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Bernard: Hello everyone. Welcome to the 11ᵗʰ episode, already, of Words and Actions. We've noticed, based on the stats that we see on the blog, that we have lots of new visitors. We're really happy with that. So, it might be a good idea to revisit what the podcast's mission statement is all about. So, what the rationale is behind the podcast.

What we basically want to do is we want to make the familiar unfamiliar. We want to make the trivial untrivial. Then I'm actually referring to language and language... How people find language to be an instrument, a kind of appliance that they use.

But of course, language is a lot more than that. We want to do a kind of unboxing of the power of language in business, politics and other contexts. We want to go beyond this idea of language just being a means of communication. I do that with two co-hosts, Erika Darics and Veronika Koller. So, maybe a brief introduction first? Good morning, Erika. Good morning, Veronika.

Erika: Hi Bernard and hi everybody. I'm Erika Darics. I'm a senior lecturer at Aston University. I'm very passionate about how language works in professional contexts.

Veronika: Hello, I'm Veronika Koller. I work at Lancaster University at the Linguistics Department. I'm very interested in how people use language in their social lives very generally and in business in particular.

Bernard: Okay. I am Bernard de Clerck. I work at Ghent University, the Department of Interpreting, Translation and Communication. Of course, I like everything related to communication in terms of business.

Veronika: Okay. What you're listening in to at the moment is episode 11 of our podcast. This is part of a miniseries, a three-part miniseries. So,

episode 10 was all about the language of recruitment. In the previous episode we looked at what channels are there for companies or businesses to advertise that they are recruiting. We talked about everything from signs in shop windows to Twitter ads etc.

This episode is now about the channels and language that applicants can use if they're interested in a vacancy. Next time, in episode 12, we'll be looking at what communications channels both companies and applicants can use when the interest is mutual, if it is. Okay? So, this is part two of a three-part miniseries.

Erika: Right. Before we actually start looking at how to manage impressions and through what channels, we probably need to slow down a bit and look closely at the kind of jobs we are applying for. For example, a very important thing in job applications is that we have to make sure that there is a genuine match between our profile and the vacancy, right?

Veronika: Yeah. But that can also depend on how you advertise, of course. You know, here in the UK, a recent example of a government advisor Dominic Cummings who has been in the news quite a bit recently... Not too long ago, he put out an ad for people to work for the government.

In the ad, he specifically said that they are looking for "misfits and weirdos". And sure enough, that's what they got. (Laughter) To the extent that there was a bit of a public outcry about what kind of people he was planning on hiring there, really. So, be careful what you wish for.

Erika: Yeah, that's a tricky profile to match, right? (Laughter) I guess the most important thing to discuss today or to start with today is to look at what impression management is. We talk about this a lot in our book Veronika and I co-authored called, "Language in Business, Language at Work". Many people have a misconception about what impression management is.

People tend to think that this is lying and this is deception. But it really isn't. This is about us becoming aware of the impressions others may form about us, especially in situations where there is something to be gained or lost. Think about a first date. Then when we become aware of how others may perceive us, that's when we, consciously or subconsciously, try to manage these impressions.

If we think about this as a dial, sometimes we dial up our impression management efforts to make sure that others get us the way we want them to get us.

Veronika: But the point is that it's authentic. So, you only dial up things that you genuinely are, really. You don't invent traits or personality traits or characteristics for yourself.

Bernard: Yes. I think what is important here is that you can highlight different characteristics and different skills that you have depending on the job that you are applying for. I see it as a kind of amplifier, as well, where you can tweak the sound. So, you have bass, you have mid-region, you have high tones. I think people have to do that when they write up their CVs. Perhaps this could be a first take-home lesson to the listeners.

In many cases, people have standard CVs and they send them off to different jobs but the idea, of course, is that you start tweaking and dialling up your skills related to the actual job that you're applying for.

Sometimes creativity will be more important when, for instance, you're interested in copy writing. Other times, your actual language skills will be more important. So, that is the first, basic thing that you have to do in terms of managing the contents of your CVs or applications letters, even, or other documents or channels.

Veronika: It's about CVs. It's about cover letters. It's also, of course, increasingly about online forms that you fill in to apply. But whatever it is, whatever text genre you're looking at, we know both from research and from anecdotes that you have a very, very short time to make that first impression. As we know, you don't get a second chance to do it.

