

Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

Av Helge Ridderstrøm (førsteamanuensis ved OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet)

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Stillelesing

(_lesepraksis) Lydløs lesing, men av og til praktisert med lav mumling (nesten uhørlig lydering).

I begynnelsen av den nordafrikanske forfatteren Lucius Apuleius' *Det gylne esel* (1. århundre e.Kr.) blir leseren invitert til å lese verket “med en lav mumling” (på latin: “lepido susurro”). Det var ikke før på 900-tallet e.Kr. at helt stille/taus innatlesing ble vanlig i den vestlige verden (Manguel 1998 s. 67).

To hendelser “fueled the increasing demand for books – the invention of eyeglasses, at the end of the thirteenth century, and the development of silent reading, particularly among the elite of the fourteenth century. For four thousand years, “reading” had meant reading aloud and one book could be shared with many listeners, whereas silent readers needed a copy apiece.” (Kilgour 1998 s. 7)

Stillelesing gjorde det vanskeligere med sosial kontroll av det som ble lest. En slik lese måte fremmet dessuten individuell refleksjon, og forsterket dermed tendensen til individualisme i moderniteten (Gilmont 2003 s. 35). Den individuelle stillelesingen har sannsynligvis bidratt til å gi den enkelte leser bedre analytiske evner, evne til å tenke i logiske strukturer og evne til kritisk distanse (Horellou-Lafarge og Segré 2003 s. 15).

“Silent reading is different from oral reading as it involves students reading solely to themselves. This kind of reading is quite beneficial to both the teachers and the students. According to studies in the educational field, students who were given time to silently read and understand their topics had far better grades than other students. [...]

1. Provides deeper insight

Silent reading benefits the user as it provides them a better understanding of whatever they are reading. This is largely because the meaning of the text is more important to silent readers than the word pronunciation in those who read orally. [...]

2. More effective

Students who silently read their learning materials finish their work much quicker in contrast with those who use oral reading. The reason for the effectiveness of silent reading is that there are no delays that are linked to the vocalization of difficult words. Actually, vocalization greatly limits and reduces the speed at which oral readers read their materials, an issue that does not affect those who silently read.

3. Avoids distraction

If a student who has an accent is told to read orally to the class, other students are going to be distracted from the actual text as they listen to the new accent.

Similarly, if an unskilled reader reads orally in a classroom, other better readers will be affected by the slow reading of the unskilled person. Silently reading is therefore the most appropriate option in such cases as all students are encouraged to read at a pace that is comfortable to them. Silent reading does have its restrictions, including the fact that a student can pretend to read even when he or she is really not reading.” (<http://benefitof.net/benefits-of-silent-reading/>; lesedato 14.06.16)

“In determining whether your child is reading the appropriate books, remember that it is OK for a child to peruse a difficult (or very easy) book. Kids like to look at pictures and younger children like to pretend to read silently.” (<http://teachkidsreading.com/dnn/Step2Prescribe/CarefullySelectReadingMaterial.aspx>; lesedato 07.09.16)

“There is no disputing the fact that the Romans read everything aloud, in fact they were apparently not able to read silently. We know this from testimony about Roman villas having private “reading rooms” where the master could read without disturbing the family, and it was only in the time of St. Augustine that silent reading developed, perhaps out of the requirements of monastic life. In other words, all Romans continually “phonated” the way a third grade child often does, and were happy with this as a satisfactory way to read. Of course there is one major benefit: Reading is kept to a slow and sensitive pace, one savors the sounds and enjoys minute changes of meaning and inflections of mood. It is said that a modern student must be able to read forty pages of non-technical prose an hour simply to be able to keep up with college assignments in the Humanities. One marvels at how much is covered, but cannot help wondering how much is missed. [...] To us, largely schooled in a Print Culture with silent reading and accustomed as we are to the visualness of printed texts, this Roman “acousticity” seems strange. But no one can read Latin poems or prose silently without losing a great deal of the impact of the original.” (William Harris i <http://community.middlebury.edu/~harris/LatinBackground/SilentReading.html>; lesedato 08.06.16)

