

# TROMSØ DIALECT

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Sep 1989

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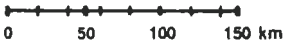
### SUMMARY

The Tromsø dialect situation today is probably typical of many Northern Norwegian town dialects. It has developed from an old local non-standard speech variety which was very similar to the present local rural dialects. What clearly distinguishes the modern town version, as spoken by young people today, from the old one, however, is the inclusion of a significant number of bokmål features. This study investigates which particular bokmål features have been adopted and which dialect features dropped. Variables within the group of teenage informants were sex, social status of the parents and place of origin of the parents. These variables were each investigated separately to see if there was any relationship between them and the percentage of bokmål forms used.

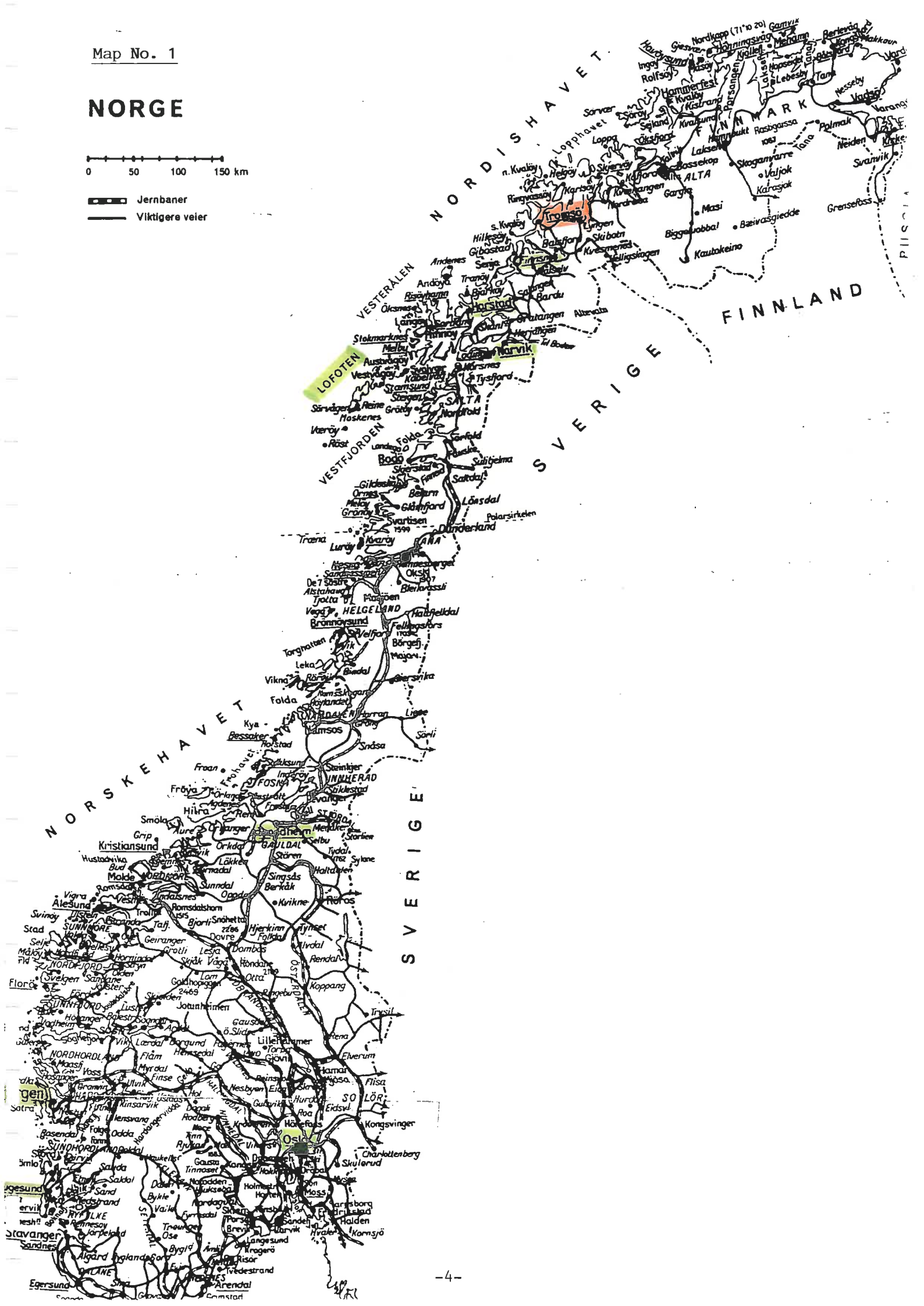
Clear evidence of a Thelander Regional Standard was found.

An apparent absence of style-shifting was also noted.

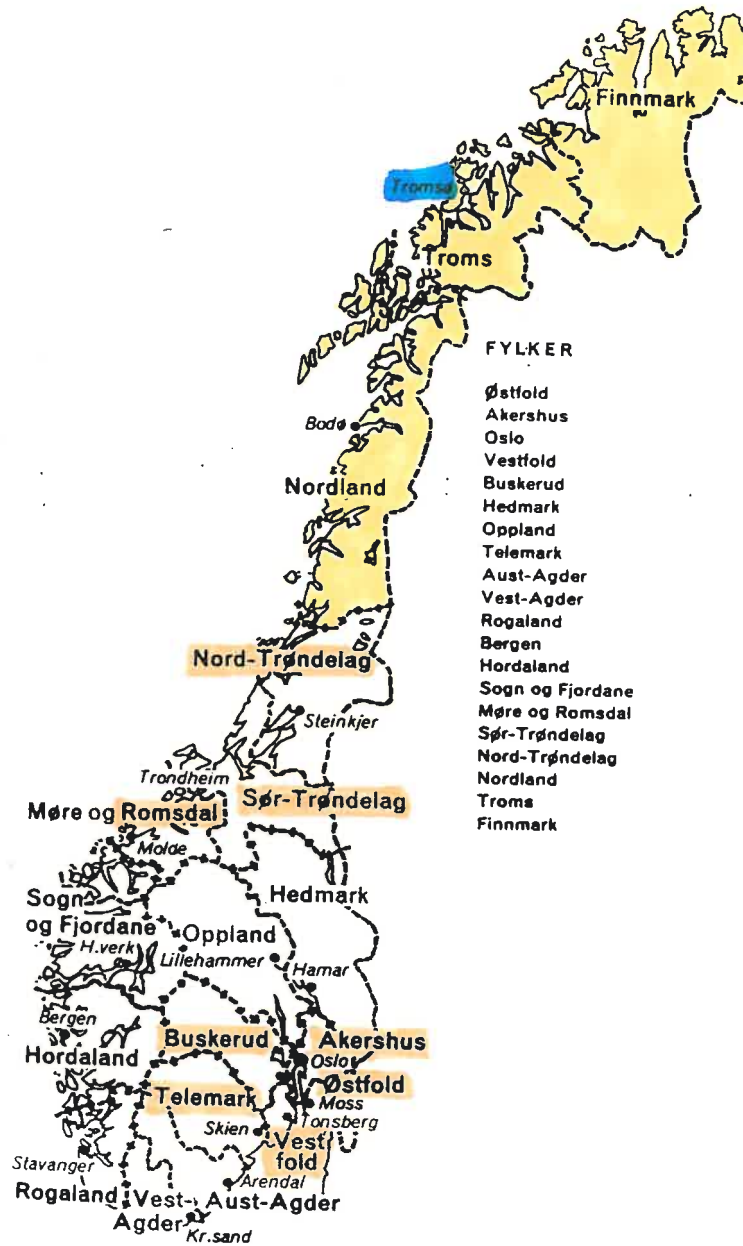
# NORGE



- Jernbaner
- Viktigere veier



Map No. 2



## INTRODUCTION

This study is focused on the town of Tromsø in the far North of Norway (see map No.1). Established in 1795 Tromsø now has a population of just over 50,000, 85% of whom live within the town boundaries. The main town is situated on a small island, with connecting bridges to suburbs - on the island of Kvaløya to the West, and the mainland to the East. The island and suburbs cover approximately 25 square kilometres - just 1% of the total area of the Tromsø municipality, which is in fact the largest in Norway. Outside the town boundaries there are a number of small scattered communities; this area, like much of Northern Norway is rather sparsely populated. The total population of Finnmark, Troms and Nordland counties is only about 400,000 (see map No.2).

The most important economic activities in Tromsø are fishing and associated industries, employing almost half of the workforce. The town is also the administrative, cultural and commercial centre for the county of Troms. In addition it has a university and medical school, a teacher-training college and at least three other large further education establishments, which serve the whole of Finnmark, Troms and Nordland counties. In short, Tromsø is **'the capital'** of Northern Norway. The town is also known as **'The Arctic City'**, due no doubt to its high latitude of 69° 40' - 375 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle, or even **'The Paris of the North'**, referring to the renowned liveliness of its social and cultural scene.

Despite the town's fame, very little work has been carried out on language variation in Tromsø, compared with that on many dialects in Southern Norway. A short article by Tove Bull (1989b) and a very brief account in an essay by Kåre Elstad (1982) apparently constitute the only studies of 'the Tromsø dialect' since the beginning of the century. Despite this, the speakers themselves in Tromsø seem very dialect-conscious and are often eager to tell others about the situation. Thus certain 'facts' are frequently stated by speakers, concerning 'the Tromsø dialect', past and present. These 'facts' represent very commonly-held views, some of which, on investigation, turn out to be more accurate than others. Three such statements are given as follows:

- I "Everyone in Tromsø is gradually using more 'bokmål' forms in their speech."  
('Bokmål' is one of the official written languages and closely resembles the dialect spoken in parts of Oslo).
- II "Elderly upper-class Tromsø residents speak pure bokmål."
- III The well-known piece of text doggerel -  
'En han hund svømte over Tromsøysund med ullteppe i munnen.' - is pronounced distinctively by 'real natives' of Tromsø. ie. the 'n', 'nd', 'll' and 'nn' consonants underlined are pronounced as palatals rather than as dentals, as in standard Norwegian. (The 'd' of 'nd' is silent, incidentally). - and the 'u' vowels underlined are pronounced as 'o's. (These correspond to Cardinal Vowels 8 and 7, respectively).

Each of the above is a sociolinguistic statement. These statements, however well-known, are, from a linguistic point of view, merely assertions, which may be true or false. Despite this obvious fact, their potential value cannot be ignored. Indeed they can serve as useful direction indicators towards the reality of the situation, or as reference points from which some investigations may be started.

In fact each of these assertions is referred to (indirectly rather than explicitly) in one or both of the above-mentioned articles on Tromsø dialect. Regarding the first assertion for instance, Tove Bull (1989 b) writes:

'Det som mest skil bymålet fra bygdemåla, er at tromsømalet lenge har hatt ein del typiske byformer som er tatt opp fra bokmålet.'

('That which most clearly distinguishes the town dialect from the rural dialects, is the fact that the Tromsø dialect has for a long time had a considerable number of typical town forms which are taken from bokmål'). (my translation).

Elstad (1982) also mentions the common occurrence of bokmål forms in Tromsø dialect, some of which are long-established, while others are competing with the old 'domestic' forms. In his section on 'General Tendencies of Town Dialects' he writes that there is often a stronger influence from bokmål in town dialects than is noted in local rural dialects. He also suggests that the imported (from Oslo, basically) or bokmål forms are slowly taking over. Thus assertion I) is essentially supported by Bull and Elstad, although the word 'everyone' should rather be replaced by 'most people'.

Moving on to assertions II) and III), Bull (1989 b) explains that there used to be two distinct varieties whose speakers belonged to different social classes. The high social status variety was referred to as 'fin' (= refined) and the other as 'folkelig' (= homely, popular, of the folk). She writes that for speakers of the high-status variety, bokmål served as the prescriptive model for their speech. Nowadays, as she points out, this variety is most often heard spoken by elderly women; there are very few, if any, young people who are brought up to speak it. Thus, Bull's views are basically in accord with assertion II). Assertion III) refers to the other 'folkelig' variety of the dialect. The two special pronunciations mentioned in III) are discussed by both Bull and Elstad (ibid.). They each conclude that those non-standard pronunciations would now seldom be heard. They are definitely from the old 'folkelig' variety of the variety and the claim in III) that 'real natives' of Tromsø speak in that way, demonstrates the prestige that that variety enjoyed in the town. There was apparently competition between the 'fin' and the 'folkelig' varieties; each claiming to be the genuine Tromsø dialect. It seems now to be generally accepted that the latter won the battle, though it is also generally accepted that only a number of elderly (non-upper-class) people speak that variety now. Other Tromsø residents tend to describe their own speech as 'lapsed Tromsø', meaning a less radical version of the 'folkelig' variety; and while they concede that there is much evidence of bokmål-influence in their speech, this is never attributed to convergence towards the old 'fin' variety of the dialect; rather it is described as 'normalisert' - normalised or standardised. This point will be returned to later in the study.

As a result of these observations the three aims of this study were formulated:



Firstly, to obtain a general picture of Tromsø dialect, as spoken today.

Secondly, to observe how versions of Tromsø dialect compared with modern bokmål and the above-mentioned 'fin' and 'folkelig' varieties of the dialect.

Thirdly, to investigate the possible existence of a Thelander 'regional standard' (M.Thelander, 1982).

## METHOD

The study consisted mainly of interviewing a group of carefully selected teenagers. The interviews were recorded and analysed. This entailed observing and then attempting to account for variations between speakers, with regard to their sex, their parents' social status and the places of origin of their parents. 'Place of origin' is throughout the study used to mean the place where the person was brought up. An elderly upper-class woman and an elderly non-upper-class man were also interviewed, to provide samples of the previously-mentioned 'fin' and 'folkelig' versions, respectively, of the Tromsø dialect.

### The Sample

The first consideration, then, was how to choose the subjects who were to be interviewed. I followed Gillian Sankoff's (1980) 3-stage procedure for sampling. Namely:

- a) Defining the sampling universe.
- b) Assessing the relevant dimensions of variation within the community.
- c) Fixing the sample size.