Because what we know is that these documents are really only ever sometimes skim-read in a matter of seconds. There's a very, very limited time to make the right impression and to make the right impact, really.

Bernard: True. You know, studies vary in terms of how much time or how many seconds people spend on filtering these CVs. Sometimes you get 45 seconds, sometimes 30 seconds. At least, it's a very short time.

So, one of the first basic questions we should address, perhaps, talking about CVs is what should be in a CV? I know we're in different contexts. You're in the UK, I'm more Western Europe. Then the question we can ask ourselves is do we need to refer to things like marital status, for instance? Or your age? Date of birth? What do you think?

Veronika: I think it's changed, you know? I used to live in Austria. This is a while ago now, but that was a context where, say, 15 to 20 years ago you would include your marital status. Now, I live in the UK and it's 15 years on and I think actually it's nobody's business, really. (Laughter) For me, that has changed with time but also with cultural context, perhaps.

Erika: Yes. I guess the answer to this is also about impression management. Thinking about how whatever information you choose to include, how will that be read? How will that be interpreted? What impression will that give about you?

Veronika: And there's the problem of unconscious bias, as well. There are tons of studies—and we will mention some on our blog—about what on a CV could trigger unconscious bias, from gender, to age, to marital status, to disability and you name it.

One thing we perhaps want to pick out is ethnic background. Ethnic background, most obviously perhaps in terms of appearance or pictures but also indicated by names.

There are studies where people have tried to model ethnic bias where they have come up with CVs, both of which feature a non-white sounding name, shall we say, and a white-sounding name. For instance, the difference between somebody called Ayo Omoniyi or somebody called George Thompson, that there is actually a bias and who gets a call back, for instance. That is rather worrying evidence, it has to be said.

Bernard: It is indeed rather worrying. So, we will have this linked to loads of studies. Perhaps I should add a breezy note to this, as well. First of all, there is conflicting evidence for some of these variables. For instance, marital status is not always negative. Motherhood, thank God, is not always negative. That's good news.

But also, when you start thinking of this bias, one of the obvious next questions or what a possible solution could be... Why not make them anonymous? Wouldn't that be an idea?

Veronika: Yeah. Many people have had this idea. That's one way, perhaps, of tackling it. Another one—and that was another question—would you include a picture on your CV or not?

Erika: Right. Well, image-wise, I think the picture is equally bleak, if I may say that! (Laughter) Yes. These experiments where researchers created different versions of a CV and then send it out to recruiters or people in the research project, and then ask them to decide who would they call back when the two CVs match in terms of experience and expertise. Of course, the results always show that there is bias in recruiters.

Veronika: Yeah. I think we should perhaps say that, at higher level jobs, discrimination is perhaps not so pronounced. Because some companies then want to demonstrate diversity, especially at the higher levels of management. But that's something that I think we should not forget about. But yes, back to the images.

Bernard: Perhaps if I can just pick up on that, Veronika...? There is a study, for instance, where you had an anonymous CV and then you had a CV

with someone from a different ethnic background. But it was, as you said, a high-profile job. Then you could actually see that the CV that wasn't anonymous got better results and better scores.

You get this situation where you have positive discrimination, because of the high skills that people see in these CVs. Again, it's not all bad news, fortunately.

Now, when referring to these images, you do have different studies again with different results. But the problem, I think, especially in cultures, situations or even company cultures where you don't really expect the picture to be there, people might see it as somewhat vain when you include one. So, I think it's very important that people take into account the actual context itself and how sensitive people might be to what you indeed include in your CV and what not.

Erika: Yes, I guess that's true. We got that question on Twitter from one of our listeners, whether people do include pictures in their CVs. It may well be that you don't. That said, it's very easy to find an image about you online these days. We will come back to that when we talk about online presence. We may not directly include an image into our CVs but it's not hard to find an image about us online, and they do matter in recruitment decisions.

Veronika: Yeah. That's also a cultural difference, as with so many things, really. So that, for instance, applicants in Western European countries are much more likely to use a photograph as part of their CV as a cultural convention, I suppose.

And other cultural differences to do with CVs pertain to how creative should your CV be? Should you try and put a lot of effort into a creative layout, for instance? That, again, may depend on national culture but also corporate culture. And indeed the industry you're applying for.

