



'The illusion or the truth?' – Back stage constructions of authenticity in an up-market restaurant

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ABSTRACT

Building on recent sociolinguistic and anthropological theories on authenticity, in this paper we take a sociolinguistic perspective on the construction of authenticity in a Copenhagen-based Bornholmian restaurant. Focus is on the tensions between different understandings of authenticity in the creation of a new predinner drink. Data include interactions between owner and staff where ingredients, serving, and glass design are negotiated, all connected to the general aim of creating a recognizable Bornholmian product. Through detailed discourse analyses it is shown how the potentiality of authenticity is created backstage in a contemporary commercial enterprise, and how understandings of authenticity as inherent quality or performed are not necessarily mutually excluding, but rather co-existing in contemporary commercial cultural encounters.

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1. Introduction

In May 2015 a guest writes a review of the Copenhagen-based restaurant Koefoed on the web-based platform TripAdvisor:

Jeg fik vidunderlig betjening med fantastiske vine, samt en bornholmer cocktail i verdensklasse!

I received wonderful service with fantastic wines, and a world class Bornholmian cocktail.

Another guest, similarly praising the restaurant, writes that it has a 'super cosy and authentic atmosphere, which immediately directs your attention to Bornholm'. Bornholm is a Danish island, which Restaurant Koefoed orients to in its effort to carve out a place for itself in the saturated high-end Copenhagen restaurant market. The guests' comments make it evident that this restaurant offers an experience which includes both Bornh (cf. the 'Bornholmian cocktail') and high-end dining (cf. the reference to 'fantastic wines' and the 'world class' cocktail). The Bornholmian experience implies that the restaurant staff establishes indexical links to Bornholm. This is done through material resources, accompanied by discursive practices, which create, underline, and stress their symbolic meaning potential (Duchêne and Heller, 2012). In this paper we analyze the creation of the Bornholmian Cocktail mentioned in the review above. We concentrate specifically on the production of this drink as *authentically* Bornholmian. This is interesting as traditional, and in that sense authentic, Bornholmian drinks would rather be beer and aquavit or *snaps*, yet, authenticity is crucial to the restaurant's brand. We discuss tensions brought up in a conversation among the restaurant staff members in relation to discourses of authenticity.

We have discussed authenticity constructions in front stage interactions between servers and guests elsewhere (Karrebæk and Maegaard, 2017). Yet, the front stage authentication is prepared back stage (Goffman, 1959) outside the view of the audience, i.e. the guests. In this paper, we suggest a sociolinguistic and semiotic analysis of such preparatory work, including

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the creation of a universe of interpretation (cf. Manning, 2012; 21). We analyze recordings of an extended conversation between owner and staff during lunch servings where they discuss the owner's idea of a new pre-dinner cocktail – the so-called 'Bornholmian cocktail.' Alcoholic drinks are consumables with particular material properties and (potential) social meanings (Douglas, 1987; Manning, 2012), and the restaurant attempts to influence both dimensions. Sociability, materiality and universes of interpretation are thereby essential aspects of this analysis of the restaurant staff's discursive construction of – and troubled relation to – authenticity.

We start by discussing theoretical conceptions of authenticity, as well as theories of the sociability of food and, especially, drinks. Then we account for the data and method of analysis. Through analyses of examples of back stage interaction in the restaurant we show how authenticity is constructed, challenged and negotiated – all part of a contemporary commercial enterprise centered on indexing place and exclusiveness. We end with more general reflections on authenticity in contemporary commercial contexts.

2. Value and authenticity

The analyses presented below are concerned with how the creation of the new pre-dinner drink involves extended considerations of what will be meaningful, appropriate, and acceptable, in addition to what will add economic and symbolic value (Bourdieu, 1984). The restaurant's two primary objectives – to claim value and authenticity – are both centrally achieved through an orientation to the location of Bornholm. Such place-based orientation is made available through symbolic resources including language. We return to this below.

Within sociolinguistics, authenticity is often viewed as strongly related to the type of capitalism practiced today by most Western economies (Coupland, 2003, 2014; Duchêne and Heller, 2012; Heller, 2003; Pietikäinen et al., 2016; Cavanaugh and Shankar, 2014). Authentication – i.e., the active process of creating, performing and achieving authenticity (Manning, 2012; Pietikäinen et al., 2016) – adds value, perhaps even uniqueness, to commercial products, which in situations of market saturation may make them more sellable (Duchêne and Heller, 2012). Most sociolinguistic studies of authentication and authenticity in situations of commercial exchange focus on front stage encounters (Goffman, 1959) between producers (or sellers) and consumers (e.g. heritage tourism encounters, cultural performances; Jaworski and Thurlow, 2010; Stengs, 2015), or on products (e.g. menu cards, souvenir cups, t-shirts, etc.; Coupland, 2012; Johnstone, 2009; Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes, 2011). At the same time, commercial products, both goods and services, are designed and prepared by producers and sellers; perhaps even orchestrated by marketing and branding professionals (see e.g. Cavanaugh and Shankar, 2014).

Authenticity can be seen as a framework for the creation of meaning and value. It involves an assemblage of meanings, including, e.g., the grounding of a phenomenon in place, time, and tradition, all of which carry high value in a time characterized by mobility and constant change (Cavanaugh and Shankar, 2014; Duchêne and Heller, 2012; Heller, 2003, 2014; Pietikäinen et al., 2016; Weiss, 2016). Authenticity is associated with the genuine and real (Pratt, 2007; also Coupland, 2003, 2014), and it suggests a phenomenon as more local, more morally correct, and less industrialized and mediated (Blum, 2017; Paxson, 2010; Weiss, 2016).

In our previous analysis of front stage encounters, we showed how links between products, authenticity and the restaurant are created and exploited in highly reflexive moments (Karrebæk and Maegaard, 2017). When we focus on how producers' claims to authenticity take shape, we see discrepancies, disputes and dilemmas. Some of the discrepancies can be understood on the basis of authenticity being evaluated in relation to different frameworks. Thus, it is common to regard *constructed authenticity* as an oxymoron (cf. Heller, 2003, p. 475). Goffman's work exemplifies this. In his description, the back stage is where the front stage performance is planned, and where the audience's impression of it is contradicted by 'the suppressed facts' (Goffman, 1959, p. 112). An understanding of authenticity as necessarily partly constructed performance is not easily compatible with a concept like 'suppressed facts' behind the performance. Pietikäinen et al. (2016) argue that the modern consumer is often aware that authenticity is a construction. They describe two different types of authenticity which are both at work today: *conventional authenticity* and *transactional authenticity*. Within the conventional framework, authenticity is related to the concept of *truth*, as mentioned above. In contrast, within the transactional frame of authenticity, *verisimilitude* rather than truth is important:

Transactional authenticities are grounded in the moment: they do not require products, displays, performances to be exact replicas or re-creations of the past or any other essentialised cultural element. Rather, they are judged against standards of verisimilitude, the appearance of being true or real, which are situated and contextual: they are 'true enough' for the situation and the purposes at hand (Pietikäinen et al., 2016, pp. 77–78).

