

Danish Language and Culture

Level I

SYLLABUS SPRING 08

Instructor: Suzanne da Cunha Bang

Cand. mag. et art. (Danish, English, History of Art, University of Copenhagen, 1983 and 2002). Teacher of Danish to foreigners since 1979. With DIS 1983-1991 and since 2004. Director of Danish Language Instruction at DIS.

Course: Danish I Section 101

Location: Vestergade 7, Basement Classroom

Time: Block A1 (8:30 – 9:50)

"He who doesn't know another language doesn't know his own," wrote German poet Wolfgang Goethe. The same can be said about culture.

Language Ability and Cultural Sensitivity are closely connected - studying Danish while living in Denmark is a unique opportunity for you to study another language and another culture, thus giving you the opportunity to experience your own language and culture from another perspective. In general, you get the opportunity to see the world through a different pair of glasses.

Using the language as a stepping stone, we provide you with an insight into Danish culture, values and ways of life.

Objectives

Language:

- Develop a basic understanding of the Danish language including grammar, vocabulary and correct pronunciation. The textbook Aktivt Dansk provides basic communicative competency in Danish. The lessons guide the student step by step into modern Danish; as the main emphasis is on communicative competencies, the grammatical rules are not the beginning and end of the lesson, but are second to the needs of communication. First language, then grammar. Phrases and appropriate language for specific situations are analyzed in order to comprehend grammatical rules. At the end of the semester you will be able to engage in basic everyday conversations with a Dane, while applying the proper cultural sensitivities relevant to Danish society.

Culture:

- Establish a basic understanding of Danish history, society, culture and way of life, and thus being able to decode Danish culture.
- Develop a keen sensitivity to the role and importance culture plays in inter-personal and business communications throughout the world.

Language and Culture:

- To identify and explain how a language can be used as a key to a nation's culture.

Format of the Course

- The class meets two times a week: Monday - Thursday **OR** Tuesday – Friday

- **The Language** is taught using “Aktivt Dansk,” by Lise Bostrup. The In Class focus is on speaking and listening comprehension, and during class you will be asked to practice speaking Danish either with a partner and/or in small groups, and often the homework will include you speaking with a Dane. Furthermore, we will spend quite a lot of time on pronunciation (since this constitutes one of the bigger challenges of learning Danish).
- **The Cultural** part consists of small lectures and discussions based on various texts about Denmark and your own experiences and observations. An important aim of the course is to strengthen your ability to navigate in an international world, and your active participation is extremely important not only in class but also outside the classroom. You are expected to bring your observations and experiences to class for analysis and discussions.
- **Readings:** A Binder consisting of different relevant articles.

Homework

- **Language:** there will be oral and written homework for each class
- **Culture:** “Kultur dagbog – mine observationer” : You are asked from the beginning to record your observations and experiences while living in Denmark (in English!). You may use a note book or your computer. This is rather important because:
 1. Otherwise you tend to forget...
 2. Sometimes, keeping a journal that is just “stating the obvious” sharpens your awareness of what is going on around you.
 3. Recording your own observations from the beginning of the semester gives you the opportunity to see your initial observations and reactions in a different light at the end of the semester.

Observations

- There is no set of rules. They can be from your Danish family, from interactions with Danish roommates or Danish students at the “kollegium”, people’s behaviour on buses and trains, in the supermarket, in cafés etc. Even though you are asked to be a sort of “anthropologist”, this doesn’t mean that you cannot participate in what is going on around you. Try to ask questions, share your observations and interpretations with your family or friends whenever it is possible. Try to use your Danish as an “opener”.

Papers

- Synopsis for PowerPoint Presentation “Capture Danishness”
- Short Paper to turn in before Midterm

Group Presentation

- Capture “Danishness”: PowerPoint group presentation in class. After Travel Break

Field study

- There will be one Field Study, place and date to be announced

Danish film

- There will be one film evening during the semester. Time TBA

Quizzes

- There will several quizzes during the semester.

Exams

- **Midterm:** Oral midterm in class either, Thursday the 5th of March/ Friday the 6th of March
- **Final:**
- Written Final Monday the 21st of April OR Friday the 2nd of May
- Oral Danish Exam, between the 5th and the 16th of May

Grading elements:

Participation and Quizzes	25%
Group Presentation	10%
Cultural Journal	10%
Midterm	10%
Written Final / Term Paper	20%
Oral Final	25%

Participation covers:

1. attendance
2. level of preparation – ability to answer questions asked in class
3. involvement in class and group discussions
4. presentations in class

Please note that simply attending class will not earn you participation/preparation/homework credit. Participation means being actively and cooperatively INVOLVED in the classroom sessions.