You mentioned that before. If you apply for a graphic design agency, you would want to be a bit creative with your CV. But perhaps if you apply for a solicitors firm, maybe dial it down a bit again.

Erika: Yeah. I guess that may be another lesson for listeners. The internet is laden with advice, especially for young graduates, to go as creative as they can. Put your CV in a pizza box, create a soap or make cupcakes. That may work for some industries but not so much in others.

Veronika: Yeah. It might be seen as gimmicky in others. In some industries but also in other cultures. It doesn't stop there, really. You can really drill down into the level of language.

For instance, there's one study which we'll put on our blog where somebody compared German and Italian CVs. For instance, both featured pictures, in contrast to British CVs. That's a point about the pictures again. But also that, for instance, Italian CVs were more about storytelling whereas German ones would rather include tables.

Bernard: Right.

Veronika: Or that Italian CVs featured more verbs, so it was more about what people did or had done, rather than... In German, you would have a more nominal style. I mean, German is a bit infamous for that, isn't it? But on the other hand, in the German CVs, people would use, "I" more to talk about themselves. Whereas Italian ones followed a cultural convention where they talked about themselves in the third person. So, "Veronika got her PhD from Vienna in 2003", rather than, "I did." (Laughter)

Bernard: Okay.

Veronika: Which may or may not travel across different cultures, really.

Erika: Yeah.

Bernard: Other studies have also shown that in American CVs or American application letters, they tend to be more hyperbolic, let's say. So, that would be another difference. For people writing up their CVs or the application letters, it might also be interesting to refer to vocabulary. I've got this link to something called DISCO. So, we can actually go to the disco!

Veronika:	Can we now? (Laughter)
Bernard:	Regardless of the ages we might or might not have.
Veronika:	Okay! (Laughter)
Bernard:	It's the European Dictionary of Skills and Competences. But I do think it might be interesting for listeners because you get a very long list of skills. So, we might discover new ones. Skills that you didn't really realise that you have but there they are as part of the list.
	Also, I think it will allow you to include some more stylistic variation. Because, let's be honest, we do find the usual suspects in many letters. People say that they are "eager to learn". People say that they are "ambitious." You have to be, in some ways, a bit more creative for this impression management that you're trying to get at.
	So, on the DISCO tool, you can find lots of synonyms. So, when you talk about being sociable, for instance, why not refer to it as having good networking skills?
Veronika:	Yeah. Because I mean, "sociable"... Maybe I'm biased but sociable to me sounds like you're forever hanging out at the pub, really.
Erika:	Right. (Laughter)
Veronika:	My uncle in Germany—who I like a lot, okay—is your typical extrovert. He just likes hanging out with his mates in the pub. I was on the phone to him the other day and he said that lockdown was being eased in Germany and that he could have more of a social life.
	At one point he referred to—and I quote—"the local gastronomic industry of which I have an intimate knowledge". (Laughter) I thought, "Wait a minute! You're just re-framing the fact that you're forever hanging out in the pub, aren't you?"
Bernard:	I like the fact that you used the word "re-framing" there, Veronika. Because we've talked about framing a lot in previous episodes as well. That, of course, is very important during a job application process. How you frame yourself.

Erika:	Exactly. That's a very good tool on our dial of impression management, to change the words in a way that they come through as more positive. Although, that said, your Uncle Thomas, however much he tries to re-frame his pub going habit on his CV, for example, when people go on social media and look at his profile they might find lots of pictures of him hanging out there.
Veronika:	I think I need to Google him, you know! (Laughter)
Erika:	Our digital footprint comes to the fore here, and what that reveals about us.
Veronika:	What's a digital footprint?
Erika:	The digital footprint is what is available about your online. It's important to remember that the digital footprint comprises of two things. First of all, the footprint that is consciously controlled by you. Then there is something that we call a "digital shadow" and that's information that's available online about you, of which you don't have control or somebody else put it up there.
Veronika:	Okay. So, the digital footprint is basically something like my LinkedIn profile, right? Which is a prime example of impression management. But if somebody uploads a party picture on Facebook featuring me, that would be my digital shadow, right?
Erika:	Exactly.
Bernard:	I'm glad I actually grew up in the more analogue phase, still, where you didn't have digital pictures.
Veronika:	You and me both, Bernard! (Laughter) You and me both.
Bernard:	You know what? There's one picture of me—there's only one but it is out there—of me dressed up as a spring fairy. (Laughter) So, I'm...
Veronika:	We'll put it on a blog post, Bernard, to your eternal shame! (Laughter)

Bernard: We actually might, just to warn people. Be careful with your digital shadow because people might take pictures of your analogue pictures and then you're in trouble.

