann, han beskrev hvordan det blåste opp til storm der mannen gikk, og hvordan folk sprang til alle kanter. I ettertid er det lett å se hvilke grep disse fortellerne brukte, hvordan de tok eierskap til stoffet og innforlivet det med sin egen magi.” (*Morgenbladet* 23.–29. oktober 2015 s. 48)

I et intervju ble Thiong’o spurt: “- Noen av romanene dine har faktisk blitt tatt opp igjen i den muntlige kulturen, og blir for eksempel lest høyt på barer? - Ja, blant annet den første romanen jeg utga på kikuyu, *The Devil and The Cross*, som jeg skrev i fengsel. Én leste den, fortalte den den videre til andre, og slik fortsatte det, som en gruppeaktivitet der folk samlet seg for å høre romanen fortalt. “Oralisering” kaller man den prosessen.” (*Morgenbladet* 23.–29. oktober 2015 s. 51)

“Tall stories are pieces of verbal exaggeration or boastfulness which may be intended to deceive or may be openly bogus and merely intended to amuse. The name was coined in the 19th century in England, where the stories were also called Munchausens, after Karl Friedrich Hieronymus, Baron von Münchhausen. He might sound fictional, but was in fact a real person, albeit a purveyor of extravagantly untruthful stories about himself. In the USA, the openly bogus ‘around the campfire’ stories are known as ‘tall tales’ and, under that name, have become a distinct and stylised form of storytelling, becoming ever more embellished as they are retold. Tall tales usually involve a larger-than-life mythical character who accomplishes some superhuman task; for example Paul Bunyan, the giant lumberjack who could fell a tree with a single swing of his axe.” (<http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/tall-story.html>; lesedato 20.06.17)

“Oral history is the systematic collection of living people’s testimony about their own experiences. Oral history is not folklore, gossip, hearsay, or rumor. Oral historians attempt to verify their findings, analyze them, and place them in an accurate historical context. Oral historians are also concerned with storage of their findings for use by later scholars. In oral history projects, an interviewee recalls an event for an interviewer who records the recollections and creates a historical record. [...] Oral history depends upon human memory and the spoken word. The means of collection can vary from taking notes by hand to elaborate electronic aural and video recordings. The human life span puts boundaries on the subject matter that we collect with oral history. We can only go back one lifetime, so our limits move forward in time with each generation. This leads to the Oral Historian’s Anxiety Syndrome, that panicky realization that irretrievable information is slipping away from us with every moment. [...] We all have stories to tell, stories we have lived from the inside out. We give our experiences an order. We organize the memories of our lives into stories. Oral history listens to these stories.” (Judith Moyer i http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html; lesedato 21.11.16)

“Oral history is the systematic collection of living people’s testimony about their own experiences. Historians have finally recognized that the everyday memories of everyday people, not just the rich and famous, have historical importance. If we do not collect and preserve those memories, those stories, then one day they will disappear forever. Your stories and the stories of the people around you are unique, valuable treasures for your family and your community. You and your family members can preserve unwritten family history using oral history techniques. Likewise you and your community can discover and preserve unwritten history large and small. Oral history is so flexible that people of all ages can adapt the techniques of asking and listening to create and learn about history and historical narratives. As a door into the world of oral history, these pages give basic suggestions for collecting and preserving the valuable oral treasures around you, to enrich you and future generations. Many people become concerned about “doing it right,” yet they also recognize that a voice on tape is better than nothing at all. So they try just a simple interview, just talking to someone for an hour. Ten years later such people are thankful that they made the effort, and those who did not ...well, they have regrets.” (Judith Moyer i http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oral_History.html; lesedato 21.11.16)

“Oral history can be defined as the recording, preservation and interpretation of historical information, based on the personal experiences and opinions of the speaker. It may take the form of eye-witness evidence about the past, but can include folklore, myths, songs and stories passed down over the years by word of mouth. While it is an invaluable way of preserving the knowledge and understanding of older people, it can also involve interviewing younger generations. [...] Oral history in the modern form of audio recordings had its origins in the work of Allan Nevins at the University of Columbia in the USA. He began to record the memories of ‘persons significant in American life’ in 1948. By contrast to this ‘great men’ approach, the pioneer of oral history in England, George Ewart Evans, collected memories of life and work in Suffolk villages, where ‘the old survivors were walking books’. These were first published in *Ask the Fellows Who Cut the Hay* in 1956. At much the same time, oral history in Scotland developed within a broader focus on Scottish culture and history. In their different ways, all three reflected the changing political and social climate of the early post-war period – just as more recent oral history work has developed its own distinctive forms in other areas of the world.” (<https://www.le.ac.uk/emoha/training/no1.pdf>; lesedato 12.12.16)