Paul Saengers bok *Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (1997) handler om lesing som “a silent and solitary activity. Ancient reading was usually oral, either aloud, in groups, or individually, in a muffled voice. [...] This book explains how a change in writing – the introduction of word separation – led to the

development of silent reading during the period from late antiquity to the fifteenth century. Over the course of the nine centuries following Rome's fall, the task of separating the words in continuous written text, which for half a millennium had been a function of the individual reader's mind and voice, became instead a labor of professional readers and scribes. The separation of words (and thus silent reading) originated in manuscripts copied by Irish scribes in the seventh and eighth centuries but spread to the European continent only in the late tenth century when scholars first attempted to master a newly recovered corpus of technical, philosophical, and scientific classical texts. Why was word separation so long in coming? The author finds the answer in ancient reading habits with their oral basis, and in the social context where reading and writing took place. The ancient world had no desire to make reading easier and swifter. For various reasons, what modern readers view as advantages – retrieval of reference information, increased ability to read “difficult” texts, greater diffusion of literacy – were not seen as advantages in the ancient world. The notion that a larger portion of the population should be autonomous and self-motivated readers was entirely foreign to the ancient world's elitist mentality.” (<http://www.sup.org/books/title/?id=683>; lesedato 12.05.15)

“In chapter 48 of the Rule, St. Benedict warned monks that reading might interfere with the silence necessary for meditation because it created unnecessary noise.” (Stock 2001 s. 16)

Den italienske kirkefaderen Ambrosius, biskop på 300-tallet e.Kr., var en uvanlig leser ved ikke å uttale ordene høyt mens han leste. “[I]n Milan Augustine paid a visit to the city's bishop, the celebrated Ambrose, friend and adviser to Augustine's mother, Monica. Ambrose (who, like Augustine, was later to be canonized) was a man in his late forties, strict in his orthodox beliefs and unafraid of even the highest earthly powers [...] Augustine, who considered Ambrose fortunate to be held in such high regard by so many people, found himself unable to ask the old man the questions about matters of the faith that were troubling him because, when Ambrose was not eating a frugal meal or entertaining one of his many admirers, he was alone in his cell, reading. Ambrose was an extraordinary reader. “When he read,” said Augustine, “his eyes scanned the page and his heart sought out the meaning, but his voice was silent and his tongue was still. Anyone could approach him freely and guests were not commonly announced, so that often, when we came to visit him, we found him reading like this in silence, for he never read aloud.” ” (Alberto Manguel i http://web.stanford.edu/class/history/34q/readings/Manguel/Silent_Readers.html; lesedato 03.09.15)

Det finnes kilder som tyder på at noen praktiserte stillelesing også før Ambrosius, beskrevet i Bernard M. W. Knox' artikkel “Silent Reading in Antiquity” (1968) (<http://babel.revues.org/1965>; lesedato 10.04.15). “Augustine's description of Ambrose's silent reading (including the remark that he never read aloud) is the first definite instance recorded in Western literature. Earlier examples are far more uncertain. In the fifth century BC, two plays show characters reading on stage: in

Euripides' *Hippolytus*, Theseus reads in silence a letter held by his dead wife; in Aristophanes' *The Knights*, Demosthenes looks at a writing-tablet sent by an oracle and, without saying out loud what it contains, seems taken aback by what he has read. According to Plutarch, Alexander the Great read a letter from his mother in silence in the fourth century BC, to the bewilderment of his soldiers. Claudius Ptolemy, in the second century AD, remarked in *On the Criterion* (a book that Augustine may have known) that sometimes people read silently when they are concentrating hard, because voicing the words is a distraction to thought. And Julius Caesar, standing next to his opponent Cato in the Senate in 63 BC, silently read a little billet-doux sent to him by Cato's own sister. Almost four centuries later, Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, in a catechetical lecture probably delivered at Lent of the year 349, entreated the women in church to read, while waiting during the ceremonies, "quietly, however, so that, while their lips speak, no other ears may hear what they say" – a whispered reading, perhaps, in which the lips fluttered with muffled sounds." (Alberto Manguel i http://web.stanford.edu/class/history34q/readings/Manguel/Silent_Readers.html; lesedato 04.09.15)