Within the transactional framework it is less important whether or not something is true or real, and more important whether or not it *could have been* true or real. Most processes of authentication are neither entirely one nor the other type, but somewhere on a continuum between the two and drawing on both. For instance, the constructive, performative aspects of authenticity are central to the restaurant experience in Restaurant Kofoed as well as in many other restaurants. At the same time, the participants orient towards a tension between authenticity as '(simple) facts' and 'performance' (see also Karrebæk and Maegaard, 2017 for analyses of how Bornholmian authenticity is co-constructed by staff and guests in restaurant encounters).

The stressing of performative aspects of authentication resonates well with Hobsbawm and Ranger's, 1983 concept of 'invented tradition'. They argue that the constant change and innovation of the modern world lead to a quest for establishing at least parts of social life as invariant and as linked to a historic past (Hobsbawm, 1983, p. 2). Yet, as Hobsbawm remarks, regarding 'invented traditions', the link to such a past is largely factitious. Hobsbawm mentions the pageantry surrounding the British monarchy in its public ceremonies as an example of this. The ceremonies were invented in the late 19th and the 20th centuries, but now appear as linked to a distant past. However, even though historicity is an important aspect of authenticity, this concept also involves other aspects, as mentioned above. In our case, aspects like place of origin of ingredients become extremely important.

Weiss (2016) argues against an exclusive focus on the performative side of the authenticating process, where 'invented traditions and fetishized commodities' become central, and where the crucial connections between concrete materialities and concerted actions are neglected. Rather, Weiss sees authenticity as rooted in the qualities and specific character of the authenticated object, *as well as* in practices involved in the production of the end product (in his case pastured pork). Authenticity is created or released along the life and trajectory of the authenticated object through concerted efforts. This 'release process' may be – and often is – discursive, but it may involve other kinds of efforts as well. We will draw on both approaches below, and along with Pietikäinen et al. (2016), we warn that authenticity cannot be reduced to an either-or.

3. Restaurants and drinks

Food and drinks are widely exchanged commercial products, but also material and symbolic objects, which invite producers to engage in semiotic and reflexive work (Manning, 2012; Weiss, 2016; Järlehed and Moriarty, 2018). Food and drinks are used to create meaning and distinction (Bourdieu, 1984; Silverstein, 2016; Mapes, 2018), and they materialize and index perceived qualities, or qualia, which may be (re-)interpreted as signs of authenticity; compare how the imperfection and non-uniformity of non-industrial products is sometimes highly valued, e.g. handwritten labels on the Bergamasco salami, a distinctly piggy taste of the 'real' pig or the taste of the lamb's diet in its meat (cf. Cavanaugh and Shankar, 2014; Paxson, 2010; Karrebæk and Maegaard, 2017). Through the incorporation of the food substance, consumers participate as 'eaters and drinkers' in the processes of authentication and may even become particular kinds of persons eucharistically (Silverstein, 2016).

In this sociolinguistic and semiotic study of the creation of a drink, the food perspective plays out in three ways. First, the restaurant setting provides a frame which includes certain participation frameworks and activities. Second, the branding of the restaurant evokes expectations that the food served will be authentic and exclusive. Third, the consumables become objects of talk, as the development of the drink is partly a discursive activity. In this section we will focus on the institutional embedding, namely the restaurant, and on the expectations invited by drinks.

Restaurants are well-established social formations. The meal itself offers an infrastructure of social interaction and talk, something which numerous studies in language socialization have exploited (e.g. Blum-Kulka, 1997; Ochs and Taylor, 1995). Restaurant visits are structured: Guests enter, call a server, order, are served, eat, etc. (cf. the *restaurant script*, Schank and Abelson, 1977), and there are expectations as to activities, food, décor, language, etc. Restaurants are also recreational enterprises, and guests expect comfort and an experience different from the ordinary. The food served is integral to the meal, part of the recreational experience, and in high-end restaurants, the expression of creativity, luxury and distinction (cf. also Coupland and Coupland, 2014 on recreational frames in tourist experiences). Thus, a high-end restaurant visit constitutes an entire *restaurant experience* (Beriss and Sutton, 2007) rather than just a meal.

Because restaurants are commercial enterprises, they need to attract customers – or guests. The orientation to regional, and often national, cuisines – Italian, Japanese, French – is a well-known way of accomplishing this. With Manning (2012) we refer to such orientations as the restaurant's *universe of interpretation*. The universe of interpretation motivates particular choices, as the staff selects emblematic elements of food, and attempts to make décor, tableware and even servers, etc., conform to and evoke a conventional French- (Italian-, Japanese-)ness. The guests need to experience, understand, and accept such orientations if the universe of interpretation is to create distinction. This involves authenticating work, which often includes language. In the incident analyzed a menu item is developed, thus, the universe of interpretation is made material.