“Norsk Folkemuseum’s archives of working class oral history (Arbeiderminnene) was established in 1950. It contains interviews and autobiographies and is a unique source of information on work and daily life in the labouring class at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. [...] The topics of the collection is among others: “Pulp and paper”, “Sawmills”, “Tobacco Industry”, “Match Industry”, “Construction Work”, “Textile Industry”, “Iron and metals”, “Footwear

Industry”, and also peasant labor, fishing, forestry, shipbuilding, glassworks etc.” (<http://norskfolkemuseum.no/en/the-oral-history-archive>; lesedato 07.02.17)

Foreningen Memoar (stiftet 2015) skal ta vare på og dele muntlige fortellinger. “Foreningen Memoar er godt i gang med å samle minner fra sjøfolk, i samarbeid med Sjøfartsmuseet i Bergen. Fortellingene blir videofilmet, og de fleste fortellerne har sagt ja til å dele opptakene med interesserte. [...] Ein søndag kvar månad gjennomfører Memoar minneopptak “på dekket” i Bergen Sjøfartsmuseum.” (<https://de-de.facebook.com/arbeidsarven/posts/1144877495557578>; lesedato 16.05.18) “Innsamling av minner og såkalte livshistorier står sterkt i Norge for tiden. Landslaget for lokalhistorie har med jevne mellomrom, sist i 2012-2015, dratt i gang vidtfavnende minneinnsamlinger. Etter 22. juli 2011 satte Arkivverket i gang et omfattende prosjekt for å samle inn minner om terroråden og dagene etterpå. Og i 2015 ble den ideelle foreningen Memoar stiftet, med formål å arbeide for å “fremje kultur for å ta vare på og dele munnlege forteljingar om levd liv”.” (<https://www.forskerforum.no/om-minner-og-mangt/>; lesedato 22.05.18)

“Oral history is a very subjective and personal form of evidence – but this is also one of its great strengths. In the words of the Italian oral historian Alessandro Portelli, oral sources ‘tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, what they now think they did... Subjectivity is as much the business of history as the more visible “facts”...’ (*History Workshop Journal*, 12, Autumn 1981). Oral history can give a voice to individuals and groups who are sometimes marginalized in ‘conventional’ histories – the working classes, women and ethnic minorities, for instance. It can provide new information, alternative explanations and different insights which are potentially of enormous value. The spoken word can convey feelings and emotions with an immediacy and an impact that the written word cannot match, as well as preserving a record of local dialects and accents. It allows the historian to ask questions of his or her informant – to be present at the creation of a historical source, rather than relying solely on those created by others.” (<https://www.le.ac.uk/emoha/training/no1.pdf>; lesedato 12.12.16)

Eksempler fra Egypt

Björg Halvorsens masteroppgave *Singing Traditional Muslim Narratives in Modern Egypt: Art, Folklore, and Popular Culture* (1992) er basert på forsknings-/ innsamlingsarbeid i Egypt i 1990-91, der hun var “present at performances of religious didactic “stories from real life” performed by sheikhs at festive occasions in villages of the Nile Delta.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 1) “The singer is called a sheikh because he is considered a religiously learned man. That is obvious by his red hat with a white band which is only worn by men with religious learning. He is a singer of religious songs and teller of religious stories.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 5)

Halvorsen forteller om en framføring: “The singer starts talking and gives the setting of the story he is going to tell: A rich man is sitting outside his castle when a poor man and his beautiful daughter come to ask for work. The singer acts the dialogue as the rich man and the poor man are talking together. Then the poor man starts singing, and the story continues. The singer narrates, acts and sings, and in between he puts some more songs of praise, making sure to pick tunes that satisfy the mood of the audience and give them the opportunity to dance. [...] Only the most eager stay from beginning to end. To some it is pure entertainment, dancing and music and a little good advice in the story. Others take it more seriously, listening to the *madih* and the story primarily as religious teaching. But at sunrise the performance is over, and it is time for the villagers to go to the mosque for the first prayer of the day. [...] The narrative that is related by a religious singer (called *munshid* or *sheikh*) is, according to the singers themselves, characterized by its moral purpose. It should teach the audience morally correct behavior, and how God will reward those who worship him. This can be contrasted with the epic of the Banu Hilal, the adventures of Abu Zeid, which is told purely for entertainment and would never be told by one of the sheikhs with whom we are dealing. [...] Among the stories that the religious singer will tell are stories of the descendants of the Prophet, stories from the lives of saints [dvs. hellige muslimske menn] and what the singers themselves call stories “from real life” (*min wāqae al-hayā*). It seems that stories “from real life” are the ones that are the most popular at the moment. They tell about pious Egyptians today or not too long ago, who experience hardships but in the end are rewarded by their Lord.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 10-11)

