

Received 21 December 2021

Accepted 9 December 2022

Published March 2023

DOI: 10.1344/DIALECTOLOGIA2022.2022.10

NORWEGIAN DIALECT CLASSIFICATIONS

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Abstract

From the mid 19th century, there is a tradition of classifying the dialects spoken in Norway on the basis of linguistic features that show the different developments of Norwegian dialects in time and space after the Old Norse period. Most of these features are phonological or morpho-phonological. The most prevalent theoretical background has been historical-comparative linguistics. Eight different classifications are presented, starting with a division into three main dialect areas (Aasen 1848); scholars later proposed a division into two (Ross 1905, Larsen 1897, Kolsrud 1951, Skjekkeland 1997), four (Christiansen 1954, Mæhlum & Røyneland 2012) and even twelve dialect areas (Sandøy 1985). Some of these classifications build upon each other, others take a more original approach incorporating insights from structuralism and sociolinguistics. The possibilities to renew the tradition of dialect classification by introducing other linguistic and extra linguistic factors, are discussed at the end of the article.

Keywords: historical-comparative linguistics, classification based on isoglosses, structuralism, sociolinguistics, dialects, Norwegian

Name: Norsk [nɔʊsk], [nɔʂk]

ISO 639-1: no, ISO 639-2: nor

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CLASSIFICACIONS DIALECTALS DEL NORUEC

Resum

Des de mitjan segle XIX, hi ha una tradició de classificar els dialectes parlats a Noruega en funció de les característiques lingüístiques que mostren els diferents desenvolupaments dels dialectes noruecs en el temps i en l'espai després del període del nòrdic antic. La majoria d'aquestes característiques són fonològiques o morfofonològiques. El marc teòric més prevalent ha estat el de la lingüística historicocomparativa. Es presenten vuit classificacions diferents, començant amb una divisió en tres àrees dialectals principals (Aasen 1848); els estudiosos van proposar més tard una divisió en dues (Ross 1905, Larsen 1897, Kolsrud 1951, Skjekkeland 1997), quatre (Christiansen Mæneland 1954 & Røyneland 1954). 2012) i fins i tot dotze àrees dialectals (Sandøy 1985). Algunes d'aquestes classificacions es relacionen, d'altres adopten un enfocament més original que incorporen aspectes de l'estructuralisme i la sociolingüística. Al final de l'article es comenten les possibilitats de renovar la tradició de la classificació dialectal introduint-hi altres factors lingüístics i extralingüístics.

Paraules clau: lingüística historicocomparativa, classificació basada en isoglosses, estructuralisme, sociolingüística, dialectes, noruec

INDELING AV NORSKE DIALEKTER

Sammendrag

Fra midten av 1800-tallet har det vært tradisjon for å dele inn norske dialekter ut fra språktrekk som viser utviklingen av dialektene i tid og rom etter gammelnorsk tid. De fleste av disse språktrekkene er fonologiske eller morfofonologiske. Den mest fremtredende teoretiske bakgrunnen har vært historisk-komparativ språkvitenskap. Åtte ulike inndelingsmåter presenteres. Først kommer en inndeling i tre hoveddialektområder (Aasen 1848), videre ble en todeling foreslått av flere forskere (Ross, 1905; Larsen, 1897; Kolsrud, 1951; Skjekkeland, 1997). Dagens vanlige inndeling i fire ble foreslått av Christiansen (1954), og videreført av Mæhlum & Røyneland (2012), men også tolv dialektområder har vært foreslått (Sandøy, 1985). Noen av disse inndelingene bygger på hverandre, andre har en mer selvstendig tilnærming påvirket fra strukturalisme og sosiolingvistik. Mulighetene for å fornye dialektinndelingstradisjonen ved å ta i bruk alternative språklige og ikke-språklige variabler, blir diskutert mot slutten av artikkelen.