The item in question is a cocktail, and such drinks are generally used to create occasions for social interaction rather than to quench thirst (Manning, 2012). What we do with the drink – to drink it – is a social act, performed in a recognized social context (Manning, 2012, p. 2). Furthermore, 'the Bornholmian cocktail' is a pre-dinner drink, which gives it a particular affordance: The pre-meal slot is empty time food-wise. Guests are waiting to order or perhaps waiting for their orders. At this point the guests can focus on talking. When the drink arrives, it will be the first served object on the table. Its saliency augments its social and semiotic potential, and a pre-dinner drink is thus well-placed to announce the universe of interpretation, here Bornholm. When compared to the other pre-dinner drink listed on the menu – champagne – the cocktail seems to be intended for exactly such an announcement of the Bornholmian theme. Champagne and

the cocktail both index high-end dining or eliteness (Thurlow and Jaworski, 2017), but they differ in their potential to build meaning and associations (cf. Manning, 2012, p. 26): Bornholm or just cosmopolitan time- and place-less luxury (although champagne is an AOC, we believe that the location is not what gives champagne its most dominant meaning and value). Drinks sort the people who consume them (Manning, 2012; Silverstein, 2016), and guests who order the cocktail signal that they are interested in exploring the Bornholmian concept (Karrebæk and Maegaard, 2017). ‘The alcoholic (material) aspect of the drink will make you drunk’ (Manning, 2012, p. 6) but the semiotic aspect of the drink you choose will determine what kind of drinker you are ((Manning, 2012). In other words, by choosing the Bornholmian cocktail guests choose to participate in the construction of Bornholmnness through incorporation of it (Silverstein, 2016). So, the drink is created with an eye to its symbolic potential to create indexical meanings and specific associations. It is also created with the intention that it will become part of the social interaction, as an object that can be talked about, and a social actor in itself with presence and materiality (Douglas, 1987; Manning, 2012).

4. Setting, data and method

4.1. Bornholm

The Copenhagen based, high-end restaurant Koefoed, where the data in this paper come from, uses *Bornholm* as its universe of interpretation. Bornholm is a small Danish island in the Baltic Sea with just below 40000 inhabitants. Linguistically, the traditional Bornholm dialect differs significantly from other varieties of Danish (Nielsen and Pedersen, 1991). It is easily recognized, and a nation-wide favored object of parody. However, despite its recognizability in the public, it is not used very much on Bornholm any longer. Like other peripheral areas of Denmark, Bornholm has witnessed a process of linguistic standardization leading to a drastic decrease in the use of local dialect (Maegaard et al. forthcoming). Local dialect is no longer the unmarked everyday language it was a few decades ago; now it is a way of speaking which is ideologically linked to a past agrarian society.

Bornholm is a popular tourist destination, which receives around 700,000 visitors yearly. It is famous for its unique nature, sandy beaches and cliffs. At the same time, the island faces serious socio-economic challenges, and Bornholm is associated with poverty, unemployment, deserted houses, declining population etc., like many other rural locations (cf. Britain, 2017; Woods, 2011). In order to counter this tendency, entrepreneurial Bornholmians have spent the past two decades re-branding Bornholm, not the least through food and with heavy public funding from the Danish state and the EU. Food entrepreneurs represent Bornholm as a place with a unique terroir and a place with innovative ‘micro’ food productions; wine, water kefir, and whiskey are some of the more exotic endeavors. Bornholm is marketed as a gourmet destination; various foods sourced or produced at Bornholm can be bought in Copenhagen today, and are deployed at up-market restaurants with a New Nordic Cuisine ideology, which value seasons, locality and foraging. The over-all goal of this entrepreneurial food work is that it can generate more work and income locally, both through export and through attracting new types of tourists who will come during the off-peak seasons and spend more money on luxury products.

4.2. The Copenhagen-based Bornholmian restaurant

Restaurant Koefoed is located in the Copenhagen city center, near expensive hotels and tourist attractions, some 160 km from Bornholm. Similar to the only other high-end Bornholmian restaurant in Copenhagen, *Kadeau*, it draws on widely circulating understandings of Bornholm as a location with gorgeous sights and an interesting food-scape. The restaurant is a high-end dining place, but it is not in the same league as Michelin starred restaurants like Noma or Kadeau. Nevertheless, an effort is made to create the restaurant as high-end, both when it comes to menu, décor, and communicative practices involving guests and staff. For instance, the owner comments on the choice of white table cloths for the restaurant. In an interview with us he claims that these table cloths are important for the restaurant to be perceived as ‘fine dining’, but at the same time he rhetorically asks: ‘Do you have any idea how much it costs to have white table cloths in a restaurant?’. Thus he constructs the choice of table cloths as a deliberate and necessary effort to be recognized as elite, framed in an economic consideration of profit and expenses. However, the restaurant is simultaneously presented as low-key and relaxed, and these qualities are especially achieved through jocular interactions between staff and guests, the use of kitschy Bornholmian souvenirs on shelves in the restaurant, and some of the food items on the menu (see Karrebæk and Maegaard, 2017). In this way, the restaurant works to present itself as authentic and elite, and at the same time as quite unpretentious and self-reflexive (see discussion on transactional authenticity above). Similar to Mapes (2018) we find historicity and locality to be quite central to the restaurant’s claim to authenticity, whereas the other ‘rhetorical strategies’ evolving from Mapes’ analyses are less prominent (see Mapes, 2018, p. 271). Humorous interaction between staff and guests is a central aspect of the restaurant experience at Koefoed, and as we will see below humor is also central to the back stage encounters between owner and staff, and indeed to the specially designed cocktail glasses.

Restaurant Koefoed markets itself as serving ‘Bornholm on a table’, and Bornholm and Bornholmness are recurring themes in interviews, reviews etc. Even the name Koefoed is (and is recognized as) typical Bornholman, and according to reviews Restaurant Koefoed succeeds in the task of making its universe of interpretation understood by guests. However, there is no such thing as a recognized Bornholman cuisine, and only few widely known Bornholman food products and dishes (most particularly smoked herring). It therefore demands strategic work to create a potential for guests to interpret (what are meant to be) signs of authentic Bornholmness as such. It also demands a continued anchoring in the interpretive universe, as Bornholman food is not a widely known and accepted concept. Since this meaning potential is evasive, it needs to be introduced frequently and in varied ways for the Bornholman project to succeed. This means that on the one hand, Restaurant Koefoed works to create itself as authentically Bornholman. Our analyses demonstrate how materiality, place-connections, historicity and innovation play out in the creation of a product, which has the potential to be perceived as ‘Bornholman’ by the restaurant guests. On the other hand, much of what is presented are new inventions with little historicity and tradition. This is not uncommon today (cf. discussion of authenticity above), but it may still lead to tensions – as it does in our examples with discussions of what is appropriate and permissible, what is authentic or ‘the truth’, and what is inauthentic or ‘an illusion’. The distinction between front stage and back stage, and the associated distinction between actual performance and its preparations and ‘suppressed facts’ (cf. Goffman, 1959), is reproduced by the staff during their interactions, and will be analyzed in examples below.