“The important thing, according to the singers, is to help people with their problems. One story is about a woman who does not become pregnant, one about a woman who loses her husband while she is still young and has small children, one about a son having a conflict with his father, one about a man who cannot decide if he should support his mother or his wife. The people of the audience will identify with what is happening in the story because they have the same problem, or know somebody with the same problem. According to the singers, the man who has an argument with his father should then go home and make peace, and the man who cannot decide between his mother and his wife will know that the way to Paradise goes through motherhood, and that his mother is the one to be respected the most. [...] The singer is both narrator, commentator, and actor. He tells what is happening, he acts the dialogue between the different people in the story, and frequently he also comments on their behavior. This he does in several different ways; by spoken narrative and dialogue, by sung narrative and dialogue in rhyme and by sung *mawwāl*. *Mawwāl* is a free, improvising type of song that is especially well suited for sharing the sad mood of the hero or heroine during hardships.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 12)

“[T]he oral melodrama as performed by sheikhs in Egypt usually has just one plot, it has few characters and the performance is redundant. The same thing is performed in many different ways, sung, narrated, acted out as a dialogue, or

commented upon, so that the story progresses very slowly. This is a consequence of the setting. The audience are participants in a celebration and cannot be expected to concentrate intensely on the performance. To make sure that everybody can follow the plot redundancy becomes important. Redundance also helps make the performance very flexible, as it is easy to elaborate further on a theme or to cut down on the hymns or *mawwāl* depending on the mood of the audience.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 68)

“[T]he story takes several hours to perform as it is interspersed with greetings, hymns in praise of the Prophet, and *mawwāl* talking about *id-dunya*, life and all its troubles. The story is told through dialogue, narrative and moral comments, any of which may be spoken or sung. The redundancy makes the story easy to follow, even if members of the audience should happen to cease paying attention for some time because they are dancing, or talking with their neighbors, or for some other reason. And when some *mawwāl* or song appeals especially to the audience, they ask for a repetition and get it. [...] After the sheikh has finished his performance, his younger brother comes on stage. He tells a story dealing with jealousy between brothers and the vice of women requested by members of the audience. [...] A little later another young man in a white *gallabiyya* enters the stage. “Sheikh, we are so happy to see you and hear you, *kalāmak sukkar, ya shēkh* (your words are sweet as sugar, Sheikh)”. The young man works himself into a frenzy of extatic shouts before he leaves the stage.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 90, 93 og 97)

“The role of the band is to accompany the singer and to illustrate his story, and it is common to use sound effects to reinforce and illustrate the narrative. An example is when the sheikh has been singing and suddenly the music stops. “Someone knocked at the door” the sheikh says. The drums follow with three knocks. “Who is it?” “It’s your mother’s husband.” And so the sheikh continues to act the dialogue. The violin is especially important in making sound effects. It is used for everything from illustrating a door being opened to the talking of a shy girl to the braking of cars and honking of car-horns in the city. But the musicians also get a chance to show their musical ability, both in the opening after the chanting of the Koran, and also in other purely instrumental parts during the performance. And when members of the audience dance, this is of course a perfect opportunity for the drummers to show off.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 13)

“According to their own statements, it is very important that the *munshid* knows the Koran by heart and lives a pious life, so that the audience will have faith in what he tells them. The stories these singers tell are all written down in Egyptian dialect. They are memorized by reading as opposed to the traditional way of learning folk stories by emulating another storyteller. Some singers write part of or all their stories, others buy material from professional writers and composers. The story is, however, not a fixed text. It is flexible and some themes can be elaborated on and others shortened during the performance. The demand for new stories is high, and according to one singer a reason for this may be the widespread sale of music-

cassettes with recordings of these stories. The cassettes are cheap, and a large number of singers have recorded their stories, either in a studio or at a performance. “Earlier I could have just a couple of stories to take with me”, one singer sighs, “but now the audience has heard them before on cassette and wants something new.” ” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 16)

“Because the sheikh who performs stories is considered a man learned in religion, one may hear both Sufi poetry and Sufi learning, for example the Sufi interpretation of numbers, during a performance. Sufi teachings reinforce the impact of the stories that are told. The stories have an important moral content, and the religious context gives them religious authority.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 20)
“[S]urveillance becomes an institutionalized and visible part of education and the state bureaucracy. This is also something the religious singers have to relate to through the official censorship of the lyrics they perform on cassette. They must avoid what the Ministry of Religious Affairs would deem blasphemous, such as certain descriptions of the Prophet common in popular Sufi poetry.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 46)

“The performance is adapted to the setting. There may or may not be a story, depending on the audience and the occasion. If there is a committed Sufi audience and a *dhikr* is held, it is likely that the sheikh will sing hymns in praise of the Prophet rather than tell a story which has a somewhat lighter religious weight. At this performance he tells a story based on events that happened before the revolution of 1952.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 88) I 1952 var det en politisk revolusjon i Egypt, og kong Farouk ble avsatt.