Stikkord: historisk-komparativ språkvitenskap, inndeling på grunnlag av isoglosser, strukturalisme, sosiolingvistik, dialekter, norsk

INDELING AV NORSKE DIALEKTAR

Samandrag

Frå midten av 1800-tallet har det vore tradisjon for å dela inn norske dialektar ut frå språktrekk som viser utviklinga av dialektane i tid og rom etter gammalnorsk tid. Dei fleste av desse språktrekka er fonologiske eller morfofonologiske. Den mest framtrèdande teoretiske bakgrunnen har vore historisk-komparativ språkvitenskap. Åtte ulike inndelingsmåtar vert presenterte. Først kjem ei inndeling i tre hovuddialektområde (Aasen 1848), vidare vart ei todeling foreslått av fleire forskarar (Ross 1905; Larsen 1897; Kolsrud 1951; Skjekkeland 1997). Dagens vanlege inndeling i fire vart foreslått av Christiansen (1954), og videreført av Mæhlum & Røyneland (2012), men også tolv dialektområde har vore foreslått (Sandøy, 1985). Nokre av desse inndelingane byggjer på kvarandre, andre har ei meir sjølvstendig tilnærming påverka frå strukturalisme og sosiolingvistik. Mot slutten av artikkelen vert ei fornying av

tradisjonen dialektklassifisering står i gjennom å introdusere andre lingvistiske og ekstralingvistiske faktorer diskuterte.

Stikkord: historisk-komparativ språkvitenskap, inndeling på grunnlag av isoglossar, strukturalisme, sociolingvistikk, dialektar, norsk

1. Introduction

Norwegian (Norsk) is a North Germanic language, and it is the official language of Norway, a country in the Northern part of Europe (Map 1). The country is large, 385,207 km², but the built-up area covers only 2 % of this. In 2021, Norway has 5,402,171 inhabitants, approximately 90% of these have Norwegian as their mother tongue. This paper deals with the Norwegian dialects, but first we will look at the multilingual situation in Norway, the areas outside Norway where Norwegian has been used, and the sociolinguistic status of the dialects today.



Map 1. Political map of Norway

1.1 Multilingualism in Norway

The languages Sami, Kven, Romanes and Romani are recognized regional or minority languages in Norway. They are protected through the Council of Europe's charter on regional or minority languages, and it is a goal of Norwegian language policy to take care of the national minority languages. The goal is anchored in several reports to/by the *Storting*, in Norwegian laws and regulations and in international agreements.

Sami is the largest of the minority languages. Three varieties of Sami are spoken and written in Norway: Northern Sami, Lule Sami and Southern Sami. All in all, approximately 50,000 have one of the Sami varieties as their mother tongue. Only Northern Sami has areas where it is the majority language. In two municipalities in Finnmark, north in Norway, about 90% of the inhabitants speak Sami. A separate paper in this series will be devoted to Sami dialect classifications.

Another minority language, also regionally distributed to the north, is Kven. Kven is a dialect of Finnish, which, like Sami, is a Finnish-Ugrian language. Between 2000 and 8000 people speak Kven.

The third national minority language consists of Romanes and Romani. They are both Indo-Arian languages, heavily influenced by Norwegian grammar. However, Romanes has more of the traditional, Indian features than Romani (Norwegian Language Council).

Users of newer minority languages do not have the same sociolinguistic rights as users of the national minority languages. There are more than 150 newer minority languages in Norway. Some of the most commonly used are Polish, Somali, Arabic, Lithuanian and German (Norwegian Language Council).

1.2 Norwegian outside Norway – and the relationship to its linguistic neighbours

In earlier periods Norwegian has been used by a great number of emigrants from Norway. During the Viking age (800-1050 AD), Norwegians, together with Danish and Swedish Vikings, immigrated to England, Scotland and the islands in the north. Still, certain lexical items in English, like *they*, *crawl*, *fellow* from Old Norse *þeirr*, *krafla*, *félagi* are reminders of the Vikings. In the areas where the Scandinavian settlements were dense, a large part of the place names have Scandinavian origin. Iceland was settled at the same time, and since the island was sparsely populated, Old Norse had no competition and became the language of Iceland, which in 1944 became an independent state, after having been colonized by first Norway, later Denmark.