Now, talking about pictures... Stijn Baert is an employment economist, a specialist in Belgium. He also had a look at social media profile pictures and how they influence hiring decisions. What you could see there is the same message as we saw in the CV pictures. If you have better pictures of yourself on Facebook, the chances of getting invited to a job interview are 38% higher.

So, if you decide not to include a picture in your CV, you might want to have a look at the pictures that you have on Facebook of yourself. Be careful there, as well.

Veronika: Yeah. We will do that later. We'll come back to this idea of online presence. We've looked a lot though, now, at CVs and other things where you can manage your impression on a prospective employer.

We now turn to our interview guest and she will be able to tell us a lot about how we can best present ourselves, including online.

[Music 0:18:00 - 0:18:05]

Right, we're very happy to welcome Anna Marie Trester today. She's a linguist and consultant who uses a story-based approach for career advice. She's also the founder of Career Linguist and she has worked with linguists who are engaged in career education, exploration, professional self-presentation. She's done that for more than ten years.

She's a bona fide linguist with a PhD from Georgetown University in the US. She's particularly interested in institutional discourse, professional identities and narrative. Her latest book is Bringing Linguistics to Work, where she looks at the language of the job search. Which is why she is here with us today for this episode.

Erika: Great to have you, Anna Marie.

Anna Marie: I'm thrilled to be here.

Erika: We've known each other for a long time and I've always been really fascinated by your work. We think that what you have to say or what you can say fits this episode so well. In the previous section, we were talking about online profiles and you have a training called, "How and why do we link?", where you look at social networking sites through a socio-linguistics perspective.

Anna Marie: Yeah, especially LinkedIn.

Erika: What is it? Can you explain to our listeners what socio-linguistics is? And how does it help us use LinkedIn?

Anna Maire: Sociolinguistics is the study of language in its social context. My favourite way of talking about what it means to be a sociolinguist these days is to say that we expect misunderstanding. I think in the job search, that gives you a big advantage. If you can expect misunderstanding, you're not going to be hanging on, weeping on the other end of a sent LinkedIn invitation to connect that is not being responded to.

    If we can take the understanding that conversation is always an interactional achievement, this means that we're going to have to try a lot and we're going to have to keep trying.

    I use this metaphor of the constellations in the night sky as a way to invoke a sense of how much you want to be doing on LinkedIn before you really can get your bearings. Imagine a night sky full of stars. Each of those points are like people you've connected with on LinkedIn or articles that you've read and liked and recommended and shared. It's like 150 minimum. Job ads that you've looked at, people that you've reached out to and then they've told you to reach out to somebody else.

    If you can think about 150 stars in that sky, then you can maybe start getting your bearings with your career navigation.

Erika: Right. We used the dial as a metaphor to talk about how to present yourself. So, that fits this image really well. To find the scale of your self-presentation.

Anna Marie: Like the amplitude. I love it.

Bernard: One of the services that you offer with Career Linguist is working with clients on their CV and cover letters when they're applying for a job. Basic question here, what are the most common mistakes you see in those? And what are the alternatives you suggest? I will let you choose from three topics: the contents, the language—hint hint. That's what we are very interested in—and visuals.

Anna Marie: So, I will pick something that is a little bit of a mix of content and language.

Bernard: Great.

Anna Marie: For me, it comes down to thinking about your deictic centre. Deixis, Greek, thinking about where you are and where your reader is. So, your point of view.

               If your cover letter has a lot of "I want this job. I need this job", you have not successfully shifted your deictic centre. This should sound more like, "You need me because I speak French. And because I speak French, I'm going to be able to help you really understand the Francophone Africa market. Where I know you are trying to break in because I've done my research." These are ways of signalling.

Bernard: Okay. In many cases, you see that people write from a perspective of "Your company will be added value for me" but you have to adopt that perspective and say "I can be added value for you." So, that is a common mistake indeed. Okay. What about aspects of language that you've come across? Because I know that there could be differences, as well.