#### a) Defining the Sampling Universe.

I was interested only in people who had lived all their lives in Tromsø, obviously, and who were all of a similar age (14 or 15 years old). This particular age-group was chosen according to Labov's theory (1981) that during adolescence, speakers tend to speak most uniformly. So, if differences are found, one can assume that they are very relevant.

#### b) Assessing the Relevant Dimensions of Variation with the Community.

There were essentially three dimensions of variation I was concerned with - sex of the subjects, place of origin of the parents and social status of the parents. The first two of these were fixed, binary variables in the sample. 'Sex' is obviously a binary variable and in order to obtain as complete a picture of the dialect situation as possible, one obviously takes equal numbers of speakers of each sex.

The place of origin of the parents was also taken as a binary variable, here - either the parents were originally from Tromsø, or they were not. This was one of the variables I was most interested in, in the investigation, due to the possibility of finding a different version of the dialect spoken by 'real natives' of Tromsø (ie. those teenagers whose families had lived in the town for several generations), as opposed to those whose families had only recently moved to the town. Thus half of the sample had parents who both were originally from Tromsø and had lived most of their lives there, and would therefore presumably speak some version of Tromsø dialect. The other half of the sample I selected, were teenagers whose parents had first moved to Tromsø some time in their adult life, and would thus presumably not speak a version of Tromsø dialect, originally, at least. When choosing this second group, I was careful to avoid youngsters whose parents came from the towns nearest to Tromsø eg. Narvik, Harstad, Finnsnes, or from the rural areas immediately surrounding the town. The reason for this was to ensure that the dialects of the parents of the second group, were as different from the Tromsø dialect as possible. As Elstad (1982) writes:

**'målet på ein større tettstad ofte har meir til felles med andre tettstader som ligg lenger unna, enn med landdistriktet nærmest omkring'.**

That is to say, that even though the towns mentioned above are as far as 90, 80 and 50 (British!) miles (respectively) away from Tromsø the dialects spoken in those towns are often much more similar to the Tromsø dialect, than is a rural dialect from an area rather closer to Tromsø. Thus it seemed wise to avoid those towns. The dialects spoken in the rural areas immediately surrounding Tromsø, however, will, of course, also be likely to have many features common to the Tromsø dialect, and so they too were avoided.

The third variable, social status of the parents, was not fixed, as this would have been too time-consuming and difficult to 'fix' in accord with the other fixed variables. A social class index score was afterwards assigned to each subject in the selected sample. This obviously was not the ideal situation, although care was taken in the first place, regarding choosing the school. It was thought that children attending the chosen school (Sommerlyst skole) came from a wider range of social backgrounds than children from the other suitable school on the island (Gronnåsen skole). This was because the catchment area for Sommerlyst covered a number of socially differentiated areas of the town, whereas the Gronnåsen

catchment area was thought to be rather more uniform. The actual assessment of the social status was purely subjective, based on judgements about the area of the town in which the subjects lived, and the occupations of their parents. Two knowledgeable middle-aged native Tromsø residents were asked to look at the list of addresses and occupations, and to assign a score, between 1 and 6 to each one, according to social status; 1 being the highest, and 6 being the lowest.

c) Fixing the sample size.

I fixed the sample size at 16 subjects, so that there were four youngsters in each of the following categories:

- i) females whose parents' place of origin is Tromsø.
- ii) females whose parents' place of origin is not Tromsø.
- iii) males whose parents' place of origin is Tromsø.
- iv) males whose parents' place of origin is not Tromsø.

In order to select my sample of sixteen subjects, I went to the school and distributed a questionnaire, Appendix 1, to seventy pupils of the appropriate age. From the questionnaires I ascertained, among other things, every place where the teenagers had lived during their lives up until now, the same information for their parents, and their parents' occupations. It is relevant to look at the places of origin of all the parents; not just of those whose children were selected for interview. (No data is available for 16 of the 70 questionnaires, as a small number were from pupils who had only recently moved to Tromsø, and the rest were not returned).

Of the 54 pupils whose place of origin was Tromsø there were:

first; a group of 11, where both parents also were brought up in Tromsø;

second; a group of 13 where one parent was from Tromsø and the other was not, originally;

and third; a group of 30 where both parents were originally from other areas.

A clearer picture of the parents' places of origin was obtained on tabulating the results below. 'Northern Norway' is taken to be the counties of Finnmark, Troms and Nordland, and 'Southern Norway' is taken to be the rest of the country i.e. all the counties south of Nordland (see map No.2).

	First group: both parents from Tromsø.	Second group: 1 parent from Tromsø. 1 from another area.	Third group: neither parent from Tromsø.	TOTALS
	2 x 11	2 x 13	2 x 30	2 x 54
No. of parents originally from Tromsø	22	13	-	35
No. of parents originally from Northern Norway (excluding Tromsø)	-	9	36	45
No. of parents originally from Southern Norway.	-	4	24	28

Table A. The places of origin of 54 sets of parents.

The table shows that of the 108 parents, only 28 were not from Northern Norway (including Tromsø) originally. Assuming this to be a typical representation of the population of this age-group, it can then be concluded that despite the significant migration of people to Tromsø in the last few decades, the great majority of dialect varieties to be heard there are still Northern Norwegian.

The subjects finally selected were, of course, from the first group or the third group (mostly from Southern Norway).

## The Interview

Sixteen teenagers plus two elderly people were interviewed, and the interviews were recorded. Each interview took the form of a general chat at the beginning (not recorded) and then a series of simple questions. The questions posed were very carefully worded, for the purpose of eliciting particular replies, which would demonstrate whether the subject used the older 'folkelig' dialect forms or the newer imported bokmål forms. When the required response was not obtained, the question was rephrased in a second attempt. All of the variables being considered had very distinct, easily specified variants - usually only two, though occasionally three or more. No variables were considered which had variants along a continuum.

It proved to be much easier to interview the youngsters than the elderly pair. This was perhaps because the questions were basically aimed at teenagers, covering topics I hoped would present them with no problems. The success of this, with regard to the teenagers, was indicated by the ease with which I elicited the desired responses. Another reason for the difference between the interviewing of the youngsters and the elderly pair could be attributed to the relative asymmetries between interviewer and interviewee. With the youngsters I was probably not so much of an outsider to their culture, whereas with the elderly people there was asymmetry of age (and thus of culture also), and exaggerated asymmetry of race. Older people in Northern Norway have often had extraordinarily little contact with foreigners, whilst young people in Tromsø can hardly avoid having contact with foreigners, as so many have started coming to the town in the last few years. Related to the asymmetry of age is the general unfamiliarity of the situation for the elderly pair. Using a tape-recorder and microphone may have been strange for them and answering a series of apparently pointless questions was perhaps all rather bewildering. However, reasonable recordings were made despite the difficulties.

All the data collected was, according to Labov's criteria for 'formal' and 'casual' speech style, in formal style. The roles of the two participants in the speech event were clearly defined. The problem of power relations within the interviews with the youngsters was minimal for several reasons. Firstly, there was a comparatively small age-difference (7 years) between interviewer and interviewee, and I assume this was an advantage because they would relate more easily to a person of my age than to an older

person. Secondly, they were all on familiar 'home territory' in their school (and the elderly pair in their respective homes, incidentally) and so presumably felt comfortable in the surroundings. Thirdly, I consciously tried to put each interviewee at ease by chatting to them in a relaxed and informal manner before beginning the real interview. The informants were told that the study was about linguistics, that the interview consisted of very straightforward questions, and that they were to speak as naturally as possible, ignoring the fact that I was a foreigner. I assured them that I understood everything they said, and this was, of course, a very important reason for talking to them before the interview. To demonstrate to the informants that the language barrier would not create any problem whatsoever, was vital in the attempt to dissuade them from using more bokmål forms than they normally would in the given situation, were the interviewer Norwegian. Further, I used my normal oral Norwegian speech-style, which is heavily influenced by Tromsø speech varieties, throughout the interviews and the preceding conversations - I made a point of trying to avoid stigmatised bokmål expressions, picked up from books. This was easier to control in the interview, as I had checked each question beforehand with two natives of Tromsø, to see if there were any stigmatised bokmål expressions which were to be avoided. I can unfortunately not claim to have been entirely consistent in this matter, as I noticed from the recordings that in particular questions, some less obvious bokmål forms had crept into my speech. They did, however, seem to be few and mostly the same for each subject.

The basic problem, however, of the observer's paradox, as described by Labov (1972), was obviously very prominent. That is to say, that whilst I was seeking access to the vernacular (and by the 'vernacular' I mean the natural speech of an individual, as opposed to a 'low-status variety, characteristic of a social group' (Milroy, L. 1987)), the speech style of individuals was undoubtedly affected by the artificiality of the situation - being required to give answers to a series of questions and speak into a microphone. This problem is returned to in the discussion of results.

The other traditional method used in sociolinguistic research - the participant-observation technique, without the use of a tape-recorder - was not feasible due to the fact that, as a foreigner with only a year's exposure to the language, my ear was not well enough attuned to some of the subtle sound differences which whistle past at high speed in flowing natural speech. Particularly, for instance, in the case of the vowels 'e' and 'a',

eg. in plural forms of some nouns, my judgements as to where the border between the two sounds lay, turned out to be somewhat inaccurate when compared to a native speaker's judgements (although even they had trouble occasionally!). I trusted their judgements to be more reliable than mine, assuming that I was influenced by English-language intuitions and that it was this that accounted for the judgement difference. Fortunately, then, I had not used the participant-observation technique, and so was able to check and re-check the data collected very carefully. Another great advantage of the interview method used, was that it enabled me to decide in advance which particular variables I was interested in studying. Thus a large number and variety of hand-picked features could be obtained with a minimum of superfluous useless data.

The questions posed in the interview are listed below. (Translations are in Appendix 2). Most have two versions; a) being the form I actually used ie. my normal Tromsø-dialect-influenced spoken Norwegian, and b) just for comparison, the standard bokmål version. The differences between a) and b) are underlined. The responses are (for simplicity, here) the bokmål forms of the required replies. All the actual responses are discussed in 'RESULTS'. The words highlighted in the 'Responses' are those variables in which I was interested.

#### Interview Questions and Expected (Bokmål) Responses.

1 a) Du e i byen og du ser ei god venninne. Så hilse du på henne.  
Spør om ho ha det bra. Bruk et spørreord.

b) De er i byen og du ser ei/en god venninne. Så hilser du på henne. Spør om hun har det bra. Bruk et spørreord.

Response: **Hvordan** har du det? / Hvordan går det?

2 a) /KoJn/skulle en kniv være, slik at den skjære godt?

b) **Hvordan** skulle en kniv være, slik at den skjærer godt?

Response: **Skarp.**



- 3 a) Hvis nå ka e veldig morsomt, /kon/beskrive du det?  
b) Hvis noe er veldig/meget morsomt, hvordan beskriver du det?

Response: Jeg sier at det var **gøy**.

- 4 a) Hvis folk ha drukket for mye alkohol, så e dam .....  
b) Hvis folk har drukket for mye alkohol, så er de .....

Response: **Fulle**.

- 5 a) Koffør e den 21. Januar en spesiell dag i Tromsø?  
b) Hvorfor er den 21. Januar en spesiell dag i Tromsø?

Response: Fordi **solen** kommer tilbake etter mørketiden.

- 6 a) Ka slags husdyr e popul are i Norge?  
Hva slags husdyr er popul are i Norge?

Response: **Hunder**.

- 7 a) Ka slags stoff få man fra sauer? Hvilken farge e det vanligvis?  
b) Hva slags stoff får man fra sauer? Hvilken farge er det vanligvis?

Response: **Ull. Hvit**.

- 8 a) Ka slags frukt vokse på tr aer i Norge?  
b) Hva slags frukt vokser på tr aer i Norge?

Response: **Epler**.

- 9 a) Ha dåkker blomster hjemme hos dae? Kor dam vokse? E det fine hager i veien kor du bor? E det gress i alle? Svar med en hel setning.

- b) Har dere blomster hjemme hos deg? Hvor vokser de? Er det fine hager i veien hvor du bor? Er det gress i alle? Svar med en hel setning.

Responses: Ja. I **hagen**. Ja/nei. Ja det er gress i alle **hagene**.

- 10 a) Når folk jobbe i hagen om sommeren, ka bruke d~~ø~~m en spade til?  
b) Når folk jobber i hagen om sommeren hva bruker de en spade til?

Response: De bruker den til å **grave**.

- 11 a) Koffør kan d~~ø~~m ikkje grave jorda om vinteren?  
b) Hvorfor kan de ikke grave jorden om vinteren?

Response: Fordi det ligger så mye **snø** opp på.

- 12 a) Kan du si med andre ord: Æ ble kald på fingeran?  
b) Kan du si med andre ord: Jeg ble kald på fingerene?

Response: Jeg **frøs** på fingrene.

- 13 a) Ka slags tr~~ø~~r finnes i Tromsø?  
b) Hva slags tr~~ø~~r finnes i Tromsø?

Response: **bjørk**.

- 14 a) Kan du si med andre ord at det gamle treet ha v~~ø~~rt der i mange år?  
b) Kan du si med andre ord at det gamle treet har v~~ø~~rt der i mange år?

Response: Det har **stått** der i mange år.

- 15 a) Du ha noen eple som du sette på bordet, og du ha noen banana som du sette i skapet. Så komme broren din og han spør ka du ha gjort med frukten. Ka svare du da?

- b) Du har noen epler som du setter på bordet, og du har noen bananer som du setter i skapet. Så kommer broren din og han spør hva du har gjort med frukten. Hva svarer du da?

Response: Jeg har satt **eplene** på bordet og **bananene** i skapet.

- 16 a) Ka kalle du unge menn for?

- b) Hva kaller du unge menn?

Response: **Gutter**

- 17 a) Ka kalle du unge dame for?