Up until the 16th century, the areas Jämtland, Härjedalen and Båhuslän were parts of Norway. After Sweden conquered these areas, they have been Swedish. And even though the dialects of these areas still have much in common with the Norwegian dialects on the other side of the national border, standardisation has led them more in the direction of Swedish during the last centuries.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, as many as 800,000 Norwegians emigrated to the United States, and Norwegian served as a community language in many villages in the West. Only after WWII did the decline in the use of heritage Norwegian start.

Norwegian is related to the Scandinavian languages Swedish and Danish, the Nordic languages Icelandic and Faroese, and the West Germanic languages English, Dutch and German. Whether Norwegian, Danish and Swedish should rather be classified as three dialects than as three languages, is more of a sociolinguistic than a linguistic question. In historical classifications of the Scandinavian language area, the division between East Scandinavian and West Scandinavian goes through Norway, with East Norwegian, Swedish and Danish counted as East Scandinavian; and West Norwegian, sometimes including Icelandic and Faroese, as West Scandinavian.

1.3 The sociolinguistic situation today

Norwegian is divided into two written standards, called Bokmål 'book language' (used by approximately 90%) and Nynorsk 'new Norwegian'. There is no clear connection between dialect and written standard, but Nynorsk is mostly used in the Southwest. Norwegian lacks an official spoken standard. Only the written standards are codified; however, the liberty to choose from different spellings is large. Norwegians, not dependent on socioeconomic backgrounds, speak their dialect in all domains, official and non-official. For non-native Norwegians trying to learn the language, this is often a challenge (Strzyż 2013), but the cultural and political climate in Norway does not favour speech standardization. Still, regionalisation and mobilization has also reached Norway, so for every generation, more speakers accommodate to linguistic features similar to those used in the capital, Oslo.

Norwegian dialects are considered to be mutually intelligible. However, as Chambers and Trudgill (1998: 3-4) discuss, this may not be based solely on linguistic factors. Rather, the high status that dialects enjoy in Norway, leading them to be exposed in all domains, has resulted into «reseptiv elastisitet» ‘receptive elasticity’ (Hårstad 2021: 34-35). With this term, Hårstad points to an overall capacity to understand other dialects, including (standard) Danish and (standard) Swedish.

The different classifications of Norwegian have never had intelligibility as a starting point, rather, the divisions have been based on linguistic features that show the different developments of Norwegian dialects after the Old Norse period – or in other words – after the Black Death of 1349-1350.

2. Classifications

This section contains the different classifications of the Norwegian dialects that have been presented in the 20th and 21st century: Aasen (1848), Ross (1905-1909), Larsen (1897), Christiansen (1946-1949), Kolsrud (1951), Sandøy (1985), Skjekkeland (1997, 2005) and Mæhlum & Røyneland (2012).

2.1 Ivar Aasen (1848)

Ivar Aasen (1813-1896) carried out the first scientific investigation of Norwegian dialects (Sandøy 1985, 2013). He is also – it seems - the only linguist in Norway that all Norwegians have heard of. He was autodidact in several languages, and at a relatively young age developed a fully developed grammar of his own dialect, *Sunnmørsmålet*. Later, he obtained grants to investigate all Norwegian dialects with the aim to create a written language. This should be a national, Norwegian language that was meant to be used alongside or instead of the Danish written standard that was used in Norway at the time. After the High Middle Ages, the Scandinavian countries were connected in different unions, but by 1500, Scandinavia was divided into two: Sweden and Denmark-

Norway. The capital of Denmark-Norway was Copenhagen, and the written language developed there, came to be used – with some regional variation – all over the state. As standardization became an issue, Norwegians wrote increasingly more similar to those in Denmark. When the union was dissolved in 1814, a nation building process began, influenced by the romantic ideals of the time. One of the slogans were «One nation – one language», and several Norwegians were interested in creating a new Norwegian language with a clear linguistic distance to Danish.