"Plutarch, in a speech called "On the Fortune of Alexander", tells us that, when Alexander the Great was silently reading a confidential letter from his mother, Hephaestion his friend "quietly put his head beside Alexander's and read the letter with him; Alexander could not bear to stop him, but took off his ring and placed the seal on Hephaestion's lips". Plutarch tells this story four times: the point is that Alexander does not have a fit of temper at his friend's presumption: he behaves "like a philosopher" simply reminding his friend that such letters are highly confidential. I consulted Alberto Manguel's *A History of Reading* (Flamingo), which was published in the same year as Gavrilov's and Burnyeat's articles. Manguel believes that the passage in Augustine is "the first definite instance [of silent reading] recorded in western literature". He is well aware of the evidence to the contrary, but he finds it unconvincing. Thus Manguel: "According to Plutarch, Alexander the Great read letter from his mother in silence in the fourth century BC, to the bewilderment of his soldiers." [...] But these bewildered soldiers are Manguel's importation. They have been brought into the story in order to make it seem exceptional. Manguel shamelessly fudges the argument. [...] What shocked Augustine was that Ambrose read silently in front of visitors and refused to share his reading matter, and his thoughts, with them. But Augustine was perfectly capable of silent reading, and describes a key moment in his conversion as a moment of silent reading with a friend." (James Fenton i <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/jul/29/featuresreviews.guardianreview27>; lesedato 21.06.16)

"Reading out loud with someone else in the room implied shared reading, deliberate or not. Ambrose's reading had been a solitary act. "Perhaps he was afraid," Augustine mused, "that if he read out loud, a difficult passage by the author he was reading would raise a question in the mind of an attentive listener, and he would then have to explain what it meant or even argue about some of the more abstruse points." But with silent reading the reader was at last able to establish an

unrestricted relationship with the book and the words. The words no longer needed to occupy the time required to pronounce them. They could exist in interior space, rushing on or barely begun, fully deciphered or only half-said, while the reader's thoughts inspected them at leisure, drawing new notions from them, allowing comparisons from memory or from other books left open for simultaneous perusal. The reader had time to consider and reconsider the precious words whose sounds – he now knew – could echo just as well within as without. And the text itself, protected from outsiders by its covers, became the reader's own possession, the reader's intimate knowledge, whether in the busy scriptorium, the market-place or the home.” (Alberto Manguel i http://web.stanford.edu/class/history34q/readings/Manguel/Silent_Readers.html; lesedato 04.09.15)

“Silent reading, stimulated by the complex works of scholasticism [et teologisk-filosofisk lærdomssystem i middelalderen], prevailed in clerical and professional communities as early as the twelfth century. In the fourteenth century it became popular among the elite – the upper middle class and the nobility, for whom Dante (1265-1321) and Boccaccio (1313-1375) wrote. The nobility in particular turned to silent reading, acquiring books to read as well as reference works such as gazetteers and biographical dictionaries of saints. Books in the vernacular were plentiful, engendering larger and larger royal and upper-class libraries.” (Kilgour 1998 s. 78)

“Once silent reading became the norm in the scriptorium [i middelalderklostrene], communication among the scribes was done by signs: if a scribe required a new book to copy, he would pretend to turn over imaginary pages; if he specifically needed a psalter, he'd place his hands on his head in the shape of a crown (in reference to King David); a lectionary was indicated by wiping away imaginary wax from candles; a missal, by the sign of the cross; a pagan work, by scratching his body like a dog. [...] Some dogmatists became wary of the new trend; in their minds, silent reading allowed for day-dreaming, for the danger of accidie – the sin of idleness, “the destruction that wasteth at noonday”. But silent reading brought with it another danger the Christian fathers had not foreseen. A book that can be read privately, reflected upon as the eye unravels the sense of the words, is no longer subject to immediate clarification or guidance, condemnation or censorship by a listener. Silent reading allows unwitnessed communication between the book and the reader” (Alberto Manguel i http://web.stanford.edu/class/history34q/readings/Manguel/Silent_Readers.html; lesedato 04.09.15).

Briten Samuel Pepys levde på 1600-tallet og er i dag berømt for sin omfattende dagbok. Pepys var statsansatt administrator og dessuten medlem av parlamentet. I dagboka forteller han blant annet om at han av og til lystleste på jobben, på sitt kontor under dekke av å arbeide med administrasjonssaker. Der leste han uanstendige bøker som han ikke torde lese hjemme, av frykt for at hans kone skulle oppdage det (gjengitt fra Quinsat 1990 s. 269).