- b) Hva kaller du unge damer / kvinner?

Response: **Jenter.**

- 18 a) Det e både jente og gutta i klassen, ikkje sant? Kem e flinkest i skolearbeid?

- b) Det er både jenter og gutter i klassen, ikke sant? Hvem er flinkest i skolearbeid?

Response: **Jentene.**

- 19 a) Ka hete de her? (pointing to my boots!)  
Og de ha de på .....

- b) Hva heter disse?  
Og jeg har dem på .....

Response: Støvler. **Føttene.**

- 20 a) Hvis du møte noen utlendinger, ka ville du spørre de om?

- b) Hvis du møter noen utlendinger, hva ville du spørre dem om?

Response: **Hvor** de **kommer** fra.

- 21 a) Ka det e at du gjør når du ikkje e våken?  
b) Hva er det at du gjør når du ikke er våken?

Response: Jeg **sover**.

- 22 a) Kan du tenke om to andre ord for 'å reise'?'  
b) Kan du tenke om to andre ord for 'å reise'?'  
Response: **å dra. å fare.**

- 23 a) Ka gjør du med en bok?  
b) Hva gjør du med en bok?

Response: Jeg **leser** i den.

- 24 a) Hvis du ha fått en plate fra en venn, så ha han .....den til da.  
b) Hvis du har fått en plate fra en venn, så har han .....den til deg.

Response: **gitt.**

- 25 a) Hvis du gikk til byen en dag, og så kom besøk til da etter at du hadde forlatt huset, ka sie mora di til vennen som kom? "Han/ho ha ..... til byen."  
b) Hvis du gikk til byen en dag, og så kom besøk til deg etter at du hadde forlatt huset, hva sier moren din til vennen som kom? "Han/hun har ..... til byen."

Response: **gått.**

- 26 a) Hvis du lete etter jakken din, så spør du kanskje om noen ha ..... den.  
b) Hvis du leter etter jakken din, så spør du kanskje om noen har.....den.

Response: **sett.**

27 a) Kan du tenke om et annet uttrykk for 'å trives'?

b) Kan du tenke om et annet uttrykk for 'å trives'?

Response: å like **seg**.

28 a) Kan du spørre me om du trives i Tromsø? Bruk det andre uttrykket.

b) Kan du spørre meg om jeg trives i Tromsø? Bruk det andre uttrykket.

Response: Liker du **deg** i Tromsø?

29 a) Kan du spørre me om dem som står der borte trives i Tromsø?

b) Kan du spørre meg om de som står der borte trives i Tromsø?

Response: Liker **de seg** i Tromsø?

30 a) Kan du spørre om vi alle trives i Tromsø?

b) Kan du spørre om vi alle trives i Tromsø?

Response: Liker **dere dere** i Tromsø?

31 a) Trives du i Tromsø?

b) Trives du i Tromsø?

Response: Ja, **jeg** liker **meg** i Tromsø.

32 a) Hvis du hadde en bolle med sukker, og du ville vite om du hadde brukt opp alt sukkeret, så kunne du spørre: "E det noe sukker igjen?" Og hvis du hadde brukt opp alt sukkeret, så ville du svare: "Nei, det e..... noe sukker igjen."

b) Hvis jeg hadde en bolle med sukker, og du ville vite om jeg hadde brukt opp alt sukkeret, så kunne du spørre: "Er det noe sukker igjen?" Og hvis jeg hadde brukt opp alt sukkeret, så ville jeg svare: "Nei, det er ..... noe sukker igjen."

Response: **ikke**.

On the whole, the interviews went very well, and the desired responses were obtained. Now and again, though, problems occurred. In such instances the question would be repeated or re-phrased in a second attempt. Occasionally the required response was not obtained at all. No.9) turned out to be a singularly unfortunate question to pose in Tromsø (as I soon realised), due to the Arctic climate. With my British 'flowers in the garden' way of thinking, it had not occurred to me that for Tromsø residents, flowers are actually things which usually grow in pots in the living-room, rather than in the garden; and to talk about there being grass in the gardens was also perhaps rather inappropriate, considering that at the time the interviews were recorded (and indeed for eight months of the year), the only thing to be seen in gardens was at least five feet of snow.

## RESULTS

Before looking at figures for which subjects used which particular forms, I will consider all the various forms themselves. Important factors to take note of here are: a) different types of variation, i.e. lexical, phonological, morphophonological or morphological; b) any relevant details of the historical origin of the variants; and c) the geographical dispersion for each variant.

The figures in the margin are the interview question numbers, to which the variants were the responses.

### LEXICAL VARIATION

3) Variants: gøy / morsom / artig

Details: The relationship between these variants is semantic - they are different lexemes, but are all synonyms. It is probably not a question of which is consistently used in which particular dialect, but rather a question of frequency of usage. Thus 'gøy' and 'morsom' are commonly heard in Southern Norway, and are usually considered in Northern Norway to be marked Southern forms and they are thus seldom used in speech in the North. 'Artig' is occasionally heard in the South, but is extremely common in the North.

11) Variants: snø / sny/ sne

Details: 'snø' is the official written form in both bokmål and nynorsk. It represents, then, a standardised form and was introduced in the 1960s, to replace the old standard riksmål form 'sne'.

'sny' is a dialect form heard only in Northern Norway.

'sne', as mentioned above, is the old standardised riksmål form. It must, however, also be a dialect form from the North. It is found in rural dialects around Harstad, in

Southern Troms, for example, and in Tromsø town as well, and in those areas it is NOT considered to be a standard form - indeed most young people seem surprised to learn that it was also a standard riksmål form, and they immediately retort that it is a dialect form and they would not use it if it were a standardised form. The form 'sne' is not found, however, in the rural dialects immediately surrounding Tromsø town - 'sny' is the form still used there. So it would appear that the form 'sne' represents a NEW dialect feature in some people's speech, while it represents an old riksmål feature in others.

12) Variants: frøs/freus/frøys

Details: 'frøs' is the standard bokmål form. 'freus' is the original form from gammelnorsk and the form found in rural dialects in Troms, at least. 'frøys' is a newly introduced dialect form which came originally from Østlandet, working its way up along the coast, from town to town. In 'Sterke Verb i Norske Målføre', (1967), Kjell Venås states that this form has come up only as far as Haugesund (see map No. 1). But obviously that is rather out-of-date now, as the form is found some 780 miles further north in Tromsø town, and possibly even further north in Finnmark also.

29) Variants: de / d æ m (3rd person plural, subject)

Details: 'de' is the bokmal form and is found in towns in Southern Norway as well as in rural dialects in Vestlandet, South of Romsdal and in most 'midland' dialects.

The form 'd æ m' is the bokmål OBJECT pronoun in fact, but is widely used (with slight variations) as SUBJECT pronoun in (rural) Østlandet, Trøndelag and most of Northern Norway (Skjekkeland, M., 1977).



30) Variants: dere / dǎkker

Details: 'dere' is the bokmål form and is heard only in town dialects in Østlandet and Sørlandet.

'dǎkker' is heard in most of Troms and Nordland and all of Finnmark. (Elstad, K., 1982).

### PHONOLOGICAL VARIATION

2), 23)

Variants: skarp, bjørk / /skaʃp/, /bjøʃk/

Details: 'skarp' and 'bjørk' are standard bokmål pronunciations. In most Norwegian dialects there is some friction in such word-final consonant clusters, caused by devoicing the 'r' sound to assimilate to the following voiceless consonants. (In some Southern dialects, though, there is just one tap for the 'r'.) 'Skaʃp' and 'bjøʃk' on the other hand, are old 'folkelig' dialect forms. The rule was that 'r' before 'p' or 'k' was pronounced as 'ʃ'. This caused considerable confusion in the orthography as words such as 'mørk' would be spelt 'mørsk', and conversely, words such as 'fersken' would be spelt 'ferken'. The latter spelling is actually to be seen in a shop in Tromsø. These 'ʃ' forms are now highly stigmatised and although of great renown, they appear in fact to be almost extinct.

4), 7), 6)

Variants: full, ull, hund / /full/, /ull/, /hunn/

Details: 'Full, ull, hund' are standard bokmål pronunciations. Palatalisation of dentals was originally found in all areas to the North of an imaginary line drawn from Bergen approximately straight across eastwards to the Swedish border. (Helleland, B. and Papazian, E. 1973). Now, however, in Troms and Finnmark at least, dentals seem to be in the process of replacing the palatalisation in many areas. (Tove Bull, 1989a).

4), 7), 6)

Variants: full, ull, hund //foll/,/oll/,/hond/

Details: The /o/ vowel rather than /u/, used to be commonly found in parts of Troms (including Tromsø town) (Tove Bull, 1989 b) and West Finnmark. It is now seldom heard among young people in Tromsø.

7) Variants: hvit / kvit

Details: In dialects around Oslo, in Østfold, Vestfold, Akershus, part of Buskerud and part of Telemark, the gammelnorsk (old Norwegian) /hv/ developed into /v/ or /gv/. In all other areas it developed into /kv/. (Helleland, B. and Papazian, E. 1973). Now, however, /v/ is commonly found in town dialects throughout the country, and is again considered to be a standardised or 'bokmål' form.

32) Variants: ikke / ikkje

Details: Palatalisation of velars has vanished from Northern dialects, with the exception of the words 'ikkje, mykje, stykkje, bikkje' (Tove Bull, 1989 a). But non-palatalisation of these words also, can be found in almost all of Finnmark, and can now be heard in Troms as well. There is variation between these words also: 'bikkje' is never non-palatalised in any dialect, 'ikkje' is very variable, 'mykje' seems to be mostly in rural dialects in Troms and 'stykkje' is very seldom heard anywhere.

1) Variants: hvordan //koʃn// kosn / kordan

Details: 'hvordan' is the standardised bokmål form, associated with 'upper class' speech in towns in Østlandet.

'koʃn' and 'kosn' are two different realisations of the same dialect form, which is thought to be found throughout Northern Norway.

'kordan' is rather interesting as it appears to be a new dialect form. It has not apparently come from any old dialect form, and neither has it come from bokmål or nynorsk. It looks like an intermediate form having come from 'koʃn' or 'kosn' and heading for 'hvordan'. Whether it will itself become a stable inter-dialect form, is hard to say, at the moment.

20) Variants: hvor / kor

Details: 'hvor' is the bokmål form and is heard only in upper-class speech in towns in Østlandet. 'kor' is heard in most dialects in Western and Northern Norway.

31), 28), 27)

Variants: jeg , meg , deg , seg / æ , mæ , dæ , sæ

Details: 'jeg , meg , deg , seg' are bokmål forms which are heard mostly in towns in South-Eastern Norway. The other forms 'æ , mæ , dæ , sæ' are obviously different dialect realisations of the same personal, object and reflexive pronouns and are heard only in towns north of Saltfjellet. In the rural dialects immediately surrounding Tromsø, a 'g' ending is heard, and a little further south, the vowel changes, yielding /eg/ /meg/ /deg/ /seg/.

(N.B. The bokmål forms are of course quite distinct from these forms, the former being pronounced /jɛi/ /mɛi/ /sɛi/. In Nordland we find 'e , me , de , se' (Helleland, B and Papazian, E., 1973).

#### MORPHOPHONOLOGICAL VARIATION

10), 22)

Variants: å grave, å fare, å dra / å græve, å fære, å dræge.

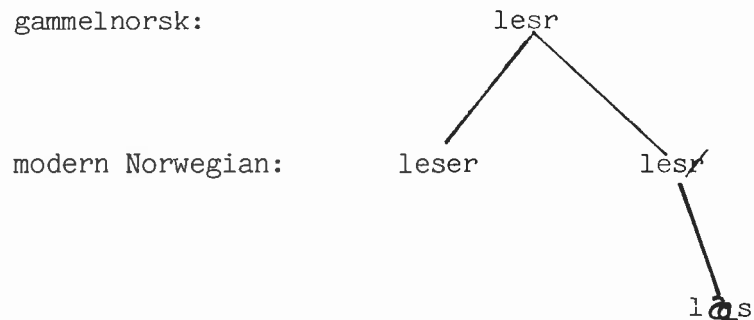
Details: 'grave', 'fare' and 'dra' are the standard bokmål forms, while 'græve', 'fære' and 'dræge' can be heard in all dialects from just south of Trondheim, up through all of the North.

The origins of the two forms are interesting:



Details: 'leser' is the standard bokmål form. 'lese' with the final 'r' dropped, is usual in the present tense of all verbs, throughout Northern Norway. 'l̥əs' is the dialect form in most of Northern Norway.

gammelnorsk:



modern Norwegian:

In 'gammelnorsk' the form was 'lesr'. This developed in two different ways : 1) inserting an extra 'e' to give 'leser' and 2) dropping the final 'r' to give 'les' which then became 'l̥əs'.

'sover' and 'kommer' developed similarly.

5) Variants: solen / sola

Details: The postponed feminine singular definite article '- en' is a riksmål form also used in Bergen and upper-class Oslo speech. The '-a' form is heard in all the eastern dialects of Southern Norway and in all Northern Norway down to Lofoten. Other variants are heard in other areas. (Helleland, B. and Papazian, E. 1973).

17), 18)

Variants: jenter / jente (indefinite feminine plural)

Details: 'jenter' and 'jentene' are bokmål forms which also occur in dialects in Østlandet .

jentene //jent̥/ (definite feminine plural)

'jente' and 'jent̥' are dialect forms in Northern Norway at least.

16) Variants: gutter / gutta / gutte (indefinite masculine plural)

Details: 'gutter' is the bokmål form also found in dialects in Østlandet. 'Gutta' is the Northern dialect form. 'Gutte' is rather puzzling, as it is not known to be found specifically in any dialect. It could then simply be a speech error, where the rule for formation of indefinite plural feminine nouns has been applied also to indefinite plural masculine nouns; or, it could be inter-dialect forms between 'gutter' and 'gutta'.