In 1848 Aasen's *Det norske Folkesprogs Grammatik* 'Grammar of the Norwegian people's language' was published, and here he launched his classification of Norwegian dialects. His aim in this book was to show to which degree the grammatical and phonetic patterns had similarities across the different dialects. In 1873, he published a dictionary, *Norsk Ordbog*, where the vocabulary of the Norwegian dialects was given an orthographic and morphological form in line with Aasens grammar.

2.1.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology and historical-comparative linguistics

In historical-comparative research it was an essential idea that in order to reach understanding of the nature of a phenomenon, one needed to investigate the origin of the same phenomenon. For linguistics, this led to a large and meticulous work to establish so called language families, and to trace these families back to the mother language of all languages. Aasen had already acquainted himself with these theories before he started collecting dialect evidence. He can be firmly placed within comparative dialectology, influenced by Rasmus Rask, Jacob Grimm and Franz Bopp (Venås 1998: 69-70).

As mentioned, Aasen's task was to create a written language, and his perspective was that the modern dialects, to a larger or lesser degree, were reflections of the old language, used in the Middle Ages before the emergence of the Danish-Norwegian union. Aasen therefore compared Norwegian along two dimensions. First, the geographic dimension where he compared sounds, derivation, and vocabulary in the different dialects. In addition, he compared the language along a historical dimension,

in which he studied which of the dialect features resembled the old language the most. His aim was to create a dialect-free Pan Norwegian. This was an ideal language that represented a Norwegian as it would have been if the political circumstances had been different. He wanted to bridge a 400-year linguistic gap of written Norwegian in order to eliminate the traces the Danish reign had left on Norwegian. This did not mean that dialect features that he mapped by travelling across large parts of Norway, were given all those room in his written language. Basically, he did not include phonological features that had developed in dialects after 1500. But he did recognise the morphological changes that had developed before 1500 – so his new language had a simpler morphological system than Old Norse (ON). An overview of the main linguistic features Aasen used for his classification is presented in Table 1.

Grammar field	Features
Phonology	Apocope of unstressed end vowel, inf. /hop/ < ON <i>hoppa</i> ‘jump’ Palatalization of alveolar consonants, /fjeʎ/ < ON <i>fjall</i> ‘mountain’, /huɲ/ < ON <i>hundr</i> ‘dog’ Segmentation of alveolar consonants, n. /fjedl/ < ON <i>fjall</i> ‘mountain’, v. /fidna/ < ON <i>finna</i> ‘find’ Differentiation of ON <i>rn</i> > <i>dn</i> /bjødn/ < ON <i>bjørn</i> ‘bear’ Retroflex flap ¹ /su:ɾ/ < ON <i>sól</i> ‘sun’, /ga:ɾ/ < ON <i>garðr</i> ‘farm’ Vowel balance + vowel assimilation /vʌkʌ/ < ON <i>viku</i> ‘week’
Noun morphology	Def. sg. f.: The same endings in all f. nouns or a division in weak and strong nouns f. <i>jenta, sola</i> vs. <i>jento, solæ</i> ‘the girl, the sun’ Def. pl: The same endings in all three genders vs. f. <i>-er</i> , m. <i>-ar</i> and n. <i>a, jentan, gutan, husan</i> vs. <i>jentene, gutane, husa</i> ‘the girls, the boys, the houses’ Two cases (nom./acc. + dative) vs. one
Verb morphology	Infinitive: <i>-e, -a</i> , apocope, <i>-e/-a</i> according to vowel balance ² Present tense: Two syllable forms in all verbs vs. one syllable in strong verbs and two syllables in weak verbs. <i>skriver, hopper</i> vs. <i>skriv, hoppar</i> ‘writes, jumps’

Table 1. The main features used by Aasen for the classification of Norwegian Dialects

¹ This is a separate phoneme that emerged from two different historical processes, substitution of / and merger of *rð*.

² *Jamvekt* ‘vowel balance’ (see Larsen 1906, Sandøy 2005, Kusmenko 2007) results in different end vowels in Eastern Norwegian (inf. verb: *å kaste, å je:ra*, ‘to throw, to do’ and def.sg.noun: *ei vi:se, ein hana*, ‘a song, a rooster’). Some Western Norwegian dialects have *-e*, others *-a*, but there is no alternation of endings like in Eastern dialects.