Anna Marie: Yeah. Well, if I could elaborate on that point...? I do a story approach, as Veronika mentioned, and one thing that I've been talking a lot about

these days is paying attention to the MRE in your narrative. The Most Reportable Event.

When you do story work and you have people listen with you to your stories, you may find that the most reportable event in your narrative is celebrating something that you treasure. If you're a teacher, you may really love learning. You might tell a story about an experience in the classroom where you learned something or you discovered something or you were really happy about realising something.

If you are telling that story to someone that you want to hire you or would want to collaborate with you, you need to shift that most reportable event to be, instead, "Because I recognised that maybe there had been a moment of cross-cultural misunderstanding, therefore I was able to deploy this teaching tactic and this activity and facilitate this kind of conversation." It's often shifting your MRE forward in time that is the trick. Not always but often.

Veronika: Talking about inter-cultural differences, which you used there in this example, we talked a bit about this in the previous part about cultural differences and job applications. By which we mean not just country culture but also culture in an industry or...

Anna Marie: Organisational culture, as well.

Veronika: Absolutely, yeah. There's a big question here. Should the applicant adapt to the corporate or national culture of the would-be employer? Or would you rather advise them to emphasise what their own cultural background might bring to the organisation?

Anna Marie: I want to say, "Yes and..." to that question! (Laughter) I do a story listening approach. I advocate for putting yourself in a situation where you are hearing lots of stories, almost like an ethnography.

So, if you know that you're interested in working in a particular sector, a special geographical region, or even on a particular team, if you can find a way to listen to them on social media [and] have a conversation with people who work there or have worked there, know people who

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work there... As many... Remember back to this 150 points. To learn as much as you can about what they're going to hear when they are listening to you.

And then have people listening to your story so you know as much as you can possibly know about what you are giving off, what information is being given and given off, à la Erving Goffman.

Then you may have to take a calculated risk. You have to decide, maybe, to come off a little bit, "Look at me! I bring this and you need this." Be a little bit bold if that's in keeping with your style.

But if you have an awareness, as much awareness as you can have about their expectations and norms and how they are likely to perceive, interpret, react and respond to your conversational style, you can know that you're taking a bold risk, right? (Laughter)

Veronika: Now, you particularly work with linguists.

Anna Marie: Yeah.

Veronika: Of course, the aim of this whole podcast is to make people see how language matters in business, politics and beyond. Just to close off, what would you say linguists... What are the, say, three most amazing skills that they could bring to any non-academic workplace?

Anna Marie: I love it. Okay, I'll accept the challenge and the rule of three at the same time! Number one, we have an empirical orientation to change. I give workshops at schools where I'm speaking to linguists and I have a slide, actually, where I say, "What do you think a linguist's superpowers are?" And this is one that students told me, actually. The empirical orientation to change.

Linguists are constantly tracking language as it changes in real time. I can't think of a better preparation for the world that we're in now than being prepared, anticipating. When you hear that something is changing rapidly, that you say, "Okay, let's dig in. This is my invitation to go."

I think we have a high tolerance for ambiguity. It's our training. We can deal with overwhelming amounts of data. We can find patterns in chaos. And then I guess I would say listening is a superpower, you know? We hear not just what is on the surface of things but we hear what's underneath.

Veronika: I like the idea of linguists having superpowers. (Laughter)

Anna Marie: Oh yeah!

Veronika: That's really good. I can just see us all flying about in capes.

Anna Marie: Yes!

Veronika: Thank you. I think that sums it up really very well. That was a really interesting insight from somebody who works as a practitioner but with a linguistic background and who also works with linguists. So, I would really like to thank you, Anna Marie, for being our interview guest for this episode.

Anna Marie: Oh, it's my pleasure.

Erika: Thank you so much.

Bernard: Bye bye.

Veronika: Bye bye.

[Music 0:27:32 - 0:27:37].

Right. Okay. Back to impression management. Or rather, more on impression management. It's really important to be aware how others perceive us, really. The same goes, of course, for our online presence. We talked before about digital shadow, digital footprint.

We would really encourage our listeners to do something like a bit of a personal audit of what can be found about them online. That's actually what we did for each other, the three of us. We did a bit of an impression audit for the others.

We simply typed each other's names in inverted commas in the normal Google search box and see what came up. What came up in terms of images, links to other platforms and even the language that was used. So, let's start with the images. Erika, what can you tell us about images of Bernard online?