4.3. Data

Our work on Bornholman food endeavors was carried out in connection with a larger project on dialect in peripheral areas of Denmark, including Bornholm. We have data from other Bornholman food entrepreneurs such as food professionals on the island (e.g. Monka et al., 2015; Scheuer et al., 2015), a Michelin-star Bornholman restaurant in Copenhagen, and a Bornholman restaurant in Brooklyn, NY. In the case of Restaurant Koefoed, data consist in an interview with the owner, conversations with and observations of the servers, photos taken in the restaurant, the restaurant website, and a collection of reviews and discussions from media (social media, newspapers, magazines, etc.) made over a six month period. In addition, we were allowed to make audio-recordings of conversations between servers and guests twice, once during lunch (4 h), once during dinner (6 h). The data set offers a rare glimpse into the discursive constructions of authenticity and creative exploitation of available resources during everyday practices in the cultural institution ‘a restaurant’ (cf. restaurant studies in Berris and Sutton, 2007; Goffman, 1959). Data like these are difficult to obtain, and we had to refrain from doing more in-depth fieldwork in particular because not everybody at the restaurant was comfortable with the recorders. Two servers, originally from Bornholm, carried the recorders while waiting tables. When they were not in the restaurant dining room, serving guests, they were talking to the kitchen staff, to each other, and to us. We instructed the servers to inform the guests about our project and to ask for consent, and we placed informative pamphlets by the front door and cloakroom. We were present during the recording sessions and talked to guests who had questions about the project.

Our analyses are based in linguistic ethnography, which here implies that we carry out detailed sequential analyses of interaction data and interpret them in a wider frame of analysis not restricted to the specific conversation and informed by our ethnographic knowledge (see e.g. Rampton et al., 2015; Maybin and Tusting, 2011).

5. Analyses: constructing ‘the truth’

The analyses focus on an encounter that took place in September 2014 in a room next to the counter, the toilets, and the kitchen, relatively isolated from the dining room where the guests were seated. The two authors were sitting at the counter, eating and chatting with the owner, as the servers walked back and forth between the restaurant’s dining room and the kitchen. The centrally involved participants in the interaction include: Thomas who owns the restaurant, the sommelier Søren, the restaurant manager and server Henrik, a second server Peter, and the two authors. The interaction is recorded through microphones worn by Henrik and Peter.

5.1. ‘The illusion or the truth’, part 1

In example 1 the participants demonstrate disagreements related to a suggestion of the owner who wants to introduce a ‘Bornholman cocktail’ on the menu. The disagreements are articulated through oppositional meanings, and we see them as essentially concerning different types of authenticity. Before the extract, the owner Thomas has suggested that the restaurant add a ‘Bornholman cocktail’ to the menu as a pre-dinner drink. It is the sommelier Søren’s job to develop this idea, yet Thomas has already proposed the (Danish) up-market gin Geranium and Bornholman rhubarb juice as the main ingredients. The entire conversation takes place in a friendly atmosphere ripe with laughter and jokes.

Example 1. ‘Rhubarb juice with gin’.

01	Søren:	det stadig bare en juice en	it’s still just a juice a
02		rabarberjuice med gini	rhubarb juice with gin in
03			it
04	Thomas:	jamen det vigtige for [dig	well but the important
05		er at du skaber sandheden]	thing for [you is that you
06			create the truth]
07	Søren:	[det var ikke det det var	[it just wasn’t it wasn’t
08		ikke det] du sad og sagde	what] you were saying
09	Thomas:	nej (.) men jeg tænker bare	no (.) but I’m just
10		på (.) i forhold til at vi	thinking (.) in relation to
11		kan få det gjort (.) så	getting it done(.) then
12		kunne det jævne en start	this couldbe a start a
13		lidt ligesom nu har vi	little bit like now we did
14		gjort det med platten	it with the plate
15	Søren:	helt sikkert men det her	sure but we’re already
16		det gør vi jo i forvejen	doing this when people want
17		når folk vil have en	a cocktail
18		cocktail	
19	Thomas:	ja men det står ikke på	yes but it’s not in the
20		kortet	menu
21	Søren:	så skriv det på kortet (.)	then put it in the menu (.)
22		skriv bornholmsk cocktail	write Bornholmian cocktail
23		så kan vi fortælle folk dag	then we can tell people
24		til dag hvad det er (.)	from day to day what it is
25		indtil vi rammer den (1.4)	(.) until we hit it (1.4)
26		men det var bare ikke det	but this just wasn’t what
27		du sagde	you said [to me and] Henrik
28		[til mig og] Henrik	
29	Thomas:	[nej nej]	[nono]
30	Henrik:	vi kan bare skabe sandheden	we can just create the
31			truth
32	Thomas:	så er det også svært	then it’s difficult too
33	Søren:	og så er det vi	and then we get where
34	Thomas:	ja (1.3) jamen jeg det	yes (1.3) but I I do
35		forstår jeg godt	understand that
36		(1.7)	(1.7)
37	Henrik:	hvad (.) hvad b- altså hvad	what (.) what so what’s
38		er vigtigst illusionen	most important the illusion
39		eller sandheden	or the truth
40	Søren:	sandheden	the truth
41		(3.8)	(3.8)
42	Thomas:	har du været nu har du	have you been now you’ve
43		været for lang tid på Noma	been spending too much time
44		igen Søren	at Noma again Søren
45	Henrik:	haha	haha
46	Thomas:	nu er du lidt	now you’re being a little
47	Server:	hvad kalder vi den	so what do we call it the
48		bornholmercocktailen xxx	Bornholmian cocktail xxx
49	Thomas:	nu er du Søren (.) jeg-vil-	now you’re being Søren (.)
50		ikke-tjene-penge igen	I-don’t-wanna-make-money
51			again
(…) (five lines omitted, Henrik and server discussing aquavit for a specific table)			
52	Henrik:	hah nu er du Søren-jeg-vil-	hah now you’re being Søren-
53		ikke-tjene-penge igen hah	I-don’t-wanna-make-money
54	Thomas:	hvad med at lave en øh hvad	again hah
55		med at lave en øh hvad med	how about doing an eh how
56		at lave en si- en sirup på	about doing an eh how about
57		bornholmske morbær (.) i	doing a sy- a sirup
58		det dér (2.6) i den dér	onBornholmian mulberries
59		(1.0) til en rabarber (2.7)	(.) in that one (2.6) in
60		så bliver den da lidt mere	that one (1.0) with a
61		så bliver den da lidt mere	rhubarb (2.7) then it gets
62		xxx	a little more then it gets
63			a little more xxx

The first opposition we meet is the implicit distinction between creative invention and a relatively arbitrary mix of ingredients. Søren questions whether this mix qualifies as a 'Bornholmian cocktail' (line 01–03), as he finds that it is 'still just a rhubarb juice with gin in it.' In other words: it is *just* a mixture, not a new type of phenomenon – not a 'cocktail' – and as such it has no particular value for the fine-dining restaurant. The crucial point is what it takes for a mixture of ingredients to qualify as a 'Bornholmian cocktail'.