2.1.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Aasen discussed (1848/1996: 170) how a division into two dialect groups was a possibility, and how such a division would divide the country into West + the rest. As far as we are aware of, he is the only one who has launched this idea. Other linguists who have divided Norwegian into only two dialect groups, have included the Northern dialects into the West Norwegian group, while Aasen suggested to include them in the East Norwegian group. However, he concluded that a division into three dialect areas would be more fruitful, and he labelled the three areas *Den nordenfjeldske Række* ‘North Norwegian line’, *Den vestenfjeldske Række* ‘West Norwegian line’ and *Den østenfjeldske Række* ‘East Norwegian line’. His categorization consists of three levels (*Sprogarter* ‘dialects’, *Hovedforgreninger* ‘subdialects’ and *Forgreninger* ‘varieties’) and is presented in Table 2.

Dialect	Subdialects	Varieties
Den nordenfjeldske Række [North Norwegian line]	Den nordlandske Forgøring [Northern branch]	
	Den indre trondhjemske Forgøring [Southern inland branch]	Namdalsk Inderøisk Ørkedalsk
	Den ytre trondhjemske Forgøring [Southern coastal branch]	Fosensk Nordmørsk Romsdalsk
Den vestenfjeldske Række [West Norwegian line]	Den nordre bergenske Forgøring [Northern Bergen branch]	Søndmørsk Fjordefylkisk
	Den søndre bergenske Forgøring [Middle Bergen branch]	det Sognske det Nordhordlehnske det Vossiske og Hardangerske
	Den stavangerske Forgøring [Stavanger branch]	Søndhordlehnsk Ryfylkisk Jædersk
Den østenfjeldske Række [East Norwegian line]	Raabygdelaget og Tellemarken [Southern]	Raabygdelaget Tellemarken
	Den vestre oplandske Forgøring [North-western branch]	Hallingdalsk og valdersk det Gulbrandsdalske
	Den østre oplandske Forgøring [North-eastern branch]	Hedemarkisk Østerdalsk

Table 2. Aasen’s geographical classification of Norwegian dialects

All in all, there is no doubt that Aasen performed a ground-breaking analysis of Norwegian dialects. Even if all nuances of the historical background of all dialect features were not understood, his work is impressive. His lack of understanding when it comes to the *jamvekt*, the vowel balance, led him to a division where the dialects of Trøndelag were included in the northern dialects, whereas all later classifications, that use the vowel balance as criterium number one, have split the dialects of Trøndelag from those in the north, splitting the dialects with apocope in two.

2.2 Hans Ross (1905-1909)

Even if the books where Ross introduced his classification of Norwegian dialects were published nine years after Larsen published his one volume book (see Section 2.3.), we place Ross before Larsen in the chronology. The reason is not just that he was older (Ross was born in 1833 and Larsen in 1849), but Ross was seen, both by others and himself, as Aasen's successor (Larsen 1914). He started his work within dialectology by supplementing Aasen's dictionary. In doing so, he included both phonetic and morphologic details, and he included longer texts to illustrate the meaning and the use of the words. After his dictionary-supplement was finished, he decided to elaborate on the phonological and morphological part of the language, and wrote the work we will look at here, *Norske bygdemaal* 'Norwegian rural dialects'.

2.2.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology and Historical-Comparative Linguistics meets the Neogrammarian paradigm

Ross was an eager supporter of the principle of Aasen's new written standard and was one of the first to use a version of it in his scientific works. He adjusted Aasen's norm to the spoken language, for example by deleting word final consonant (*ette, de, maale* instead of *etter, det, maalet*), but these changes were not incorporated in

standard orthography. The aim of his work was not limited to the development of a new written standard. He also wanted to display the width of the present dialects, and he mapped the vocabulary with more geographic accuracy than Aasen had done. He also gave more elaborate grammatical and cultural information about the words (Grønvik 2016).