“It was the fate of the extraordinary Egyptian singer Umm Kalthoum, also called “Star of the East” or “the Lady” to become such a (stylized in the process) symbol of the Egyptian nation and later the Arab nation. She was born in the first decade of this century in a village of the Nile Delta as the daughter of a sheikh. The sheikh and his son used to recite traditional religious texts and songs at nights like weddings and *mawālīd* (sg. *mūlīd*) [fødselsdag]. When he realized that his daughter had an exceptionally good voice, he brought her with him, dressed in a man’s *gallabiyya* to hide her femininity and protect her reputation. Around 1922 she started performing in Cairo, singing a traditional repertoire of religious songs. Her admirers among the intellectuals of the capital increased rapidly as she represented to them something genuine and non-European. She became a national symbol to them, and famous poets started writing new lyrics for her. In the 1950’s she became a pan-Arab symbol and strongly supported Nasser’s regime. The first Thursday of every month, she held a concert in Cairo that lasted all night, and three hours of the concert was broadcast over the radio. This was called *Laylit Umm Kalthoum*, the Night of Umm Kalthoum, and princes and heads of state from all over the Arab world came in their private jets to listen to her. (N. Naguib:1991). She was and still is considered an artistic genius in the Arab world, and listening to her is a kind of “religious” experience. Umm Kalthoum became famous because of her

exceptionally good voice and the passion of her performance. She also became famous because leading nationalist intellectuals chose to make her a symbol of Egyptian and Arab identity and gave her new lyrics and new melodies to sing. The mass media, the newspapers and radio, also played an important role. The lyrics she was going to sing at her concerts were published in the newspapers in advance so that her audience could follow when she was singing, and the concerts were broadcast on the radio.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 41-42)

“In *Ramadān* (March/April) 1991 the epic of the Banu Hilal (an Egyptian Iliad) [Banu Hilal er en arabisk folkegruppe] was performed for ten nights at the Cairo Opera house. The director of the production adapted the story and performance to a Cairene audience, changed some events, and signalled to the storyteller to go on with his digression or stop it according to the director’s interpretation of the audience’s reaction. In this kind of oral epic, the poetry is reinvented on the spot and adjusted to the mood of the audience (AI-Ahram: 25 April 1991). [...] It seems like an important reason for [regissøren] el-Shafei in putting on a show at the opera, recreating a night with a traditional storyteller of the Banu Hilal epic modified for educated city people, to give the audience a sense of having a national indigenous form of opera.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 44-45)

“Dancing shows that people are enjoying themselves and that there is a festive mood. It is also, however, a way of drawing attention from the sheikh to the dancer. Sometimes one or more young men will climb the stage and dance right in front of the storyteller, literally putting him in the back-ground. Sometimes they will dance on the ground in front of the stage. The proud fathers of small children, especially little boys, often put them on the stage to dance. This is popular among the audience who consider small children cute, and it is also less threatening to the sheikh, since children are small and cannot block the audiences view of him. [...] A night is a communal event in which it is important for the audience to display who they are within the conventions applicable to this kind of event. The wealthy man displays his wealth and generosity, the pious man his piety, the skilled dancer displays his skill, the youth displays his youthfulness, the young father displays his son.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 72-73)

“The sheikhs’ style of performance on stage vary to a considerable degree. One behaves as a joker, another as a clown, a third as a more serious narrator. [...] It is a good sign when people dance and enjoy themselves, and the sheikh generally lets the *tābla*-player have a go to encourage them. If they continue too long, however, the music will suddenly change rhythm and the sheikh will start singing, ignoring the dancing people. It is important for him not to be overshadowed by his audience. The audience should know who is the center of attention and in charge of the entertainment.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 75)

“The sheikh is more than one way the center of the evening’s entertainment. The greetings given by members of the audience are conveyed by him. He is the one

that has authority on the stage and access to the microphone. The ones I have spoken with also see it as natural that they should take responsibility if there are disturbances among the audience or if fights break out. They have the microphone and can be heard by everybody. Usually the music will stop and the sheikh will try to calm people down. “I can speak to them in ordinary language” one sheikh says, “or I can speak in rhyme”. He gives this example of a rhyme: “*‘ēōd fī makānak / fī wust ikhwānak / ana gāy ealashānak*”. (Sit down in your place / between your brothers / I am here for your sake.) The last line shows a covert criticism easily understood by everybody. I came as your guest, and you offend me by not respecting my authority. Members of the audience that command respect in the local community will probably attempt to restore order immediately, so as not to be dishonored in front of the sheikh.” (Halvorsen 1992 s. 76)

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