The opposition of 'truth' version 'illusion' is announced when Thomas claims that it is important for Søren to 'create the truth' (line 04–06). This statement can be interpreted in two ways. Either Thomas tells Søren what his priorities should be (a directive speech act), and in this interpretation, Thomas undermines the idea that there should be an opposition between truth and creativity. In the second interpretation, Thomas talks about his own understanding of what Søren aims to do in his work (a more representational function), namely to bring forward truths which may not have been perceivable before. This makes Søren's work more comparable to a release process (cf. Weiss, 2016) than to invention. This interpretation could be further strengthened by the fact that Thomas acts in a very supportive and understanding manner immediately after this utterance (lines 32, 34 and 35). Regardless of which interpretation is closer to what Thomas intends, Thomas points us to the staff's continuous engagement in the development of the restaurant's product, i.e. the restaurant experience.

The participants return to the theme of truth after discussing whether they should put the Bornholmian Cocktail on the menu immediately, and subsequently experiment their way towards an optimal recipe (a discussion we will return to). Henrik asks Søren what is more important: 'the illusion or the truth' (lines 37–39). Søren answers 'the truth.' This introduces the third tension, which relates to the restaurant as either a profit-making or a truth-seeking (or truth-releasing) endeavor, and as such it is a moral tension. Also, this opposition is made concrete through a comparison between Restaurant Koefoed and the (also) Copenhagen based restaurant Noma. Noma was the flagship restaurant of the New Nordic Cuisine. It upholds an uncompromising stance to *terroir*, technique, and a quest for the genuine and out-of-the-world-distinction.¹ In contrast, Restaurant Koefoed's focus is more pragmatic and commercial. It is in this light we should understand Thomas when he argues that Søren's recent internship at Restaurant Noma was too extended (lines 42–44), because this has led him to forget the reality that they orient to at Restaurant Koefoed: 'Now you're being Søren (.) I don't-wanna-make-money again' (lines 49–51). Because Søren is hesitant about the new drink, and demands something more genuine, he is represented as opposing the commercial endeavor.

This all leads up to the fourth tension we will bring forward, namely understandings of authenticity. Authenticity is not mentioned explicitly (which is often the case) but it is made relevant through the partly overlapping oppositions mentioned – a clear concept vs arbitrariness, truth vs illusion, profit-making vs truth-seeking. Also, the negotiations do not just concern finding the right ingredients for the cocktail – enough to make it 'pass' as Bornholmian. Here it should be mentioned that the gin is actually manufactured by a Danish producer, and the rhubarb juice comes from Bornholm. The negotiations also examine the very basis for being able to carry out the project. In terms of the labels used, more than an orientation to the cocktail in terms of ingredients – is this 'rhubarb juice with gin' or 'the Bornholmian cocktail' – the labels reflect whether the drink is or is not potentially of value and relevant to the restaurant's foundational activity of authentication. The two alternative ways of referring to the drink are equivalent in terms of extension (at least in this case) but they differ in intension and indexicality. Intensionally the meaning of 'rhubarb juice with gin' is (more or less) compositional, whereas 'the Bornholmian Cocktail' points us (indexically) in the direction of authentic Bornholmness (in contrast to 'rhubarb juice with gin') as well as to luxury and elite consumption. In terms of truth and illusion, this formulates the distinction between authenticity as an inherent quality or as a constructed and performed meaning. The latter is central to Restaurant Koefoed's project as the restaurant relies on its ability to create a restaurant experience recognizable as (plausibly) Bornholmian. And although to many people it is a paradox to produce authenticity for commercial purposes, this is not acknowledged by Thomas and Henrik. They are explicitly engaged in both *creating* Bornholmness and *capitalizing* on this. They suggest 'illusion' and 'the creation of truth' to be of high value for the restaurant, and they argue that it is not the truth, but the *construction* of truth which is important. This is what Pietikäinen et al. (2016, p. 35) describe as *meta-reflexivity*, that is, a reflexive mode that questions the very basis of a reflexive assessment. This discussion relates to the nature of authenticity. As 'the Bornholmian cocktail' is Thomas' invention, can this be authentic and based in something truthful? And if it is just illusion, is this morally wrong and a way of fooling the guests, or is it a way of engaging in expected recreational entertainment? The participants turn it into a moral discussion. Seeking profit (and *creating* authenticity) is contrasted with a less commercially oriented quest (for the (pre-existing) real and genuine), where Noma symbolizes the latter, and Restaurant Koefoed the former. This is not so much a discussion of whether or not it is possible to create authenticity as a discussion of whether or not it is legitimate to do so.

5.2. The glasses

The discussion continues, but now with a change of focus. The following extracts show how the cocktail's meaning potential is embedded in something more than its ingredients. The presentation is also important and adds to its value. Again, the discussions draw on several value systems. On the one hand, the glasses should index modern fine dining and exclusivity, and on the other hand the link to Bornholm needs to be clear.

¹ The movies *Noma: My perfect storm* (Deschamp 2015) and *Ants on a shrimp* (Dekkers 2016) both depict the culinary ideology pursued by chef Rene Redzepi.

In extract 2 Thomas suggests that the cocktail be served in a cocktail glass. He has visited different websites in his search for potential glasses, and Søren offers comments while looking over Thomas' shoulder. Thomas has found a collection that he likes, when Søren comments on their presence in other restaurants.

Example 2. 'We're more classic'.