9) Variants: hagene / hagan (definite masculine plural)

Details: 'hagene' is the bokmål form also found in dialects in Østlandet. 'Hagan' is the Northern dialect form.

8), 15)

Variants: epler / elpa / eple (indefinite neuter plural)

eplene / eplan / eplen (definite neuter plural)

Details: 'epler' and 'eplene' are bokmål forms also found in dialects in Østlandet.

'epla' and 'eplan' are Northern dialect forms which follow the same pattern as the masculine forms in Northern dialects as shown above - 'gutta' and 'hagan'.

'eple' and 'eplen' appear to be new forms in the north at least, although the form 'eple' particularly, is found in many dialects in the South. They, also, could possibly be inter-dialect forms, or they could for some reason simply be following the same pattern as the feminine forms in the Northern dialects (instead of the masculine forms, as shown above - 'jente' and 'jentn').

19) Variants: føttene / føttern / fotan (definite plural)

Details: 'føttene' is the bokmål form.

'føttern' is an old dialect form from gammelnorsk:

indefinite singular	definite singular	indefinite plural	definite plural
fot	foten	føtter	føttern

'fotan' is a newer (though also old!) dialect form, analogous to the bigger plural class in the dialect:

indefinite singular	definite singular	indefinite plural	definite plural
fot	foten	fota	fotan
cf. gutt	gutten	gutta	guttan

The form 'fotan' obviously started to come into the Tromsø dialect at a particular time in the past; it then acquired low prestige and became stigmatised, with the consequence that the older form 'føttern' once again came into common usage. The form 'fotan' has, however, been retained in the rural dialects around Tromsø, and in the Tromsø dialect itself, as spoken by many old people.

Results for the elderly woman and man

In selecting for interview the elderly upper-class woman and the elderly non-upper-class man, I hoped to obtain representative samples of the 'fin' and 'folkelig' varieties respectively, of Tromsø dialect. This was satisfactorily achieved and their recorded responses are given below.

<u>Q.</u>	<u>'Fin'</u>	<u>'Folkelig'</u>
1	hvorleis	kor
2	skarp	/skaʃp/
3	morsomt	_____
4	full	/foʎ/
5	solen	sola
6	hund	/hon/
7	ull	/ol/
	hvit	kviṭ
8	epler	epla
9	havene	_____
10	grøve	grøve
11	sne	sny
12	frøs	frøys
13	bjørk	/bjøʃk/
14	stått	_____
15	_____	_____
16	gutter	_____
17	piker	_____
18	_____	_____
19	føttene	fotan
20	hvor	_____
	kommer	_____
21	_____	søv
22	fare	fare
	dra	_____
23	leser	lɛs
24	_____	_____
25	gått	_____
26	sett	sedd
27	seg	sɛ
28	deg	dɛ



29	dem	dɛm
30	dere	dåkker
31	jeg	ʒ
	meg	mæ
32	ikke	ikkje

Results for the Teenagers.

Each response to each question was labelled either 'dialect', meaning a form from the old 'folkelig' version of Tromsø dialect, or 'bokmål'. The bar-chart below compares the total numbers of dialect and bokmål forms obtained. There were 36 variables to consider and sixteen subjects. Thus the sum of the totals would have been 576 if all subjects had given the required responses to all questions. However on 29 of the 576 occasions the required response was not given; thus the sum of the totals is 547.

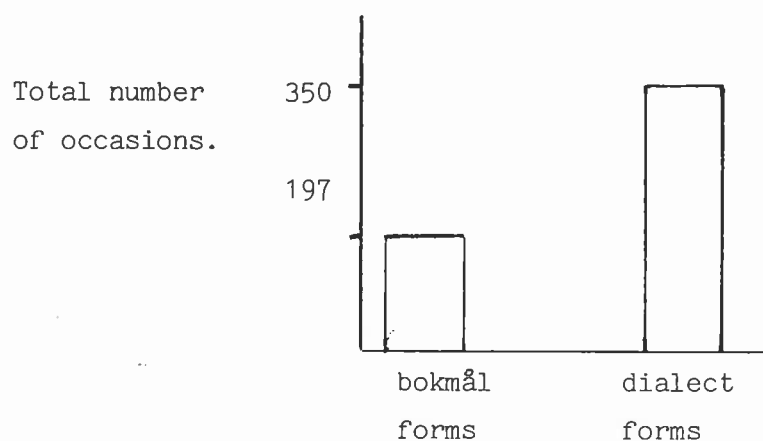


Figure A. Total numbers of bokmål and dialect forms used.

In other words, 36% of responses were the bokmål variants and 64% were the dialect variants.

Moving on to the variants themselves, the table below shows how many youngsters used each particular variant. The bracketed numbers show how many responses (ie. maximum of 16) were obtained for each variable.

Interview Question No.	Bokmål variant.	No. of reponses obtained.	Dialect variant(s)	No. of responses obtained.
1	hvordan	2 (16)	/koʃn/ kosn /kordan/	10 (16) 1 3
2	skarp	16 (16)	/skaʃp/	0 (16)
3	morsomt gøy	1 (15) 1	artig	13 (15)
4	full	12 (15)	/fol/ /foɫ/ /ful/	1 (15) 1 1
5	solen	0 (14)	sola	14 (14)
6	hund	10 (16)	— /hon/ /hun/	(16) 1 5
7	ull	13 (16)	— /oɫ/ /ul/	(16) 1 2
7	hvit	13 (16)	kvit	3 (16)
8	epler	2 (16)	epla eple	10 (16) 4
9	hagene	3 (13)	hagan	10 (13)
10	grave	9 (16)	gr <del>a</del> ve	7 (16)
11	snø	7 (16)	sne sny	8 (16) 1
12	frøs	2 (16)	frøys freus	13 (16) 1
13	bjørk	16 (16)	/bjøʃk/	0 (16)
14	stått	5 (16)	stådd	11 (16)
15	eplene	2 (16)	eplan eplen	12 (16) 2
16	gutter	2 (15)	gutta gutte	12 (15) 1
17	jenter	1 (15)	jente	14 (15)
18	jentene	3 (13)	/jentn/	10 (13)
19	føttene	2 (15)	/føtten/ fotan	11 (15) 2 (15)
20	hvor	2 (13)	kor	11 (13)
20	kommer	4 (15)	komme kj <del>a</del> m	11 (15) 0

cont.

cont.

Interview Question No.	Bokmål variant.	No. of reponses obtained.	Dialect variant(s).	No. of responses obtained.
21	sover	10 (16)	sove søv	4 (16) 2
22	fare	3 (10)	f <sup>ø</sup> re	7 (10)
22	dra	16 (16)	dr <sup>ø</sup> ge	0 (16)
23	leser	2 (16)	l <sup>ø</sup> s	14 (16)
24	gitt	10 (16)	gidd	6 (16)
25	gått	7 (16)	gådd	9 (16)
26	sett	7 (16)	sedd	9 (16)
27	seg	2 (16)	s <sup>ø</sup>	14 (16)
28	deg	2 (16)	d <sup>ø</sup>	14 (16)
29	de	2 (16)	d <sup>ø</sup> m	14 (16)
30	dere	2 (16)	d <sup>ø</sup> kker	14 (16)
31	jeg	1 (16)	<sup>ø</sup>	15 (16)
31	meg	2 (16)	m <sup>ø</sup>	14 (16)
32	ikke	3 (10)	ikkje	7 (10)

Table B. The Variants and Number of Occurrences.

It is obvious from the above table that some dialect variants are much more resistant to change or standardisation (to bokmål) than others. Compare, for instance, the two variables in questions 1 and 2. The dialect variants of 'hvordan' are very unyielding to change, it seems, whilst the dialect variant of 'skarp' (/skaɹp/) apparently put up very little resistance and has hence essentially vanished from the dialect. There exists the slight possibility that in a few years no such difference will be detectable, ie. the variants used will either be more uniformly dialect, or more uniformly bokmål. This would, however, be somewhat surprising as the degree of resistance is determined by multifarious factors. Some factors considered here are:

- a) Type of variation:
  - lexical (Lx), phonological (Ph), morphological (Mo)
  - or morphophonological (MoPh).
  
- b) Geographical range of the dialect variant.
  - Eight categories were necessary to deal thoroughly with this factor starting with the smallest area (1) and progressing to most of the country (8).

- 1) Tromsø and a) immediately surrounding rural dialects or b) other towns in Troms county.
- 2) Tromsø and parts or all of Troms county.
- 3) Parts or all of Finnmark county, plus 2).
- 4) Northern Norway (Finnmark, Troms and Nordland counties).
- 5) Most urban areas throughout Norway.
- 6) Northern Norway and parts of Southern Norway.
- 7) Most rural areas throughout Norway.
- 8) All areas except Bergen and (upper-class) areas of Oslo.

c) The 'socially marked' dialect variant.

The judgement of whether or not a dialect variant was 'socially marked' was subjective and based on impressions gained by discussing the dialect with both native and non-native Tromsø residents. A variant was considered to be socially marked if it was thought that people were, in general, aware of the difference between the dialect and the bokmål form.

Table C, below, ranks the occurrence of the dialect variants used by the subjects in order of frequency, smallest first: i.e. the first is the variable for which the fewest dialect-variant responses were obtained.

Interview question no.	Dialect variant.	No. of occurrences (out of the total).	Rank.	Type of variation.	Geographical range of variant.	Socially marked.
2	/skaʃp/	0 (16)	1	Ph	1a	*
13	/bjøʃk/	0 (16)	1	Ph	1a	*
22	dr̥ge	0 (16)	1	MoPh	6	
20	kj̥m	0 (15)	4	Mo	4	*
6	/hoŋ/	1 (16)	5	Ph	1a	*
7	/ol/	1 (16)	5	Ph	1a	*
11	sny	1 (16)	5	Lx	4	
12	freus	1 (16)	5	Lx	2	
4	/fol/	1 (15)	9	Ph	1a	
4	/foŋ/	1 (15)	9	Ph	1a	*
4	/ful/	1 (15)	9	Ph	6	
16	gutte	1 (15)	9	Mo	?	

continued

continued.

Interview question no.	Dialect variant.	No. of occurrences (out of the total).	Rank.	Type of variation.	Geographical range of variant.	Socially marked.
7	/ul/	2 (16)	13	Ph	6	
15	eplen	2 (16)	13	Mo	?	
21	søv	2 (16)	13	Mo	4	
19	fotan	2 (15)	16	Mo	1a	
1	/kordan/	3 (16)	17	Ph	?	
7	kvit	3 (16)	17	Ph	6	
8	eple	4 (16)	19	Mo	?	
21	sove	4 (16)	19	Mo	4	
6	/hun/	5 (16)	21	Ph	6	
24	gidd	6 (16)	22	MoPh	4	
10	græve	7 (16)	23	MoPh	6	
11	sne	8 (16)	24	Lx	1b	
25	gådd	9 (16)	25	MoPh	4	
26	sedd	9 (16)	25	MoPh	4	
8	epla	10 (16)	27	Mo	4	
1	/koʂn/ kosn	11 (16)	28	Ph	4	
14	stådd	11 (16)	28	MoPh	4	
22	fære	7 (10)	30	MoPh	6	
32	ikkje	7 (10)	30	Ph	?	*
19	/føtten/	11 (15)	32	Mo	6	
20	komme	11 (15)	32	Mo	4	
15	eplan	12 (16)	34	Mo	4	
9	hagan	10 (13)	35	Mo	4	
18	/jentn/	10 (13)	35	Mo	4	
16	gutta	12 (15)	37	Mo	4	
12	frøys	13 (16)	38	Lx	5	
20	kor	11 (13)	39	Ph	7	
3	artig	13 (15)	40	Lx	-	
23	læs	14 (16)	41	Mo	4	
27	sæ	14 (16)	41	Ph	3	
28	dæ	14 (16)	41	Ph	3	
31	mæ	14 (16)	41	Ph	3	
29	dæm	14 (16)	41	Lx	6	
30	dåkker	14 (16)	41	Lx	4	*
17	jente	14 (15)	47	Mo	4	
31	æ	15 (16)	48	Ph	3	*
5	sola	14 (14)	49	Mo	6	

Table C. Ranking of dialect variants, with associated factors.

A quick glance down Table C reveals one result which is not connected to factors a), b) or c), discussed below. This finding is that six of the last eight variants listed have another common factor - they are all pronouns and moreover they constitute the whole set of pronouns being studied here. Thus it would appear that pronouns are more resistant to standardisation than are other parts of speech.

Factors a), b) and c) are considered next.

Factor a), the type of variation, seems to be fairly un-ordered here, there being no tendencies for a single type of variation to dominate any section of the table.