Ross also worked on English, and in England he got acquainted with Max Müller (Venås 1998: 70), who had an important scientific impact on him. Ross became interested in the neogrammarian paradigm (cf. beneath) and influenced the language philosophy of Norwegian authors writing in the new language.

According to Larsen (1914: 179), Ross was less puristic and more open to the notion of mixed lexical elements than Aasen. Whereas Aasen for example considered a merger of two Old Norse stems into one lexeme as “wrong”, Ross acknowledged the phenomenon as common, and gave it the term *sammenglidning* ‘sliding together’ (e.g., ON *frægr* ‘famous’ and ON *frekr* ‘healthy’ merge into *fræg* ‘likable’, ‘pleasant’). Ross can be seen as a typical scholar of his time: he was not only a dialectologist and a linguist, but also a collector. He collected legends and folk tales, and he was interested in all words, also the derogatory words that Aasen tried to avoid. He was more interested in how the words were used than in etymological accuracy. This said, his classification is of equal interest to us as Aasen’s and the later scholars.

Ross started his classification with a wide scope. Under the heading *Dei Scandinaviske ell Nordlendske bygdemaal* ‘The Scandinavian or the northern rural dialects’, he included the Scandinavian dialects from Slesvig/Schleswig in the south to Estonia in the east. He claimed that Danish of his time was conservative, partly since the old consonant endings in the definite form of the feminine nouns were retained, (p.11). This may lead us to wonder if he had not realised that the feminine and masculine nouns had merged in most Danish dialects, and that the term *conservative*, when it comes to gender, would be better applied on those dialects that had retained three grammatical genders.

The introduction of Ross’ work is filled with normative statements about the dialects, and the best dialects were the Norwegian ones, “dei mest liduge o mjuke av

dei Scandinaviske maali” ‘the softest of the Scandinavian languages’ (1905: 15). Within the Norwegian dialects, he also had his clear favourites, and he did not hesitate to combine judgements of dialects with that of their speakers. For example, the valley dialects of the south are called good dialects, and their speakers are labelled as fair people. The city vernaculars he considered darker, and the speakers sounded, in Ross’ ears, as if they were complaining.

Perhaps even more interesting are his arguments as to why certain dialect features are suited for classification and why others are not. For example, features that can occur as speech impediments outside the area where it is generally used, like the uvular r /ʀ/ is not used in his classification (p. 29). The retroflex flap /ɾ/, however, does not occur as speech impediment outside its core area, and can therefore be used. Table 3 presents an overview of the main linguistic features Ross used for his classification.

The book from 1906 includes two leaves with coloured maps in A3 size, that allows a large number of place names to be included. One map has the main division between dialects with or without vowel balance, the other leaf has two maps: One based on the retroflex flap and palatalization of alveolars, the other on four different features: ON *hv* > *gv*, retention of ending *-r* in plural of nouns, lenition of *p*, *t*, *k*; and if the dialects have the same or different endings in the def. sg. of feminine nouns. A comment on his emphasis on the development of ON *hv* > *gv* is that this, also at Ross’s time, was a very marginal phenomenon. Most of the Norwegian dialects have had a sharpening of *hv* to *kv*, and the next largest group has deletion of *h* or of both *h* and *v*. Thus, ‘what’ in Norwegian can sound like *kva*, *ka*, *va*, *ǎ* – rarely *gva*.

Grammar field	Features
Phonology	Retroflex flap /ɾ/ /su: ɾ/ < ON <i>sól</i> 'sun', /ga: ɾ/ < ON <i>garðr</i> 'farm' Lenisation of p, t, k > b, d, g /ga:da/ < ON <i>gata</i> 'street' Palatalization of <i>ll</i> and <i>nn</i> /fjeʎ/ < ON <i>fjall</i> 'mountain', /maŋ/ < ON <i>mann</i> 'man, acc.' Vowel balance + vowel assimilation /vʌkʌ/ < ON <i>viku</i> 'week' (acc.) <i>hv</i> > <i>gv</i> or <i>kv</i> /kva:/, /gva:/, /va:/ < ON <i>hvat</i> 'what'
Noun morphology	Indef. fem. sg. ending: -a, -e or apocope Def. fem. sg. The same ending in all fem. nouns, or a system with one ending for weak and another for strong fem. nouns Retention of -r in plural of nouns
Verb morphology	Infinitive ending: -a, -e or apocope, or a system where some verbs have -a or -å and some verbs have -e or apocope due to vowel balance