01	Søren:	de har dem på Studio de har	they've got them at Studio
02		dem på Geranium de har dem	they've got them at
03		på øh dernede	Geranium they've got them
04		[på xxx]	at eh down there
05			[at xxx]
06	Thomas:	[men hvad hedder det] det	[but you know] it's damn
07		er eddermame også vildt du	crazy too you
08		(.)sytten kroner for sådan	know(.)seventeen kroner
09		et dér	(the Danish currency) for
10			one like that
11	Søren:	ja	yes
12		(3.4)	(3.4)
13	Thomas:	jamen der er vi vi er mere	well but that's where we we
14		klassiske det er godt	are more classic that's
15		Sørensen	good Sørensen
16	Søren:	=vi er lidt mere øh (.) vi	=we're a little more eh (.)
17		vil gerne be[tale	we don't mind
18		hundredetyve kroner]	pay[inghundred and twenty
19	Thomas:	[der er der er lidt mere	kroner]
20		finesse]	[there's there's a little
21	Søren:	kroner for vores øh flot	more finesse]
22		designede Pernille Bülow	kroner for our eh
23		glas	beautifully designed
24	Thomas:	du siger finesse (.) jeg	Pernille Bülow glasses
25		siger jatak	you say finesse (.) I say
26	Søren:	så siger jeg selv tak	yes please
27	Thomas:	HOV HOV jeg ringer sgu da	then I say you're welcome
28		til Pernille Bülow mandjeg	WAIT WAIT I'll bloody call
29		ringer lige til Pernille	Pernille Bülow man I'll
		Bülow	just call Pernille Bülow

Søren responds to Thomas' finding by naming Copenhagen high-end restaurants where they use similar glasses. Thomas reacts in two stages. First, he acknowledges their low price: 'it's damn crazy [...] seventeen kroner for one like that'. Then he claims Restaurant Koefoed to be more 'classic', which supposedly does not go with the glasses. This comes after a rather long pause (3.4 s), which suggests that Thomas considers how these rather inexpensive glasses fit with the restaurant brand. Søren aligns with Thomas and extends his line of reasoning. This is done by repeating what Thomas said almost verbatim with the formulation 'we're a little more' (line 16), then, continuing along the same lines, he elaborates on the restaurant's willingness to spend money on high quality as he mentions that they already have glasses designed by a well-known Bornholmian glass designer. Thomas continues the idea that Restaurant Koefoed shows a certain degree of finesse. The mutual agreement peaks when the two participants jokingly exchange polite phrases (lines 24–26). This co-construction of Restaurant Koefoed as more 'classic' and having more 'finesse' than other restaurants, where the two participants build on and elaborate on each other's utterances, construct alignment between the two. Thomas states that Koefoed is 'more classic' (lines 13–14), and he is ascribing this to Søren when he says 'that's good Sørensen'. However, Søren has not mentioned anything about Koefoed being more 'classic', he merely stated that other Copenhagen high-end restaurants use similar glasses. Thomas then turns this into an argument about being refined, which he subsequently appraisingly attributes to Søren. The interaction takes place in a playful mode, which is expressed particularly clearly through the joking way the participants use the idiomatic phrase 'you say X, I say Y'. Thomas introduces the word 'finesse' (line 20), and afterwards also attributes this to Søren with the phrase 'you say finesse (.) I say yes please'. In line 26 Søren continues the word-game by responding with a 'then I say you're welcome'. The activity ends abruptly as Thomas exclaims 'WAIT WAIT WAIT', and states that he will 'just call Pernille Bülow', i.e. the glass designer.

Example 2 illustrates how authenticity is not the only thing at stake. Style is important too, and again style is a resource which can also be exploited to index Bornholm. Thomas is working to make the restaurant different from other high-end restaurants, and Bornholm is a way to underline this difference. This is why he is now searching for a glass that indexes *both* the fine dining aspect *and* Bornholm.

5.3. Serving the cocktail

Example 3 illustrates how the serving of the cocktail becomes an integrated part of ‘the Bornholmian Cocktail’. After **Example 2** Thomas calls the glass designer. After having talked to her assistant, he returns to the discussion with the staff. Thomas suggests that they get Bornholmian dialect words sandblasted on the glasses. This is yet another way to invite Bornholm into the Copenhagen restaurant. Furthermore, the serving of the cocktail and the performative aspects of the restaurant activity are made relevant. Just before **Example 3**, Thomas explains to Henrik that the dialect words should be placed on the glasses so that when serving the cocktail, the guest will see them immediately.

Example 3. ‘Good evening’.

01	Thomas:	og vi så sandblæser indeni	and then we sandblast on
02		(.) og så skriver her så	the inside (.) and then
03		når du afleverer den foran	write here so that when
04		gæsterne ik (.) stiller den	you deliver it in front of
05		dér og så heroppe så står	the guests right (.) place
06		der så (viser Henrik	it there and then up here
07		hvordan den skal serveres)	it says ((demonstrating to
08			Henrik how to serve it))
09	Henrik:	godaften (Bornholmsk	good evening (Bornholmian
10		udtale)	pronunciation)
11	Thomas:	godaften (Bornholmsk	good evening (Bornholmian
12		udtale)	pronunciation)
13		(alle griner)	(all are laughing)
14	Thomas:	det er skidesjovt ha	that's damn funny ha

As this is a pre-dinner cocktail, it will presumably receive attention when served, and this can be exploited. Thomas takes a glass, shows Henrik how to hold it, and then how to place it on the table in front of the guest (lines 03–06). Thomas states that ‘then up here it says’, and finishing Thomas’s sentence Henrik adds the object phrase: ‘good evening’ pronounced in the Bornholmian dialect. The point is that when the drink is served in a particular way, the guest will immediately see *good evening*, and thus not only be offered hospitality and distinction through the substance to be consumed, but in addition to this, the offer includes Bornholm as the linguistic items index Bornholmnness. Through the serving, some of the meaningful elements of the cocktail can thus be drawn forward and embellished.

It is clear by now that the Bornholmian cocktail is more than just a drink. The drink includes a range of qualities that can be exploited in order to emphasize the restaurant’s brand. The ingredients are important; Thomas has insisted on Bornholmian rhubarb juice and Danish gin, and eventually Bornholmian fig syrup is added. Although Søren characterizes this concoction as ‘just rhubarb juice with gin in it’ (cf. **Example 1**), all of this index a connection between the drink and Bornholm or/and Denmark. The cocktail glass is to be produced by a Bornholmian designer. Even the serving situation is important and becomes a virtual performance.