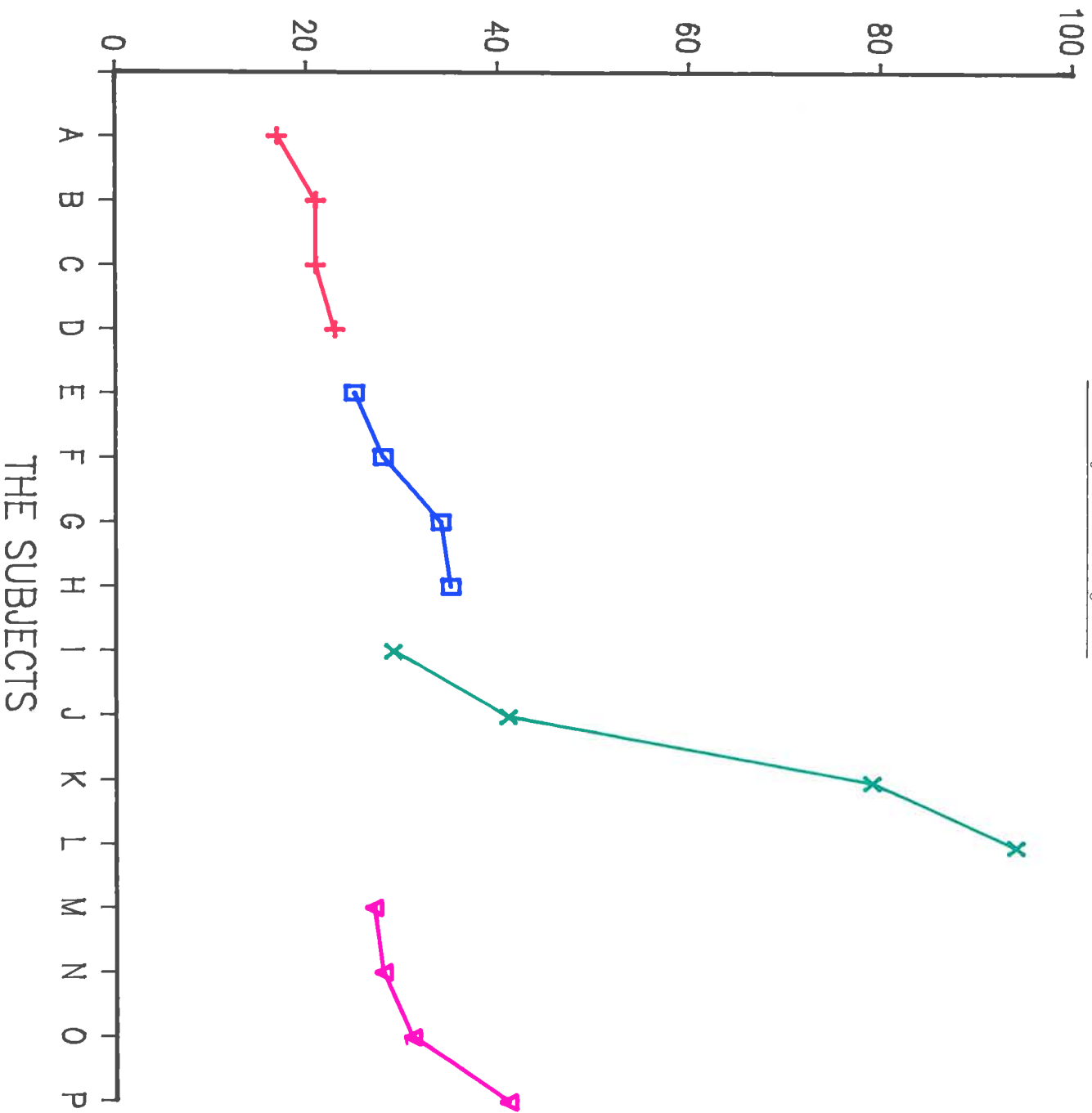
Factor b), the geographical range of the dialect variants, shows few significant trends in one direction or another through the table. One identifiable drift though, is that of categories 1) and 2). All the variants in these categories appeared in the top half of the table. So it can be stated that the group of dialect variants whose dispersions are limited to within Troms county, were standardised (i.e. the bokmål forms were used instead) by the subjects, sooner than any other complete group. In addition it is apparent from the table that none of the dialect variants from categories 1) or 2) were used by more than 50% of the subjects.

Factor c), the socially marked dialect variants, was most frequently found at the top of the table. Indeed 2/3 of the variants with factor c) were in the first quarter of the table although the other 1/3 which were, incidentally, much more frequently-used words were in the second half of the table.

Table C then reveals only a few faint traces of a regular system for the order in which particular kinds of dialect variants may be taken over by the corresponding bokmål forms. These results are considered further in the DISCUSSION.

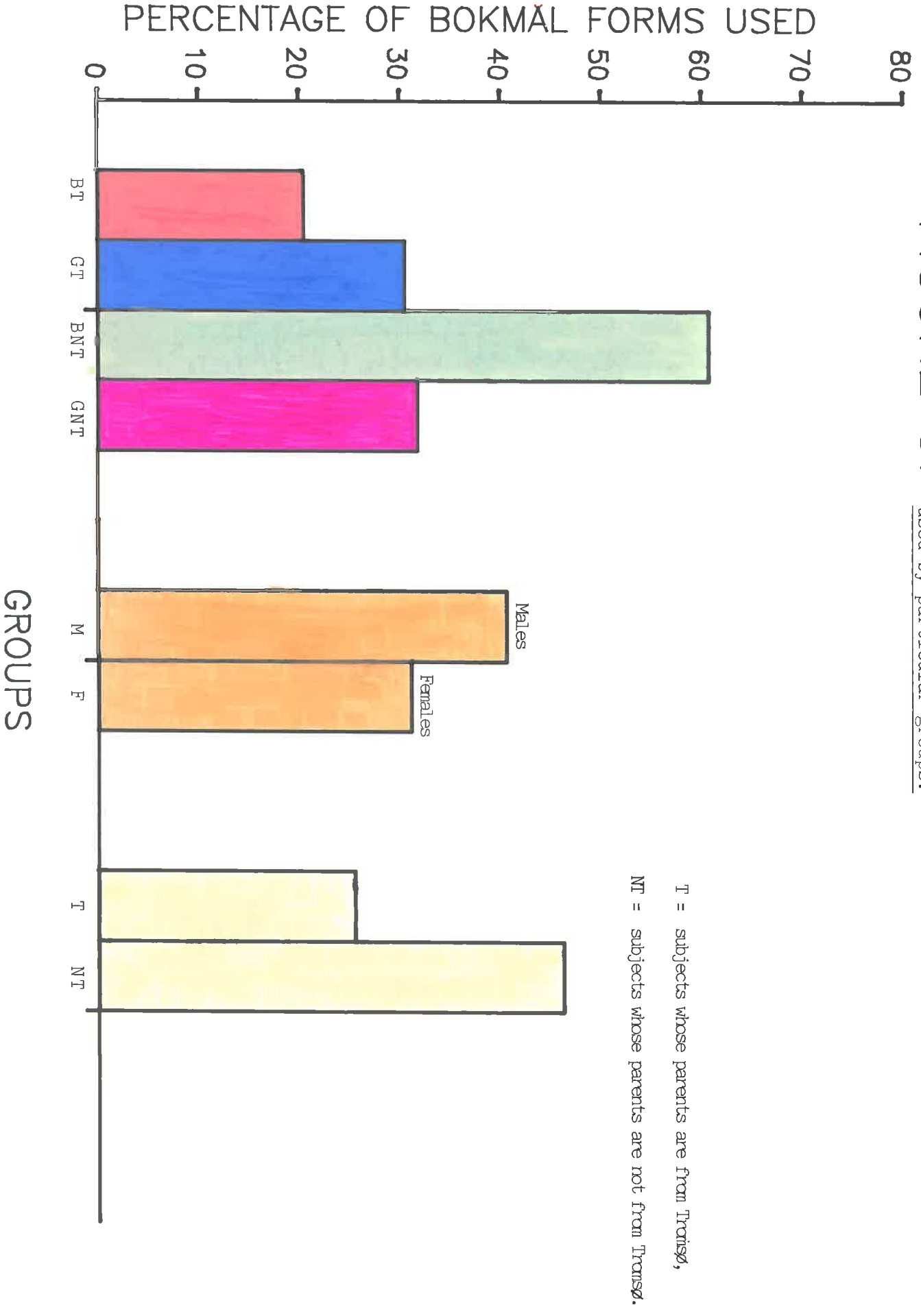
Having looked at all the variants of the variables, in some detail, we now move on to the variation between individual subjects or groups of subjects.

FIGURE B: The percentage of bokmål forms used by each subject.



- BT** = Boys whose parents are from Tromsø.
- GT** = Girls whose parents are from Tromsø.
- BNT** = Boys whose parents are not from Tromsø.
- GNT** = Girls whose parents are not from Tromsø.

FIGURE C: Average percentages of bokmål forms used by particular groups.



T = subjects whose parents are from Trømsø,  
 NT = subjects whose parents are not from Trømsø.



The graph in Figure B shows the percentage of bokmål forms used by each subject. The subjects are split into four groups and the names of the groups are from now on abbreviated as follows:

- BT = subjects A, B, C and D - Boys whose parents are from Tromsø.
- GT = subjects E, F, G and H - Girls whose parents are from Tromsø.
- BNT = subjects I, J, K and L - Boys whose parents' places of origin are not Tromsø.
- GNT = subjects M, N, O and P - Girls whose parents' places of origin are not Tromsø.

The results plotted on the graph reveal that the scores within each group were fairly uniform except for the BNT group. The range of scores within each group and the difference between the highest and lowest scores in each group, were as follows:

- Group BT: 17% - 23% i.e. 6% difference
- Group GT: 25% - 35% i.e. 10% difference
- Group BNT: 29% - 94% i.e. 65% difference
- Group GNT: 27% - 41% i.e. 14% difference

The two lowest BNT scores are just within the range covered by the GNT scores (the group with the next highest scores), but the two highest BNT scores are extraordinarily high at 79% and 94% and are therefore well out of the range of any of the other groups. The BT group, on the other hand, have considerably lower scores than any of the other groups, their highest score not even being as high as the lowest of the others. The two remaining groups, GT and GNT, have fairly similar scores, the GNT group covering a slightly larger and higher range than the GT group.

Figure C plots the **average** percentages of bokmål forms used by various groups against the variables which distinguish those groups - namely sex and places of origin of the parents. The results are most interesting. The first part of the bar chart is essentially a resume of Figure B, the results of which are considered above. The second part, boys' scores compared with girls' scores, gave the result that the boys on average scored nearly 10% higher than the girls. So the difference between the BNT group and the girls' groups was much bigger than the difference between the BT group and the girls' groups, thus yielding the overall result that the boys scored more highly than the girls. The third part of Figure C

displays the difference between the subjects with parents from Tromsø and those with parents from other areas, the latter group scoring on average considerably higher than the former.

The third variable considered in the study was social status. Thus Figure D has 'social status' along the x-axis (1 was the highest possible social status score and 6 the lowest) of the graph and the percentage of bokmål forms used' along the y-axis. The co-ordinates of the 16 subjects were plotted. At first sight the results appear to manifest little pattern. Neither of the two very high bokmål scores, 79% and 94%, are at the extremes of the graph as might be expected, and nor are they even very close to each other on the figure. If those two scores were excluded, supposed erroneous, the graph still would not expose any striking results, as one would expect, for example, with a similar study carried out in Britain. There is though, a very slight (if erratic) negative gradient - the average y-value for the first (left hand) half of the points being 29.57%, whilst that for the second (right hand) half was 27.7%.

Each point on the graph was marked 'M' or 'F' (Male or Female), indicating the sex of the subject who was thereby represented. This was to show whether there was any correlation between the percentages of bokmål forms used, and the sexes of subjects of similar social status. It was not easy, however, to establish conclusively whether such a pattern exists for two reasons. Firstly there is the question of whether or not the two very high-scoring bokmål subjects should be disregarded, supposed erroneous. If so the balance of males and females would immediately be upset. Secondly, there is the problem of what constitutes 'similar social status' when this variable is along a continuum rather than in categories. Despite these difficulties comparisons had to be made. So all the subjects were included and pairs of subjects were considered to be of similar social status if their x-axis scores differed by 0.5 or less. Thus each point was compared to neighbouring points, where suitable, provided they represented subjects of the opposite sex. The comparisons established that there were equal numbers of female-high, male-low pairs and male-high, female-low pairs. i.e. There appear to be no consistent differences between the bokmål scores of males and females of similar social status. Possible explanations for all these results are considered in the DISCUSSION.

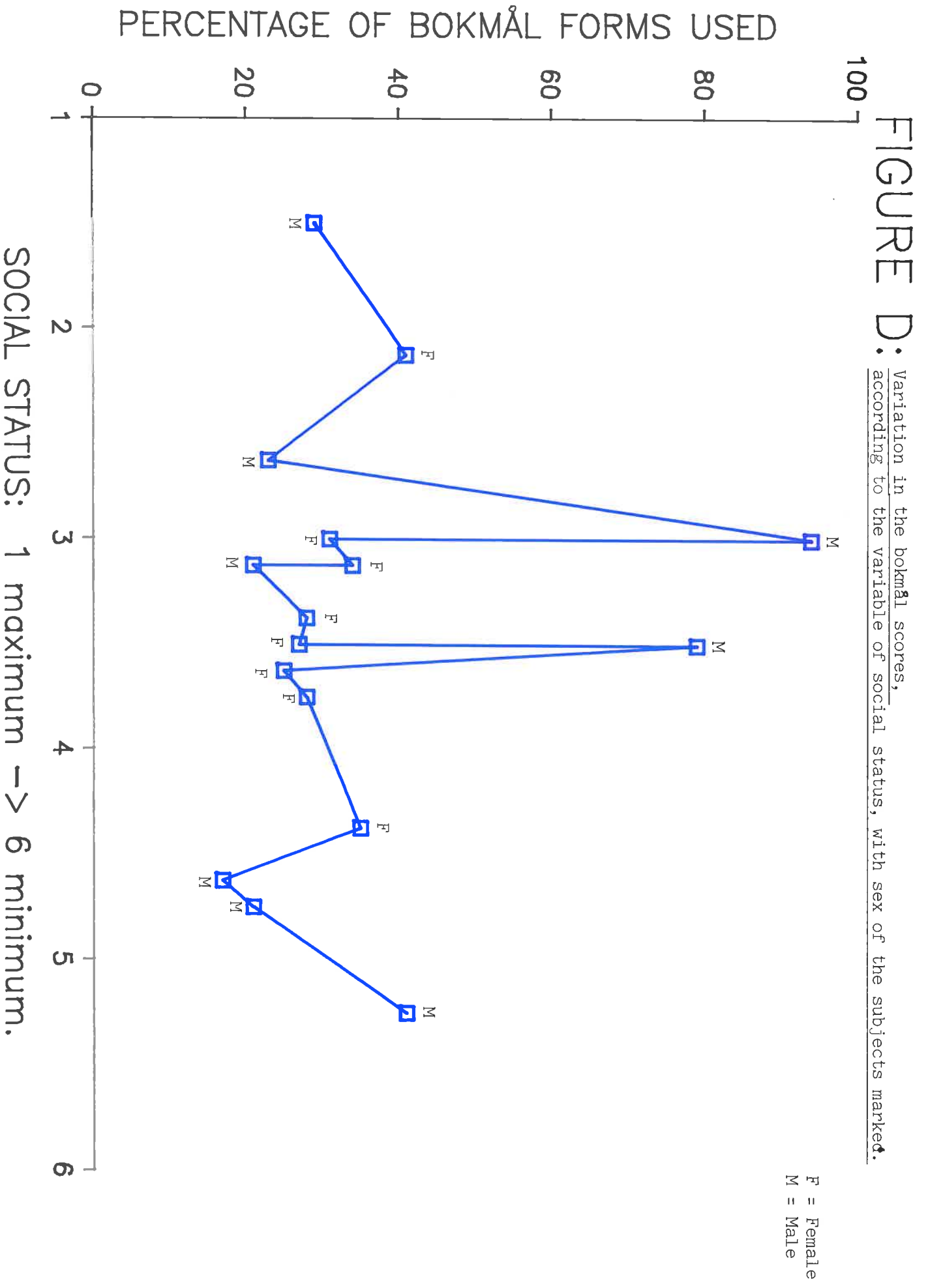


FIGURE D: Variation in the bokmål scores, according to the variable of social status, with sex of the subjects marked.