Pepys “reads in his bed and in his office; he reads while traveling down the Thames in a boat, and while walking through the streets of London. [...] But Pepys is not an entirely silent or private reader, contra Chartier’s claim. He has his valet and his wife read aloud to him as he eats, as he prepares for bed, even as he sleeps – and often texts you wouldn’t imagine would make good bedtime stories, like John Wilkins’ universal language manual.” (<http://blog.whitneyannetrettien.com/2009/02/pepys-history-of-reading-and.html>; lesedato 15.09.16)

Den tyske dikteren Johann Wolfgang von Goethe skrev i sitt selvbiografiske verk *Fra mitt liv: Diktning og sannhet* (1811-33) at “å lese stille for seg selv er et trist surrogat for tale” (Goethe sitert fra etterord til Gutenberg 1977 s. 300).

Den amerikanske filosofen og forfatteren Ralph Waldo Emerson tok på 1800-tallet “advantage of the art that had so surprised the saint [Augustin]. In church, during the lengthy and often tedious sermons which he attended out of a sense of social responsibility, he silently read Pascal’s *Pensees*. And at night, in his cold room in Concord, “covered with blankets to the chin”, he read to himself the *Dialogues of Plato*. (“He associated Plato,” noted a historian, “ever after, with the smell of wool.”) Even though he thought there were too many books to be read, and thought readers should share their findings by reporting to one another the gist of their studies, Emerson believed that reading a book was a private and solitary business. “All these books,” he wrote, drawing up a list of “sacred” texts that included the *Upanishads* and the *Pensees*, “are the majestic expressions of the universal conscience, and are more to our daily purpose than this year’s almanac or this day’s newspaper. But they are for the closet, and are to be read on the bended knee. Their communications are not to be given or taken with the lips and the end of the tongue, but out of the glow of the cheek, and with the throbbing heart.” In silence.” (Alberto Manguel i http://web.stanford.edu/class/history34q/readings/Manguel/Silent_Readers.html; lesedato 07.09.15)

Elsbeth Jajdelskas bok *Silent Reading and the Birth of the Narrator* (2007) “states her “central hypothesis” clearly and directly: “In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, for the first time in England, a large enough group of children became sufficiently skilled in silent reading to constitute (in adulthood) an audience for a new style of writing. This style arose from the development of a new model of reading, as hearing rather than as speaking [...] “Reading aloud creates an identification between the writer and the reader. The reader is a speaker, the writer’s mouthpiece, with the writer’s words in his or her mouth. Silent reading creates a different relationship between writer and reader. Instead of identifying with the writer as the speaker of his or her words, the reader becomes an (internal) hearer of the writer’s words” (6). In her first chapter, Jajdelska discusses the material, intellectual, and ideological changes that enabled the growth of silent reading. She notes that fluent silent reading comes only as a result of much practice in reading and argues convincingly that in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries conditions were in place for at least “the children of the well-off and worldly” (23)

to acquire such practice, thanks to changing patterns of consumption and new ideas about childhood education and the moral status of recreational reading, among other factors. [...] In her final chapter, she gets to what will probably be of most interest to many readers: the “birth of the narrator.” She divides the broad term “narrator” into two more specific ones. The first of these, the “Storyteller,” comes with the reader-as-speaker model and, she says, “brings the text to completion through performance” (169). The second, the “Narrator,” comes to be through the reader-as-hearer model” (<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/369678>; lesedato 19.09.16)

Stille trenger ikke å bety at det er lydløst rundt (eller for) leseren. Det kan f.eks. spilles bakgrunnsmusikk eller snakkes i løpet av stillelesingen av teksten. Den italienske renessanseforfatteren Niccolò Machiavelli fortalte i et brev til en venn i 1513 at han når han skulle lese sine yndlingsforfattere i sitt eget lesekammer, tok av seg sine skitne klær og ikledte seg rene og fine klær, og at han i lesekammeret snakket høyt med de forfatterne han leste i en slags imaginær dialog (gjengitt fra Perrig 2009 s. 129).