5.4. ‘The illusion or the truth’, part 2

The idea of having dialect words sandblasted on to the glasses gives rise to discussions about which words to select, and about whether or not specific words can in fact be considered to belong to Bornholmian dialect, as illustrated in **Example 4** below. *Good evening* greets the guest in a polite and friendly manner. Yet, it is difficult to represent the easily recognizable Bornholmian pronunciation in writing. The difference from standard Danish is the vowel quality in the second (and unstressed) syllable in *aften* ‘evening’ and as Henrik explains, the orthographic representation of the Bornholmian version would only differ from standard Danish by having ‘the *e* switched to an *a*’. Therefore, he expresses concerns that the Bornholmian indexicality will not be accomplished (see Järlehed and Moriarty, 2018 for discussions of the use of the letter *x* in the marketing of a particular wine as authentically Basque). *Good evening* (*‘godaften’*) is dismissed, and the participants continue to discuss lexical items that differ sufficiently from standard Danish to be noticed. In **Example 4** three are mentioned: *mårpyta*, *marripyta* and *jylkat*. Whereas *jylkat* and *marripyta* are traditional dialect words for standard Danish *pindsvin* ‘hedgehog’ and *mariehøne* ‘ladybird’ (cf. Espersen, 1908), *mårpyta*, comprised of *mår* (Danish for ‘marten’) and *pyta* (Bornholmian for ‘hen’) is not recognized as a Bornholmian word in any standard descriptions. Theoretically, **Example 4** returns us to the discussion about illusion and truth from **Example 1**, and again points towards tensions between understandings of authenticity as necessarily based in some sort of ‘truth’ or ‘realness’, and understandings of authenticity as constructed around verisimilitude (Pietikäinen et al., 2016, p. 77).

Example 4. ‘It’s not a damn marten’.

01	Henrik:	mårpyta ha men det e:r det	mårpyta ha but it i:s it
02		giver bare ikke nogen	just doesn't make any sense
03		mening i øh [sådan en her]	in eh [this one]
04	Thomas:	[hvad betyder] det	[what does] it mean
05		en mariehøne	
06	Henrik:	mariehøne (.) nej en jyl-	a ladybird
07	Thomas:	nånej en	a ladybird (.) no a jyl- no
08		jylkat det er [pindsvin]	a
09	Henrik:	[pindsvin]ja ja	jylkat that's [hedgehog]
10	Thomas:	det giver heller ikke	[hedgehog] yes yes
11		rigtig nogen mening i det	that doesn't really make
12	Henrik:	her ha	any sense in this either ha
13		(alle griner)	
14		nej det hedder en marripyta	(all are laughing)
15		(.) ikke mår	no it's called a marripyta
16	Thomas:	hold kæft ha	(.) not mår
17		(alle griner)	shut up ha
18	Henrik:	det er sgu da ikke en mår	(all are laughing)
19		det skal du da ikke	it's not a damn marten
20	Thomas:	bestemme	that's not for you to
21	Henrik:	nej men ku det ikke være	decide
22		sjovt jo	no but don't you think this
23	Thomas:	illusionen eller sandheden	could be fun
24		ja men det men det er netop	the illusion or the truth
25	Henrik:	den der (.) det er lige	yes but that but that is
26	Thomas:	nøjagtig det der (.) ej det	just it (.) that's it
27		er altså meget sødt (.) det	exactly (.) well that's
28		er meget sjovt (.) det er	really quite cute (.) that's
29		meget sjovt (imiterer en	quite funny (.) that's
		gæsts stemme)	quite funny (putting on the
			voice of a guest)

Henrik suggests *mårpyta* as a candidate word to put on the glasses, but it is not entirely felicitous. He claims it means ladybird, which ‘just doesn’t make any sense’ here (lines 02–03). *Jylkat* ‘hedgehog’ is rejected on similar grounds; what meaningful pragmatic work can the word *hedgehog* do on a pre-dinner drink glass? While both Henrik and Thomas are from Bornholm, like most Bornholmians today they do not ordinarily use Bornholmian dialect (cf. Maegaard et al., forthcoming). Thomas questions Henrik’s dialect competence by suggesting that *mårpyta* is not an ‘authentic’ Bornholmian word (line 16); the correct form of ladybird is *marripyta*. Henrik replies: ‘that’s not for you to decide’ (lines 21–22), returning to the line of argumentation from Example 1 when they were discussing ingredients for the cocktail. This deictic reference to prior discourse becomes even clearer when Henrik repeats: ‘the illusion or the truth’ (line 25). It underlines the point that Henrik represents authenticity as not a matter of truth, but a matter of verisimilitude. This makes it less important whether someone from Bornholm might consider a certain word Bornholmian dialect or not – what matters is whether it could pass for Bornholmian to a guest in the Copenhagen restaurant. Henrik’s focus is on the *illusion*, and Bornholmian dialect becomes negotiable. The entire conversation takes place in a playful atmosphere, and Thomas and Søren are laughing repeatedly. The conversation cannot be understood as a serious discussion about whether or not the word *mårpyta* can in this context function as a dialect word, but it brings in interpretations and understandings of authenticity, which are relevant in contemporary commercial enterprises. Even though Thomas ends up deciding to put neither *mårpyta* nor *marripyta* on the glasses, Example 4 illustrates how constructing a specific place-connected product for a market involves decisions on what counts and what cannot count as authentic indexes of place.

6. After the recordings

A while after the recordings Thomas decided on three Bornholmian words which were then sandblasted on to the new glasses: *tjyss*, *tjør* and *førder* (see Fig. 1). *Tjyss* and *tjør* represent Bornholmian pronunciations of standard Danish *kys* ‘kiss’ and *kør* ‘drive, go ahead’. In the traditional Bornholmian dialect, standard Danish *k* is pronounced [c] before fronted vowels, and the non-standard spelling with double *s* in *tjyss* has a long tradition in Bornholmian writing (e.g. Møller, 1918). The word *førder* on the other hand has no equivalent in standard Danish. It means ‘foreigner’ or ‘non-Bornholmian’ (Espersen, 1908, p. 95). This can be seen as positioning the restaurant guests as outsiders who only temporarily are part of the Bornholmian experience because of the hospitality of the restaurant. We asked Thomas by email why he had chosen these words: ‘Is there any specific reason why you chose them?’ He replied: ‘No just thought they are nice (looking) ☺ (nej syntes bare de er fine ☺).



Fig. 1. Facebook post by Restaurant Koefoed, May 2016.