Erika: Right. So, if you search for Bernard online, you get images of lots of houses. (Laughter) I thought that was very strange. Among all those houses were scattered one or two proper images of Bernard. Of course, I quickly learned that there is a very famous architect in Belgium with the same name as Bernard.

Bernard: Yeah.

Erika: I guess that's the first big lesson, again, for our listeners when they check their online personas, to see whether they have namesakes. Especially famous namesakes. Because that will mean that, if people look for their profiles, they will be directed to somewhere else.

Bernard: Yeah.

Veronika: That can be a mixed blessing, Bernard, can't it? (Laughter)

Bernard: Yes! His digital footprint is slightly bigger than mine, I would say. Actually, so much so that one day I got an email from a woman from Ukraine saying how much she adored my work and my projects. At first, I was flattered. I said, "Wow, a woman from Ukraine reading my stuff!" But then she started talking about things being very aesthetically pleasing and then I thought, 'Oh no, it's the architect!'" (Laughter)

Veronika: I think I can see where this is going. Did she want to marry you in the end? (Laughter)

Bernard: No, well... Actually, she said that we were soulmates, Veronika.

Veronika: Well, there you go.

Bernard: Yeah. I was very honest in my answer and I told her that I was an impoverished linguist. (Laughter) I'm still waiting for her reply, which was...

Veronika: Never came. (Laughter)

Bernard: No. It was only five years ago, Veronika, so... (Laughter)

Veronika: You're still living in hope! That's all right then.

Bernard: Yes.

Veronika: So, namesakes. Bernard, that's unfortunate. But of course, it means that one then needs to work even harder to sort of leave your own footprint on the web, as it were. What images do we see of our Bernard, Erika?

Erika: Well, there aren't many. I found two. In one image, Bernard is hiding behind a leaf and looking at the camera. In the other one—and this is the one I chose for analysis, I don't know how you will like this, Bernard—is the one that you have on your LinkedIn profile. This is the same image that has been used for your university profile.

Bernard: Okay.

Erika: What is important to note here is that people may think, generally, that these images don't matter that much. But think about it. Your conscious choice as choosing this as your profile picture twice tells the viewer that this is something that you see as representative of yourself.

Okay, so this is an image where Bernard is pictured... His head dominates the image. But he is in nature. Behind him is maybe a horse or some field. A meadow.

He's wearing glasses and a sort of unbuttoned shirt with a T-shirt underneath. So, sort of casual. And very importantly he is not looking directly at the viewer. Of course, his choice of this image is in itself a communication. A kind of impression management. Because am I

right, Bernard, to think that you think of this picture as some sort of representation of who you are?

Bernard: To be totally honest with you, Erika, not even that. There just aren't that many pictures of me in which I think it's acceptable aesthetically. So, I just selected a picture that looked nice with what appeared to me was a neutral background. But I'm happy to listen to your interpretation and your analysis. Please continue! (Laughter)

Erika: This is exactly one of those cases where it will form an impression in the viewer. Because you are not looking directly at the camera, you are looking out from the frame, this is what we call an "offer picture".

Unlike a "demand picture" where a person looks directly at the viewer and therefore demands the audience to join in a relationship with them, in an offer picture all the gestures tell a bigger story. So, you're not looking directly at the viewer, you are expecting them to join you in that scenery, join you in that bigger story.

Bernard: Oh right. Yeah.

Veronika: You never thought, right? It's just, "Oh, let's take an image that is acceptable." But of course if you put it in a different context it suddenly attracts new meaning.

The story is very different for Erika. If you Google Erika then you get mostly the same image. It's a very professional image. It's her holding a microphone and looking at an audience, obviously giving a public speech or lecture of some description. So, very appropriate for a professional academic profile. But it's also slightly at a lower angle so the viewer has to slightly look up to Erika, which makes her even more competent and powerful, if you will.

Erika: I like that! (Laughter)

Veronika: So, that really works. It's really interesting because there's only one personal link for you, Erika, where you did a fundraising campaign together with one of your sons. There is an image with you and one of your sons. It's much more close up and you seem to both be sort of

lying down. It's actually much more close up and personal. It's also at eye level. So, there's not this power difference. Again, that's perfectly appropriate for the purpose of fundraising together with your son.

So, I thought that was really interesting. Anything about images that you found for me, Bernard?