It was thought to be quite probable that the social status of the parents and their places of origin, were inter-related: i.e. those who had come from other areas were more likely to have had higher education and therefore to have achieved higher social status than those who had come from Tromsø. On investigation however, it became apparent that there was in fact no definite correlation between social status and places of origin of the parents. The table below ranks the subjects in decreasing order of social status of the parents, and marks each one with either T (parents from Tromsø) or NT (parents not from Tromsø).

<u>Social status rank.</u>	<u>Places of origin</u>
1	NT
2	NT
3	T
4	NT
4	NT
6	T
6	T
8	T
9	NT
9	NT
11	T
12	NT
13	T
14	T
15	T
16	NT

Table D. The Correlation between Social Status and Places of Origin of the Parents.

The table indicates that there is just a slight tendency for the parents whose places of origin are areas other than Tromsø, to have higher social status than the other group of parents. The difference is rather small though, and turns out to be of little significance in this study.

A Thelander 'Regional Standard'.

The quandary of Tromsø dialect as considered here actually turns out to be a good example of a 'regional standard' situation as described by Thelander in his 1982 article entitled: 'A Qualitative Approach to Quantitative Data of Speech Variation'. By briefly considering his study, its relevance to this Tromsø investigation becomes apparent. Thelander investigated a number of variables in Northern Sweden according to whether subjects used the old dialect forms or the standard spoken Swedish forms. He found that there was no clear distinction between the two language forms, i.e. that it was not the case that some people spoke the old dialect, and all the others spoke standard Swedish. Rather he found that most subjects used dialect forms for certain variables and standard forms for certain other variables. Looking at the variables, he assigned each one a status - either '**dialect indicator**' or '**standard indicator**'. A variable had 'dialect indicator' status if the dialect form of that variable was used by a **minority** of the subjects. That is to say, if a subject used the dialect form of that particular variable, it indicated his/her strong allegiance to the dialect. The converse was the case for 'standard indicators'. Thelander then identified three different speech varieties:

- 1) **Dialect**, where the speaker used dialect forms throughout;
  - 2) **Standard**, where the speaker used standard forms throughout;
- and 3) an interlanguage which he called 'regional standard', where the speaker used standard variants for dialect indicator variables and dialect variants for standard indicator variables.

Returning to this Tromsø study, the above method was applied. Using the results from Table B to determine the status (dialect indicator or standard indicator) of each variable, the 'regional standard' was found, containing the forms shown in the table below. Thelander's other two speech varieties, 1) and 2), above, correspond to the 'folkelig' variety of Tromsø dialect, and bokmål respectively, as shown in RESULTS.

Table E. The Tromsø Regional Standard.

Question No.	Regional Standard Form	Bokmål (B)/Dialect (D) Variant
1	/koʃn/, kosn, /kordan/	D
2	skarp	B
3	artig	D
4	full	B
5	sola	D
6	hund	B
7	ull	B
	hvit	B
8	epla/eple	D
9	hagan	D
10	grave	B
11	sny/sne	D
12	freus/frøys	D
13	bjørk	B
14	stådd	D
15	eplan/eplen	D
16	gutta/gutte	D
17	jente	D
18	/jentn/	D
19	fotan/ /føtten/	D
20	kor	D
	komme	D
21	sover	B
22	f <del>a</del> re	D
	dra	B
23	l <del>a</del> s	D
24	gitt	B
25	gådd	D
26	sedd	D
27	s <del>a</del>	D
28	d <del>a</del>	D
29	d <del>a</del> m	D
30	dåkker	D
31	<del>ø</del>	D
	m <del>a</del>	D
32	ikkje	D

26 of the 36 regional standard forms were dialect forms. That is to say, this regional standard is much more heavily 'dialect-influenced' than 'standard-influenced' - the standard forms constituting only 28% of the total number of forms. Thus the two subjects, L and K, who scored highest on bokmål forms did not score very well on the regional standard. The table below shows the 'regional standard' score of each subject.

Group.	Subject.	% of Regional Standard Forms.	
GT	E	97	(GT = Girls whose parents are from Tromsø.
GNT	M	91	
GT	F	90	GNT = Girls whose parents are not from Tromsø originally.
GT	G	89	
BT	D	89	BT = Boys whose parents are from Tromsø.
GNT	N	89	
GT	H	88	BNT = Boys whose parents are not from Tromsø originally.)
GNT	P	88	
BT	B	88	
BT	C	85	
GNT	O	84	
BNT	I	83	
BT	A	83	
BNT	J	71	
BNT	K	45	
BNT	L	29	

Table F. Scores for the Tromsø regional standard.

The above table indicates that there is in fact some regular order or - system to Tromsø dialect, as the 'regional standard' variety is consistently used by the majority of the subjects. The exceptions, subjects K and L at the bottom, speak bokmål more consistently (scoring 79% and 94% respectively on Figure B) than this regional standard. i.e. They speak the second type of Thelander's 3 suggested speech varieties. Subject A, fourth from the bottom, on the other hand, could be a candidate for Thelander's first type of speech variety dialect - as his scores for 'dialect' and 'regional standard' were equal at 83%.

## DISCUSSION

If any significant conclusions are to be drawn from this study, the validity of the results must be established and the reliability of the method used to obtain them justified. The interview method used is open to obvious criticism. It could be held that since it constituted a formal situation, any speech observed under such artificial conditions was virtually worthless as linguistic data, and certainly could not be used as a basis for predictions concerning the **natural** speech of any individual or group of individuals. As Labov (1972) writes:

**'To obtain the data most important  
for linguistic theory, we have to  
observe how people speak, when they  
are not being observed.'**

In the interview situation people are of course very conscious that they are being observed. This predicament then is essentially a case of the 'observer's paradox' mentioned in the METHOD, relating to style-shifting. Style-shifting occurs when the speaker, consciously or unconsciously, changes their register from their natural speech style to a different one, considered more appropriate to the particular situation. Whilst acknowledging this to a well-known problem in linguistic research I believe it to be of much less significance in this study than might otherwise be expected. The reason for this concerned people's attitudes in Norway to dialect. The great majority of Norwegians speak their own regional dialect, and seem proud of it. It is considered to be an important part of their personal identity and is an indicator of their place of origin or roots, of which most Norwegians are very proud. The dialects vary considerably up and down the country but are all essentially mutually intelligible. In addition, nowadays there is little evidence of social prestige attaching to any particular language variety (in refreshing contrast to Britain and R.P. English) and so, as there is apparently nothing to be gained under any circumstances, by speaking anything other than one's own regional dialect, people have neither the desire nor the need to do so. Consequently most people speak the dialect of their particular region very consistently, regardless of the formality or familiarity of the situation. Indeed they actually often seem incapable of modifying their speech variety even slightly. They stick to their dialect regardless. This phenomenon is known all too well to foreign learners of Norwegian. Armed with only bokmål learned in the classroom, one feels at first poorly equipped linguistically, to tackle for example the Norwegian spoken in Tromsø.



The first question that a Tromsø resident might ask you - "Where are you from?" - throws you instantly as their dialect version is:

**"Kor du e ifra?"**

as opposed to bokmål: **"Hvor er du fra?"**

Or even worse, if someone speaking another dialect wishes to know the time, they may fire the question:

**"Ka ho e?"**

rather than bokmål: **"Hva er klokka?"**

The foreign student of Norwegian, understanding nothing of this, then asks the speaker to repeat the question, but naturally enough (in the first few weeks), however well she or he has studied the Norwegian lessons (bokmål) thus far, there is no hope of being able to understand that on the first or second hearing. The continuation of this saga is significant. The Norwegian, realising that he or she has not been understood, will in my experience generally switch, NOT to a more standard language variety like bokmål, but rather to a completely different language - namely English (even though unaware that I was, by chance, English, because they were still trying to ask me where I was from!) - assuming, presumably, that newly-arrived foreigners will be more likely to understand English than Norwegian. Initially this is a frequent happening in encounters with Norwegians (except those from Oslo, whose dialect closely resembles bokmål). The point here then is that rather than switching from dialect to bokmål so that a foreigner could understand, the Norwegian speaker tends to switch to English. I am not aware of this phenomenon occurring in other countries, where the more usual reaction is to switch to a more standard speech variety, similar to that used in formal situations and with which the majority are quite familiar.

In Norway by contrast very few people (outside Oslo) are accustomed to speaking the 'standard' speech variety. Consequently it would be so false and artificial for them to try to speak bokmål, that they presumably do not ever consider it as an alternative or solution to this communication problem. After all, they are speaking Norwegian and the foreigner is not understanding. It follows therefore that the foreigner does not understand Norwegian and so the only thing to do is to try another language.

Observing the speech of young Norwegians generally, I gained the impression that very little style-shifting occurred in any situation. From all this then, I put forward the hypothesis that style-shifting is an uncommon phenomenon in Norwegian speakers, and consequently the results obtained from the interviews in this study should provide a fairly reliable guide to the natural speech of the subjects.

Having considered the method and its reliability, the actual results obtained must now be discussed.

#### The 'Fin' and 'Folkelig' Varieties.

These results were by and large as expected - the 'fin' variety closely resembling a spoken version of bokmål and the 'folkelig' variety being more similar to the surrounding rural dialects. A few responses were of particular interest. Starting with the 'fin' variety two responses given appear to be non-standard: **Gr &ve** in Q.10 and **dem** in Q.29. I presume the latter to be an error, the object form given instead of the subject form, but I have no explanation for the '**gr &ve**' response, rather than the standard 'grave'. At the opposite end of the spectrum are four responses which are rarely found in modern bokmål, as they are considered to be very dated, conservative forms. They are '**hvorleis**' instead of '**hvordan**' in Q.1., '**havene**' instead of '**hagene**' in Q.9., '**sne**' instead of '**snø**' in Q.11. and '**piker**' instead of '**jenter**' in Q.17. The reason for this, of course, is that the 'fin' variety is not based on modern bokmål but rather on riksmål, the old, very conservative predecessor of bokmål.

Moving on to the 'folkelig' variety, there was one surprising response which was '**fare**' in Q.22. This is the standard form rather than '**f &re**', the dialect form. I can offer no explanation for this and find it particularly mysterious, as the non-standard form '**gr &ve**' was given as a 'fin' form, and the two words are supposedly governed by the same morpho-phonological rule.

#### The Speech Varieties of the Teenagers.

Comparing the interview responses of the elderly pair with those of the teenagers set out in Table B, it was found as expected for this study that the youngsters appeared to use some features from the 'folkelig' variety and some from the 'fin'. (Here, 'fin' and modern bokmål may be equated as they are simply the two standard varieties current for the corresponding old and young age-groups, respectively.) Very salient forms were usually

avoided (with some exceptions discussed later). In other words subjects used a speech variety which combined mainly the less salient forms of the two extreme versions ('fin' and 'folkelig') of Tromsø dialect. Regarding this issue of extreme language varieties spoken by young or old people, Milroy (1987) discussed conflicting theories. Whilst young speakers are generally more likely to be influenced by a standard variety because of access to education and modern communications networks from a very early age, this is not always the case. Hurford (1967) investigating three generations of a London family found more Cockney features in the speech of the young people, at the expense of R.P. features. Cockney does of course have a special status of its own and its level of popularity among speakers of any particular generation will determine the extent of its usage. Although Milroy adds that more recent studies have shown that the most extreme form of an urban vernacular is found among adolescents, this is clearly not the case in this study. However, it is equally clear that Tromsø dialect, as an example of an urban vernacular, is neither typical nor uncomplicated.

The next part of the result was Table C. This table concerned the hierarchy of standardisation. i.e. the order in which dialect variants were standardised. Considering first the geographical range of each of the dialect variants the results here obtained were only partially in accord with Thelander's findings in his 1982 study in Burträsk in Northern Sweden. He writes:

**'the most powerful basis for determining the vitality of a dialect variant in present-day Burträsk would seem to be its geographical dispersion in Northern Sweden. The forms which are rarely used by Burträsk youngsters are at the same time those which are most limited geographically. Moreover the dialect phenomenon (sic) in Burträsk speech which hold their own against standard counterparts are common for most dialects in Sweden.'**

(Thelander, M. 1982)

As far as Tromsø is concerned, the analogous hypothesis seemed to hold only for variables whose dialect variants were limited to Troms. county and after that the order of standardisation seemed fairly random according to that criterion. I presume that the reason for this is that in the case of Tromsø dialect geographical dispersion is not 'the most powerful basis for

determining the vitality of a dialect variant.' So while not discounting this factor altogether, I believe rather that it is just one of a number which may play a role in determining the hierarchy of standardisation.