Whether Thomas is aware or not, these exact features – the [c] pronunciation of /k/ and the word *førder* (as well as *marripyta* and *jylkat* above) – are among the features usually mentioned when Bornholmians are asked for examples of Bornholmian dialect, as we know from our work on the dialect today, as well as from media representations of the dialect (cf. Maegaard et al., forthcoming; Dagblad, 2012; Wikipedia, 2018). As such, they are widely circulated emblems. Seen in relation to the interactions analyzed in this paper, we may interpret the decision to include these specific words in the production of Bornholmness, as the outcome of the considerations and discussions present in these interactions. It would be possible, then, to see the selection of the words as based in an attempt to find words, which clearly index Bornholmness to outsiders, and at the same time fit the context of the restaurant experience – especially the context of the pre-dinner drink – as an opportunity to welcome the guest. *Marripyta* and *jylkat* never made it to the glasses, presumably due to their denotational meanings which were hard to see as compatible with or relevant to the restaurant endeavor. *Tjyss* on the other hand can be interpreted as a warm welcome, *tjør* as an encouragement to the guest (or the restaurant staff) to begin the meal, and *førder* can be seen as a humorous banter reminding the guests that they do not genuinely belong in the Bornholmian environment, which they are only temporarily experiencing.

Images of the cocktail are used in advertising the restaurant, for instance on Facebook (see Fig. 1). Here, the cocktail is shown in a photo, and the text reads: 'It's Friday and we are ready to welcome you with a Bornholmian cocktail, with gin, rhubarb, apples from Bornholm Cider Mill and honey from Bjarne Bee. It is served in glasses designed by the famous Bornholmian glass blower Pernille Bülow. Tjyss from Team Koefoed'. The Facebook post is a combination of the visual image of the cocktail, the description of its Bornholmian ingredients, an account of the Bornholmian made glass, and a suggestion to come and spend Friday evening at Restaurant Koefoed, signed with the Bornholmian greeting *tjyss*. It brings together many of the aspects discussed in this paper: The construction of the link to Bornholm as well as the restaurant as a welcoming place, offering hospitality, comfort and high-end dining. Thus, the cocktail is used here as an assemblage of many of the main indexicalities that the restaurant is communicating.

7. Concluding: constructing Bornholmian authenticity

A high-end restaurant offers experiences organized around the meal. This involves material substances such as food and drink, in addition to language about, around and through the food (Riley and Paugh, 2018). We have focused on the cross-fertilization of language and materiality as it happens during a conversation in a back stage setting of a Copenhagen

restaurant. Three themes have been explored in order to understand the development of the Bornholmian cocktail. One is market conditions, one is authenticity and one is the understanding and meaning potential of a cocktail. To attract guests in a saturated market, the restaurant needs to present a certain individual statement. To be seen as authentic the restaurant creates a universe of interpretation which offers the guests a coherent experience. In a high-end restaurant guests often have pre-dinner drinks. Cocktails are widely popular in today's restaurant scene, but the cocktail created here does not have any historical relation to the island of Bornholm (this is neither beer nor aquavit). However, that does not mean that anything goes. We have focused on negotiations of what may count as authentic and of whether it is morally correct to create authenticity. The tensions between understandings of the 'true' or 'real' versus the 'sellable illusion' are recognized and generate discussions. Paxson (2010, p. 453) mentions that in place-making, moral values are very important. We too see morally engaged participants who are trying to entertain a viable commercial enterprise while staying true to particular values. It is not only a question of how to construct something as Bornholmian, but also a question of whether participating in such a construction is a legitimate action, what authenticity may mean, or what the criteria of evaluation may be.

The construction of the Bornholmian cocktail demands a lot of work. In terms of the choice of ingredients, the gin is manufactured by a Danish producer, and the rhubarb juice comes from Bornholm. The gin may not be from Bornholm, but in the global market of gin, the next best choice must be an internationally acclaimed and Danish brand. The rhubarb juice draws on terroir discourses. Authenticity is created through materiality – although this of course needs to be pointed out to the guests to be appreciated. Next, the presentation offers an opportunity for authentication. The glasses may conventionally signal 'cocktail' and 'luxury', and as they are made by a Bornholmian, the link to the island is substantiated. Again, this needs to be conveyed linguistically to the guest to be appreciated. Last, dialect is added. This embellishment of the Bornholmian experience gives it a visible representation in the moment of serving, a scene which is also carefully thought out. Interestingly, in Goffman's account of the front stage/back stage-relationship, the back stage is where dialect is spoken and used (1959, p. 128). The fact that in a modern Danish context dialect is not spoken at all back stage, but is solely used for commercial purposes front stage testifies to the overall process of dedialectalization which has taken place in Denmark through the last century. The use of local dialect is no longer a back stage practice, but part of the front stage performance. In all, the participants' focused work suggests an orientation to authenticity as a potential narrative quality as well as Bornholmnness as incorporated into the materiality, looks and taste of the final product.

The cocktail does not index authenticity *per se*, only when presented linguistically in the menu or by servers as 'The Bornholmian Cocktail.' Already from the guests first meeting with this phenomenon, language is essential. Together language and the drink become a potential to be exploited in the front stage encounters between guests and waiters. In reverse, the restaurant only becomes Bornholmian when it is able to draw on such signs of authenticity.

To sum up, materiality is 'a mediating property of social life' (Shankar and Cavanaugh, 2012, p. 357), and here participants create an object, which is meant to fulfill a socially defined slot. The staff tries to steer guests' interpretation in particular directions, within a larger universe of interpretation. In order to accomplish this, language and object are manufactured in ways that are meant to co-signify. However, in the creative process the emerging object and its material properties receive other interpretations than the one deliberately sought – or: it comes to mediate other social discourses. The larger battle stands between the intentional exploitation of resources and available meanings for profit and the search for essential and inherent ('real' and 'genuine') quality, something we often see referred to as authenticity; both dimensions are important aspects of contemporary societies. What is remarkable in this case is that regardless of the type of object, which is far removed from understandings of the 'natural' or 'historically based,' authenticity still plays a role. Paxson (2010, p. 445) mentions with Hobsbawm (1983) that as 'invented tradition, terroir-based foods contribute to the felt authenticity of French cuisine'. At the moment of writing (2018), Restaurant Koefoed has already had the Bornholmian Cocktail on the menu for several years. It is part of the conventionalized repertoire that makes it a Bornholmian restaurant. In that sense, it is a tradition, an 'invented tradition' of which we have documented the initial phases of invention.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2019.06.001>.

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