“[R]eading is, essentially, a fitful silencing of the self, at least when the self is able to accept silence. But such a formulation necessarily throws into doubt the possibility of truly silent reading, which we take as a form of solitude. Just as we hesitate to interrupt someone at prayer, we excuse ourselves when distracting an individual from silent reading as if intruding upon privacy. But reading is no more solitary than a telephone conversation, and even this notion that reading is a silent or private act is relatively modern. [...] silent reading had become the norm for educated readers by the fifteenth century but even four hundred years later, *La Cagnotte*, Eugène Marin Labiche’s 1864 comedy, mocks a farmer for reading a private letter aloud; the bumpkin retorts that he can’t understand what he reads unless he hears it.” (John Biguenet i <https://newrepublic.com/article/122665/silent-reading-doesnt-exist>; lesedato 08.09.16)

“But do we actually scan the written word silently? Recent neurological research questions whether silent reading actually is silent. Evidence grows that the brain interprets “silent” reading as an auditory phenomenon. In “Silent Reading of Direct versus Indirect Speech Activates Voice-selective Areas in the Auditory Cortex,” published in *The Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* in 2011, Bo Yao and his colleagues reported: “Overall, our results lend objective empirical support to the intuitive experience of an ‘inner voice’ during silent reading of written text, particularly during silent reading of direct speech statements.” The following year, Marcela Perrone-Bertolotti et al., in “How Silent Is Silent Reading? Intracerebral Evidence for Top-Down Activation of Temporal Voice Areas during Reading” in *The Journal of Neuroscience*, explained: “As you might experience it while reading this sentence, silent reading often involves an imagery speech component: we can hear our own ‘inner voice’ pronouncing words mentally. Recent functional magnetic resonance imaging studies have associated that component with increased

metabolic activity in the auditory cortex, including voice-selective areas.” The authors went on to announce experimental confirmation of Yao’s findings that “reading spontaneously elicits auditory processing in the absence of any auditory stimulation.” Using “direct electrophysiological recordings from the auditory cortex to show that silent reading activates voice-selective regions of the auditory cortex,” they concluded that “written words produce a vivid auditory experience almost effortlessly” and readers “produce inner voice even when reading narrative with no identified speaker.” But the authors cautioned that “sustained inner voice activation is not an automatic process occurring systematically in response to any written word. It is clearly enhanced when participants read attentively (to understand and memorize sentences) and minimized when words are not processed attentively.” ” (John Biguenet i <https://newrepublic.com/article/122665/silent-reading-doesnt-exist>; lesedato 09.09.16)

“When we read rather than merely skim a text, the experience is processed as auditory. Silent reading is not silent to the brain – or to most of us. Perrone-Bertolotti notes [...] that “few would contest that most of our waking time is spent talking to ourselves covertly.” But a 2010 article by Julie Cross in *The Daily Mail* reported on the case of a fifty-year-old dyslexic builder living in Stoke-on-Trent who was amazed to learn that his wife heard a voice in her head when she read silently: “I have never heard a voice in my head – ever. I was so shocked I nearly fell off my chair.” He went on to explain: “It all seemed so alien to me. I have the reading age of a five-year-old so I never read. If I dream, I have visual dreams. They are always totally silent.” He says the impact on his life has been enormous. “I now understand my actions a lot more. I follow my emotions because I don’t have a voice in my head analysing what I’m about to say or do.” Professor Rod Nicolson at the University of Sheffield is pursuing a link between dyslexia and the absence of inner speech. “Everyone assumes everyone else is the same. However, we have found not everyone has an inner voice and in those who don’t, literacy levels are often poor. But we have also found a lot of children with dyslexia who have well-developed inner speech.” Dr. Kate Saunders, of the British Dyslexia Association, says, according to the article, that “30 to 50 per cent of those with dyslexia also have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, a medical condition affecting how well someone can sit still and focus. It is believed that many of those with ADHD may also lack an inner voice.” ” (John Biguenet i <https://newrepublic.com/article/122665/silent-reading-doesnt-exist>; lesedato 09.09.16)

Den franske forfatteren Marcel Proust kalte individets stille lesing for “that fruitful miracle of communication in the midst of solitude [...] the very foundation of “spiritual life” ” (siteret fra Stock 2001 s. 23).

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