I turn next to possibly the most important factor in the discussion of Table C - whether or not a particular variant is socially marked. At the outset it is worth noting that Labov (1970) writing about the acquisition of standard English, claims that by the age of 14 or 15, children are aware of social markers in language. Applying this crucial assertion to my study, the subjects were presumably old enough to be conscious of the significance of using socially marked forms in their speech. A form becomes socially marked when for some reason people's awareness of that particular one is heightened. Trudgill (1982) lists factors which, in Norwich lead to greater awareness.

- '1) Greater awareness attaches to forms which are overtly stigmatised in a particular community. Very often, this overt stigmatisation is because there is a high-status variant of the stigmatised form AND this high-status variant tallies with the orthography while the stigmatised variant does not.
- 2) Greater awareness also attaches to forms that are currently involved in linguistic change.
- 3) Speakers are also more aware of variables whose variants are phonetically radically different.
- 4) Increased awareness is also attached to variables that are involved in the maintenance of phonological contrasts. Thus, in Norwich, items from the lexical set of HUGE, CUE, MUSIC, VIEW, TUNE may be pronounced with either /u:/ or /ju:/. The latter pronunciation implies a contrast in minimal pairs such as HUGH: WHO, DEW: DO, FUED: FOOD etc. The former, on the other hand, involves a loss of this contrast.'

It seems reasonable to apply these Norwich criteria to Tromsø.

Factor 1) tallies precisely with the first six of the socially marked dialect variants in Table C. They were:

/skaʃp/, /bjøʃk/, /kjæm/, /honn/, /oll/, and /foll/.

These six, all found close together at the top of the table, are 'overtly stigmatised' forms and consequently were each used by very few if any subjects. The more commonly used standard forms do indeed correspond to the written bokmål forms. (Although 'kj@m', the dialect variant, also corresponds to the orthographic forms of nynorsk - the other official written language in Norway - I consider this to be of little relevance as nynorsk is so little used in Tromsø.) So people were aware of these six forms and they are thus near the top of the hierarchy of standardisation.

The other three socially marked dialect forms in Table C seem to be of a different nature from the first six. They were:

'ikkje', 'dåkker' and '@'.

They all occur in the bottom half of the table i.e. The standardised forms are not used by most subjects. Here then the awareness factor seems to work in reverse. These dialect variants are definitely socially marked and people are very conscious of this, but rather than standardise them, the majority of subjects make a point of using them.

It appears then that there are two types of socially marked dialect variant - one which is stigmatised and so becomes standardised, and the other which presumably carries some kind of prestige and is thus retained and consistently used in its dialect form. This phenomenon prompts me to offer a hypothesis concerning the social attitudes towards dialects, bokmål and urban language varieties, in Norway. I suggest that the theory described by Trudgill (1983) about the **overt prestige** of R.P. English (a standard speech variety) and **covert prestige** of a local non-standard variety, is in fact **reversed** in the Tromsø dialect situation under investigation.

Overt prestige of a speech variety means that people very consciously try to speak that variety, usually in order to gain some social advantage, associated with it. Covert prestige, on the other hand, usually concerns a sub-conscious (but no less effectual) desire to speak a particular speech variety. In Britain, as in many countries, there is overt prestige of a standard (R.P. English for Britain) because it is considered to be a sign of good up-bringing or high social status. Covert prestige usually relates to local non-standard speech varieties which are not openly encouraged in the same way as R.P. English for instance, but which nevertheless are frequently spoken by people of lower social status. For them the non-standard speech variety serves as an important mark of their social identity and also conveys a sense of loyalty to a particular social group.

While the foregoing may describe the situation in Britain, I believe it to be totally different in Norway for two main reasons, the first of which concerned the attitudes towards dialects now in the late 1980s in Norway; which was outlined earlier in this DISCUSSION. The climate of opinion is warmly in favour of speaking regional dialect, it being regarded as an integral part of one's cultural and geographical identity. Thus a dialect in Norway unites all people from one area or region, regardless of their social status, and makes a distinction between them and people from other areas. In other words, speaking dialect in Norway indicates only one's place of origin or geographical background, whereas in Britain speaking dialect indicates first and foremost one's social background, the geographical origin being considered of much less importance, even though it may be recognised. So in Norway the use of local non-standard speech varieties is positively encouraged and people openly declare that their dialect is a vital part of their personal identity, i.e. **there is overt prestige of regional dialects**. Secondly the attitude towards the main national standard, bokmål, is that it is somewhat unacceptable, among young people at least, to use a speech variety resembling bokmål, unless of course the speaker is from Oslo in which case it is in fact their regional dialect. It is however, a commonly recognised fact that a feature of town dialects throughout Norway is a tendency for there to be more bokmål forms than are found in surrounding rural dialects. Thus to indicate that one is from a town and not a rural community, one should maintain the element of bokmål influence in one's speech while at the same time avoiding marked or salient bokmål forms, so that one is not heard to be ostentatiously trying to speak a standard bokmål variety. I propose then that **the standard bokmål has covert prestige in Tromsø** and perhaps other towns also, as an indicator of loyalty to a town speech variety, as opposed to a rural one i.e. **as a geographical indicator, not a social one as in Britain**. So to conclude I believe that there is overt prestige of non-standard regional dialects in Norway and covert prestige of the standard bokmål in Tromsø and possibly other towns also.

This hypothesis can be applied to the Table C results. The first six of the socially marked variants were stigmatised and therefore obvious cases for standardisation. I would attribute most of the remaining bokmål forms to the covert prestige mentioned above. That is not to say that it is exactly a sub-conscious process, but rather that the forms are a little less obvious. Such dialect forms are excellent candidates for standardisation due to covert prestige. The better known and more commonly used dialect forms such as the socially marked 'd, dækker, ikkje' cannot be standardised for that very reason. They are obvious, popular, salient

features in the dialect which must be retained. Thus there occurs subtle standardisation of less common or less salient dialect features (to indicate unostentatiously that one is speaking a town language variety as opposed to a rural one) and simultaneously there is strict retention and preservation of the more obvious dialect features (to proclaim loudly that one is speaking dialect and would not dream of speaking the standard bokmål).

It is worth noting at this point the results of Figure D - the graph plotting social status against percentage of bokmål forms used - to support the above hypothesis. Even excluding the two very high bokmål scores on the graph there appears to be no correlation between the bokmål score and social status. Consequently it can reasonably be assumed that there is no social advantage associated with speaking the standard bokmål. This is in stark contrast to the situation in Britain where there is a very definite correlation between social status and number of standard forms used in speech, and where, as a result, it is considered to be socially advantageous to speak the standard variety.

It is also relevant here to point out that the subjects were not too young to distinguish between and recognise the significance of different patterns of variation in speech. Labov (1970) postulates six stages in the acquisition of standard English in relation to the findings of some of the major urban sociolinguistic studies in the United States. Stage 3 he labels 'Social Perception'. At this stage beginning in early adolescence, he claims that the child begins to recognise the significance of different vernacular patterns. By the age of 14 or 15, he suggests that children begin to respond to subjective reaction tests in conformity with the adult norms. Further Romaine (1984) writes that:

**'Various studies have shown that patterns of phonological variation correlated with social class are no less characteristic of children's than of adult's speech'.**

The point here is that the lack of social differentiation with regard to the bokmål scores (shown in Figure D) can not be attributed to the age of the subjects. If there had been any such stratification, it would have been apparent.

Returning to Trudgill's criteria for determining why people become aware of certain variants which are then consequently vulnerable to change, insight is gained into some of the apparent inconsistencies in the hierarchy of

standardisation in Table C. There are three groups of puzzling results in the table, each of which concerns a set of variables whose changes from dialect to bokmål forms involve exactly the same phonological rules. Therefore one would expect that there would be consistent standardisation within each group. This, however, was not always the case. The first group were:

DIALECT	BOKMÅL
dr <del>æ</del> ge	drage
gr <del>æ</del> ve	grave
f <del>æ</del> re	fare

Although the variation is governed by the same phonological rule, /~~æ~~/ → /a/. there is the obvious additional phonetic difference of the 'ge' being dropped in the case of 'dr ~~æ~~ ge' 'dra'. This fairly large phonetic difference is presumably what was responsible for the increased awareness and hence standardisation of this variable by all subjects. At the other extreme the dialect form 'f ~~æ~~ re' was the only form obtained in responses for the 'f ~~æ~~ re/fare' variable. Often no response was given at all for this variable, probably because, as one subject told me "It's not a word I use at all. It's out of date and only old people use it." I was previously unaware of that. So assuming it to be the case that the word is now seldom used, it was perhaps already out of current usage by the time the standardisation process began, so its dialect form has been preserved. Therefore if a response was given for this variable at all, it was the dialect form from the 'foilkelig' variety, because although it is only heard among older people it will be the dialect variety that is most commonly heard as there are more speakers of the 'folkelig' than of the 'fin' speech variety. The results for 'grave/gr ~~æ~~ ve' were not of particular note.

The next group of inconsistent results were:

DIALECT	BOKMÅL
/full/	full
/ull/	ull
/hunn/	hund

There was a substantial difference between the scores for the first two ('full' and 'ull') and the third one ('hund'). The dialect variants of the first two were standardised less than that of the third one. The rule governing this variation is simply to change a palatal to a dental.



Palatal 'n' however is more phonetically different from the dental than is palatal 'l', so while it can hardly be described as 'phonetically **radically** different' as in Trudgill's third criteria for increased awareness of a variant, I suspect that the degree of this difference may account for its comparatively high position in the table.

The third group of results of interest are:

DIALECT	BOKMÅL
<b>gidd</b>	<b>gitt</b>
<b>gådd</b>	<b>gått</b>
<b>sedd</b>	<b>sett</b>
<b>stådd</b>	<b>stått</b>

The first variable had a majority of bokmål responses and I tentatively postulate the theory, strange as it may seem considering the other scores, that this example in fact represents the general pattern for the whole group of variables governed by this particular 'dd'→'tt' rule. My explanation for this is two-fold. Firstly I see no reason why the results for the 'gidd→gitt' variable should not be considered typical, and secondly I believe there is evidence to suggest that the other three results above are exceptions. This evidence has clear similarities to Trudgill's fourth criteria regarding awareness of markers. To repeat he writes that:

**'increased awareness is also attached to variables that are involved in the maintenance of phonological contrasts.'**

He goes on to give examples from Norwich where the use of certain dialect variants results in a loss of phonological contrast, whilst the use of the standard variants sustains the contrast. I suggest that this may also work in the opposite direction. That is to say that by using a dialect variant one is maintaining a phonological contrast which would be **lost** if the standard variant were to be used instead. I believe this to be the case with the last three of the above-mentioned variables. Considering then the bokmal 'tt'-ending variants:

**'gått sett and stått',**

they are in fact all pronounced virtually or exactly identically to three other words:

**'godd sett and stott'.**

'Godd' is an adverb or adjective meaning 'well' or 'good', 'sett' is also the imperative form of the verb 'å sette', meaning 'to place' or 'put', and 'stott' is the imperative form of the verb 'å stotte' meaning 'to stutter'. So when the standard 'tt' endings are used, this involves a loss of phonological contrast with the above-mentioned words, whereas when the dialect 'dd' endings are used, this phonological contrast is maintained. The actual scores obtained for these variables, while supporting the above hypothesis, are not particularly conclusive, perhaps because there is the general tendency to standardise all the relevant 'dd' past participle endings, and yet this problem of maintaining the phonological contrasts is met immediately here because of the common occurrence of these words. This may lead to uncertainty as to which form to use.

The next results to be discussed are in Figure B. The graph shows the individual bokmål scores for each subject and compares the scores of the four groups:

- BT - boys whose parents were from Tromsø
- GT - girls whose parents were from Tromsø
- BNT - boys whose parents were not from Tromsø originally
- GNT - girls whose parents were not from Tromsø originally

I suggest that all subjects were speaking a regional dialect but the two very high bokmål scorers from the BNT group were speaking a different one from all the others. While all the rest were speaking Tromsø dialect those two were speaking Oslo dialect, which of course happens to coincide with bokmål. This coincidence could confuse the issue with some NT subjects because it is impossible to distinguish between features adopted from the parents' Oslo dialect which signify failure to accommodate to Tromsø dialect, and features of bokmål which just happen to have overtaken or be in the process of overtaking the Tromsø dialect features. In the case of those two Oslo dialect speakers, however, there is no confusion as their speech is clearly not Tromsø dialect but rather a consistent Oslo speech variety. This variety is easily distinguishable due to the renowned sing-song melody in the intonation patterns, which is so prominent that it is clearly audible and recognisable even to the untrained ear. As expected the parents of the two subjects were all from Oslo. The interesting thing here is why subject 'I', also from group BNT, whose parents also were both

from Oslo, has such a low bokmål score, the lowest of the BNT group, in fact. He is clearly not speaking Oslo dialect (at school at least), but Tromsø dialect. I would hazard a guess that he is bi-dialectal, speaking Tromsø dialect at school and Oslo dialect at home with his parents. It is very curious that he has picked up Tromsø dialect so successfully while the other two have not. It would be fascinating (although perhaps out of the field) to explore this topic further, to find out exactly why there is such variation and which factors are important in determining whether a child adopts the local regional standard or her/his parents' regional standard, if the two are very different. Factors which may be involved are:

- 1) whether the child in his/her early years spent much time with the parents, or whether he/she was in the care of a (local dialect speaking) child-minder, as very many children are, in Norway.
- 2) the confidence of the child.
- 3) the intelligence of the child.
- 4) the quality of the child's relationship with the parents.

Turning now to the bar charts in Figure C it is worth mentioning again how the score of the two above-mentioned Oslo dialect speakers have weighted all the results heavily in the bokmål direction. If those two had been excluded, Figure C would have shown that:

- a) the BNT group would still be the highest average scoring group of the four.
- b) the males would then have a lower average bokmål score than the females.
- c) the NT group would still have a higher (although greatly reduced) average bokmål score than the T group.