Bernard: Well, I'm glad you asked, Veronika.

Veronika: Hmm, go on then. (Laughter)

Bernard: First of all, no houses whatsoever in your case. I see two rows of very professional pictures. And you're always wearing big necklaces, I noticed, Veronika.

Veronika: I often do. I like them. Yeah.

Bernard: It's very stylish. So, the pictures look very professional. You have your head a bit tilted. There's always this big, confident smile. You are indeed looking straight at the camera.

But what I also notice in the images section—and that's very interesting as well—is that you have pictures with other famous linguists. That, of course, is also in a way impression management. Because you're showing your networking skills, as well. You're showing the people that you know.

What I also saw is pictures of covers of books that you wrote. So, I see the very famous "Language in Business, Language at Work" by Erika Darics and Veronika Koller. (Laughter) I also see, for instance, in combination with the logo of a podcast, Veronika? Is that correct?

Veronika: Yeah, it might be. I occasionally do some podcasting, yeah. (Laughter)

Bernard: You can see that based on the images alone, in terms of impression management, there are few lessons I could actually teach you. It's fantastic because you have both your professional profile in your image but also links to other people and to your work.

Veronika: No, it's interesting because one is very controlled. So, those are actually pictures taken by a professional photographer for that very purpose. That's totally controlled.

Bernard: Okay.

Veronika: But the images of other linguists, that's just an algorithm of people that I've published with. I didn't put those there.

Bernard: Right.

Erika: So, that's your digital shadow. A very fortunate one.

Veronika: Yeah. So, there you go. But let's move on. Let's look at links to other platforms. For instance, with Erika. On the first page of Google results what you get is links to her LinkedIn page, where she is present, and then to academic pages where she foregrounds her affiliation. Then to a couple of general interest pieces that she wrote.

                 So, you get the whole constellation, as it were, of Erika on various different professional websites. Again, you can click yourself through and you will see the same professional image etc. What about Bernard? Where does he crop up, Erika?

Erika: Bernard, apart from the two images I just described, there is nothing about Bernard. Bernard has got his university profile and very little on top of that. There is a bit of a shadow there, which reveals his age, but...

Bernard: Okay. But I thought there was a link to the research page because we are obliged, of course, to have a bio, to have a list of our publications etc. via the university platform. But obviously there is no clear link there and that's a bit disturbing. So, I have to pay more attention to that. Thank you for pointing that out, Erika.

                 Now, when you have a look at Veronika, I must say that I stopped looking on after seven pages. (Laughter)

Veronika: I'm surprised you lasted that long. (Laughter)

Bernard:	Very interesting links to all sorts of different websites and even a Wikipedia page, Veronika.
Veronika:	You see, that is digital shadow again. I have no idea who put that up. I looked at it, obviously. Somebody alerted me to it. It sort of frames me as..."frames" is the wrong... Not in the criminal sense! (Laughter) But it refers to me as an Austrian linguist.
	I thought, "I wouldn't describe myself like that". I mean, I have an Austrian passport, you know, but I'm thinking that's not the most important thing about me. But this is something I can't control. I mean, it doesn't matter but it's just not a choice I would have made.
Bernard:	Right. Yeah.
Veronika:	Okay, moving on. Finally, the language used. I noted with Erika, for instance, that you get a bit of a personal touch. Even in the Google result snippets, you get something like, "I am a linguist who is passionate about the role of language in business, politics and beyond" or what have you. So, quite personal. I don't know how, Bernard, I would compare to be honest.
Bernard:	In your case, Veronika, I see people writing about you most of the time. So, it's less personal, I would say, but more professional. Which, of course, is no problem at all. But that, I think, is a difference between you and Erika.
Erika:	Yes. And I guess with your profile, Bernard, as I said earlier, there is so much story behind the pictures but much less in words.
	Perhaps this is a takeaway thing for the listeners. That you may think that you are putting up things online without much conscious thought but that doesn't prevent others forming impressions about you based on them. We would strongly recommend the listeners to do personal audits like we did for each other. I hope you enjoyed listening to our analyses. We also hope that you will return for the final episode of this miniseries next month, when we will look at job interviews.
Veronika:	Okay, see you then, as it were. Bye bye.

Bernard: Bye bye. Thank you very much. Bye.

Erika: Bye.

                    END OF AUDIO