Below are listed hypothetical predications, A), B) and C), (corresponding to a), b) and c) above) of the results supposing the study had been carried out under the social conditions prevailing in Britain.

- A) The ranking order of the average bokmål scores of the four groups, highest first, would be:

GNT

BNT

GT

BT

- B) The males' average bokmål score would be lower than that of the females.
- C) The NTs' average bokmål score would be higher than that of the Ts.

It is of interest to consider the grounds for these predictions and to compare them to a), b) and c) and the actual results obtained.

The justification for prediction A) becomes apparent in the discussion of B) and C). Comparing A) with the actual results and a) (the results after exclusion of the two Oslo dialect speakers), it is found that the two sets of results do not agree with the prediction - the BNT group are still the highest scorers, rather than the GNT group as predicted. I suggest that the reason for this is that even a) may not be a very reliable result because only two subjects were then being considered in the BNT group. A glance at Figure B makes this argument clearer. Comparing only the two lowest BNT scores with the four GNT scores, it can be seen that the ranges covered differ by only 1%. I suggest that if there had been two more Tromsø dialect speaking BNT subjects, their scores would probably have been low enough to reduce the average score for the group to below that of the GNT group, and thus to produce the agreement with the predicted result.

In connection with prediction B), Romaine (1984) has written that:

**'All studies of sex differentiation in speech show that boys tend to use more local non-standard forms than girls, as with adults.'**

The corollary to this is that boys tend to use fewer standard forms than girls. This well-established sociolinguistic theory seems to hold for the average bokmål score for each sex in this study also, provided that the two Oslo dialect speakers have been excluded, as in b). The motivation for this phenomenon in Britain, however, is almost certainly different from that in Tromsø. In Britain it concerns social advantage and attitudes

towards women in society (discussed further under Figure D). In this study in Tromsø, on the other hand, I tentatively speculate that it involves differences between the sexes concerning the regard with which they view their place of origin being a town rather than a rural area. I suggest that women may pay more attention to this fact, and so use more bokmål forms in speech than men. This obviously requires further investigation with a much larger number of subjects.

The prediction C) that the NT group would score more highly than the T group, was based on the assumption that the NT group, having had less exposure to Tromsø dialect (none in the home) would be less likely to have full command of it, than the T group, and would thus, if in doubt, perhaps tend to use more standard forms. The extent to which it is possible to learn a new language variety depends on a number of factors, and in Tromsø the situation is further complicated by the general influence of bokmål on the dialect. Romaine (1984) comments that:

**'From the studies available so far it appears that the constraints on learning are partly linguistic and partly social. That is, given a certain model to which one has access, assimilation of it is constrained by linguistic, biological and social factors. Among the relevant linguistic factors would be the extent of alteration required to one's own pattern of linguistic behaviour. Where only minimal moderations are required learning is likely to be successful.'**

Whilst only 'biological and social constraints' can account for the differences between the three subjects whose parents were all from Oslo, it is 'linguistic constraints' which are more commonly cited as the cause of incomplete accommodation to a particular speech variety. The complexity of the phonological adjustment is responsible for the degree of success in acquiring a particular feature. Trudgill (1982) discusses this matter with regard to a study in Norwich. Looking at a rather complex feature in the Norwich phonological system he notes:

**'Of the ten (informants) with non-Norwich parents, none produced the correct response.'**

He continues:

**'speakers are not capable of acquiring the correct underlying phonological distinction unless they are**

exposed to it from the very beginning, before they themselves have even begun to speak. Exposure to it in the speech of their peers from the age of four or five is, surprising as this may seem, not sufficient.'

Payne (1980) also discusses this matter and has found similar results. Returning to the situation in Tromsø, it had been hoped that this study would have revealed some similar kinds of results as those above. No such conclusive results were obtained, however, for two reasons. Firstly the study was probably not of sufficient depth to uncover such findings, and secondly it is rather tricky to examine any particular Tromsø dialect feature at the present time, as Tromsø dialect has been (and may well still be) going through a transitional stage in its development, where old dialect features are competing with new standard features causing a rather unstable dialect situation.

I now resume and extend the discussion of Figure D - the graph plotting social status against the percentage of bokmål forms for each subject, with sex indicated. It is again of interest to compare and refer to the corresponding results one would expect to obtain from such a study carried out in Britain. A clear correlation between social status and the number of standard forms used would be anticipated. In addition there would be a relationship between sex of the subject, social status and the number of standard forms used, described by Trudgill (1974) as follows:

**'Women approximate more closely than men  
of similar social status to the prestige  
norm.'**

These two expected results (from a British study) were virtually negated in the Tromsø study as the graph shows. This I did not find particularly surprising as I believe that it reflects three special features of Norwegian society. Firstly social status differences are at the present time much smaller in Norway than in many countries including Britain. Norway has a very high standard of living and is truly a welfare state, the majority of people being of similar social status. This is indicated by the fact that the middle 80% of the wage-earning population in Norway earn between approximately 100,000 and 200,000 Norwegian Kroner (approximately £10,000 - £20,000) per annum. (These figures were obtained from Tromsø Ligningskontor or tax office.) This relatively small ratio is I presume a major factor involved in maintaining the level of social equality in the country. A generation ago there were in Tromsø at least, larger social differences within the population and these differences were marked in the

'fin' and 'folkelig' language varieties used. While younger Tromsø residents are aware of the previous common existence of those two old varieties and their social significance, they resolutely deny the existence of any such varieties today. The only thing one's dialect reveals is one's place of origin. In Britain of course there is an entirely different situation. The social differences within society are greater and more deeply entrenched. The middle 80% of wage-earners in Britain earn between £5,400 and £17,400 per annum (New Earnings Survey 1988). Further and as previously mentioned, one particular language variety, R.P. English, is associated with high social status. As a result, socially aspiring people may try to modify their natural speech variety to include more R.P. English forms. This contrasts with the second special feature of Norwegian society. As already outlined it is considered snobbish and old-fashioned to markedly modify one's speech for social reasons in such a manner. As little as twenty years ago it may have been the case that Oslo dialect was a socially prestigious language variety towards which people attempted to converge in order to gain social advantage, but now this is really no longer the case. Therefore in Norway today I consider it to be most improbable that one's speech variety serves as an indicator of one's social status. This, I believe, is precisely why the graph in Figure D provides no striking results.

The third special feature of Norwegian society concerns attitudes towards women. Looking first at the position of women in Britain it is still the case that there is a sad lack of social equality between men and women - women occupying a minute percentage of top jobs, women still often being expected to stay at home with the children, and if they do work, being usually employed in the lower-paid jobs. Women are generally thought, by sociolinguists, to be more aware than men of the social implications of particular speech varieties. This is perhaps because they feel that their job or lack of one does not serve to give them the social identity they would like and so they attempt to remedy this by converging towards R.P. English. Men, on the other hand, tend not to exhibit such behaviour, presumably because they feel that their job largely defines their social identity. That then is the suggested explanation of why, as stated earlier, 'women approximate more closely than men of similar social status to the prestige norm.' By contrast in Norway there is much more equality between the sexes. This is due partly at least to the existence of laws and policies of positive discrimination in order to encourage women into employment and out of the home, with top jobs and important positions in society being accessible. i.e. to generally aid the process of raising the social status of women until they are on a level with men. This objective appears to have been largely achieved. For example, out of the sixteen

mothers of the subjects in this study, only one was not in employment. Thus the factor of social motivation for women to modify their speech in the direction of a prestige standard, as in Britain, would be most unlikely to hold for women in Norway. (Disregarding the variable of social status, however, a relation may hold between the sex of the subject and the number of bokmål forms used, as discussed earlier.) It would be very interesting to put these theories to the test in a further investigation with a larger group of subjects.

Consideration of Table D involved the possible relation between social status and places of origin of the parents. Whilst it might have been expected that non-Tromsø parents had higher education and therefore higher social status than Tromsø parents, this was obviously not the case for all of them. Conversely a generation earlier there had been a definite distinction in Tromsø between the ordinary fishing folk and an upper-class who had high social status which may have been passed down through families. So anyway, as shown in the table, this relation does not seem to hold and even if it did, it would probably be of little linguistic significance due to the lack of a relation between social status and bokmål scores, as shown in Figure D.

#### The Regional Standard

The regional standard found from the results imposes some form of order on what might otherwise have seemed a somewhat inconclusive study. This Tromsø regional standard, a bokmål-influenced dialect variety derived from the old 'folkelig' variety of Tromsø dialect, was consistently used by 14 of the 16 subjects, as shown by the scores in Table F. It would be interesting to investigate whether the transitional phase in the development of Tromsø dialect has now been largely completed with the emergence of this regional standard. To conduct a similar study in perhaps ten years time, would show whether still more bokmål forms had been adopted, or whether the present variety had in fact become stabilised.



## CONCLUSION

The overall picture of Tromsø dialect as spoken by teenagers today, shows that it is comprised of features from the old 'folkelig' version of Tromsø dialect and from bokmål. The adoption of the bokmål features does not reflect convergence back towards the old 'fin' version of Tromsø dialect (as that was based on the old standard, riksmål) but rather towards the modern standard. bokmål. The results provide clear evidence that today's Tromsø dialect constitutes a regional standard which was very consistently spoken by 14 of the 16 informants in the study, (the other 2 speaking Oslo dialect). The speech of the 14 teenagers was in fact so uniform that there was little conclusive evidence of variation within the group, according to the variables of sex, social status of the parents and place of origin of the parents. The small number of subjects, however, makes these conclusions tentative at best. If further studies in greater depth but less breadth were to be carried out, each variable could be separately examined for larger groups of subjects. The differences hypothesized earlier could then be tested.

The apparent lack of style-shifting, which was a crucial factor in the design of this study, would certainly merit further investigation.

## APPENDIX 1

The questionnaire distributed to the pupils at the school.

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Vær så snill å svare på så mange spørsmål som mulig. Ta skjemaet hjem hvis du ikke vet svarene sjøl, men lever det inn så snart som mulig.

Navn:

Fødselsdato:

Adresse:

Gutt  eller jente

Hvor lenge har du bodd der?

Hvis du har bodd på forskjellige plasser, både inn og utenfor Tromsø, skriv hvor du har bodd, og når du bodde på hvert sted.

Hvor kommer foreldrene dine fra? Hvis de har bodd på forskjellige plasser, både inn og utenfor Tromsø, skriv hvor de har bodd og når de bodde på hvert sted.

Hva slags dialect snakker de?

MOR

FAR

Foreldrenes yrke:

mor:

far:

Har du noen ide om hva du skal bli?

APPENDIX 2

Translation of the interview. The words highlighted in the responses, are those words in which I was interested.

1. You are in town and you meet a friend of yours. You greet her. Ask her if she is well. Use a question word.

Response: **How** are you?

- 2 What should a knife be like, so that it cuts well?

Response: **sharp**

- 3 If something is very humorous, how do you describe it?

Response: **funny.**

- 4 If people have drunk too much alcohol, then they are .....

Response: **drunk.**

- 5 Why is 21st January a special day in Tromsø?

Response: Because the **sun** comes back after the 'dark period'.

- 6 What kind of pets are popular in Norway?

Response: **Dogs.**

- 7 What sort of thing do you get from sheep? What colour is it usually?

Response: **Wool. White.**

- 8 What sort of fruit grows on trees in Norway?

Response: **Apples.**

9 Do you have flowers at home? Where do they grow? Are there pretty gardens in your road? Is there grass in all of them? Answer using a whole sentence.

Response: Yes. In **the garden**. Yes/No. Yes, there is grass in all **the gardens**.

10 When people work in the garden in the summer, what do they use a spade for?

Response: For digging (in Norwegian: For to **dig**.)

11 Why can they not dig the soil in the winter?

Response: Because there is so much **snow** on top.

12 Can you use other words to say: "My fingers **got cold**?"

Response: My fingers **were freezing**.

13 What kind of trees are found in Tromsø?

Response: **Birch** trees.

14 Can you use other words to say that the old tree has **been** there for many years?

Response: It has **stood** there for many years.

15 You have some apples that you put on the table, and some bananas that you put in the cupboard. Then your brother comes and asks you what you have done with the fruit. What do you reply?

Response: I have put **the apples** on the table and **the bananas** in the cupboard.

16 What do you call young men?

Response: **boys**.

17 What do you call young ladies?

Response: **girls.**

18 There are both girls and boys in your class, aren't there?

Who are the cleverest?

Response: **The girls**

19 What do you call these? (pointing to my boots).

And I have them on my .....

Responses: **Boots. Feet ('the' feet, in Norwegian).**

20 If you meet some foreigners, what might you ask them?

Response: **Where they come from.**

21 What do you do when you are not awake?

Response: **I sleep.**

22 Can you think of two other words for 'to travel'?

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

23 What do you do with a book?

Response: **I read it.**

24 If you have received a record from a friend, then he has .....it to you.

Response: **given.**

25 If you went to town one day, and then somebody came to visit you, after you had left the house, what would your mother say to the friend who has come? She would say: "He/She has.....to town."

Response: **gone.**

26 If you are looking for your jacket, you might ask if anyone has ..... it.

Response: **seen.**

27 Can you think of another expression for 'to be happy'?

Response: to enjoy **oneself.**

28 Can you ask me whether I am happy in Tromsø? Use the other expression.

Response: Are you enjoying **yourself** in Tromsø?

29 Can you ask me whether those people over there, are happy in Tromsø?

Response: Are **they** enjoying **themselves** in Tromsø?

30 Can you ask whether we are all happy in Tromsø?

Response: Are **you** all enjoying **yourselves** in Tromsø?

31 Are you happy in Tromsø?

Response: Yes, I am enjoying **myself** in Tromsø.

32 If I had a bowl with sugar in it and you wanted to know if I had used up all the sugar, you could ask me: "Is there any sugar left?" And if I had indeed used up all the sugar, I would reply: "No, there is.... sugar left".

Response: **no/not** any.

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