Table 3. The main features used by Ross for the classification of Norwegian Dialects

2.2.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Ross divides the Norwegian dialects into two main groups and includes the dialects of Northern Norway into the western branch. He also includes all of the southern dialects, even the dialects in the far south-east into the western group. For some of the subdialects he makes further divisions, see the overview in Table 4.

Dialect	Subdialects	Varieties
Dei vest-norske maali [The West Norwegian dialects]	A I den sudvestre landsluten fraa Jøstedalsbredden til vatsvendet imillom Mannalen og Otredalen [The south-west part of the country from the Jostedal glacier and until the middle of the county Agder, where there is a water divide]	
	B Paa baade sidor av A-maali [On both sides of the a-dialects]	1 Dei fyrdske ə-maali (e-maali) imillom Jøstedalsbredden og skilet millom Romsdal og Nordmøre [The e-dialects of the Førde-area between the Jostedal glacier and the border between the districts Romsdal and

		Nordmøre] 2 Dei aust-egdske eller raabygske ə-maali [The eastern e-dialects]
	C Maali i Nordland [The dialects of Northern Norway]	1 I sud, i Helgeland [The southern part, Helgeland] 2 Salten [The middle part, Salten] 3 Nordanfor Salten [North of Salten]
Dei austnorske maali [The East Norwegian dialects]	A Dølemaali [The valley dialects] B Upplandsmaali [The dialects of the Oppland district] C Vikvermaali eller Foldamaali [The dialects on both sides of the Oslo- fjord] D Aust-fjellmaali [The eastern mountain dialects] E Trøndermaali [The mid Norwegian dialects] F Fosnmaali [The dialects of the Fosen district]	

Table 4. Ross' geographical classification

2.3 Amund Bredesen Larsen (1897)

The first Norwegian dialectologist that studied dialects purely for scientific reasons and not with the aim to create or develop a new written standard, was Amund B. Larsen (1849-1928). He benefited from a vivid debate on linguistics as a science during the second half of the nineteenth century, and on international developments within the field.

Like Aasen and Ross, Larsen started out studying the rural dialects. Aasen considered the urban dialects impure and too far removed from Old Norse to be of interest for a new language, and Ross saw them as dark and – in the case of Oslo – staccato. But Larsen went on in an opposite direction being the first to study city dialects, both the urban vernaculars and the urban varieties of the spoken standard. He

did so with the same linguistic and historic interest as he studied the rural dialects, and he discussed the different dialect contact situations of the cities in the past (Kristiania/Oslo 1907, Bergen 1911-1912 with co-author Gerhard Stoltz, Stavanger 1925 with co-author M. Berntsen).

2.3.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology

The neogrammarians used the notion of sound laws to explain the sound changes of languages and dialects. Even if their contribution to historical linguistics was substantial, the slogan *Ausnahmslose Lautgesetze* ‘sound laws without exception’ has been coined as their most important theoretical achievement (Hoel 2018: 81-82).

It has been debated if Amund B. Larsen actually should be counted as a neogrammarian. He wrote (1897: 7) «Sprogenes forandringer sees altid, hvor ikke voldsomme forstyrrelser udenfra er indtrådte, at være skeet efter ret faste regler («lydlove»)» ‘Changes in the languages will always, when no major external disturbances have occurred, develop according to a set of rules («sound laws»)’. The fact that he puts sound laws both in brackets and within apostrophes, gives a signal that he may not be entirely satisfied with the concept. For Larsen’s description of Norwegian dialects, the point about external disturbances was important, since he openly sought explanations for language change in external factors like migration and prestige.

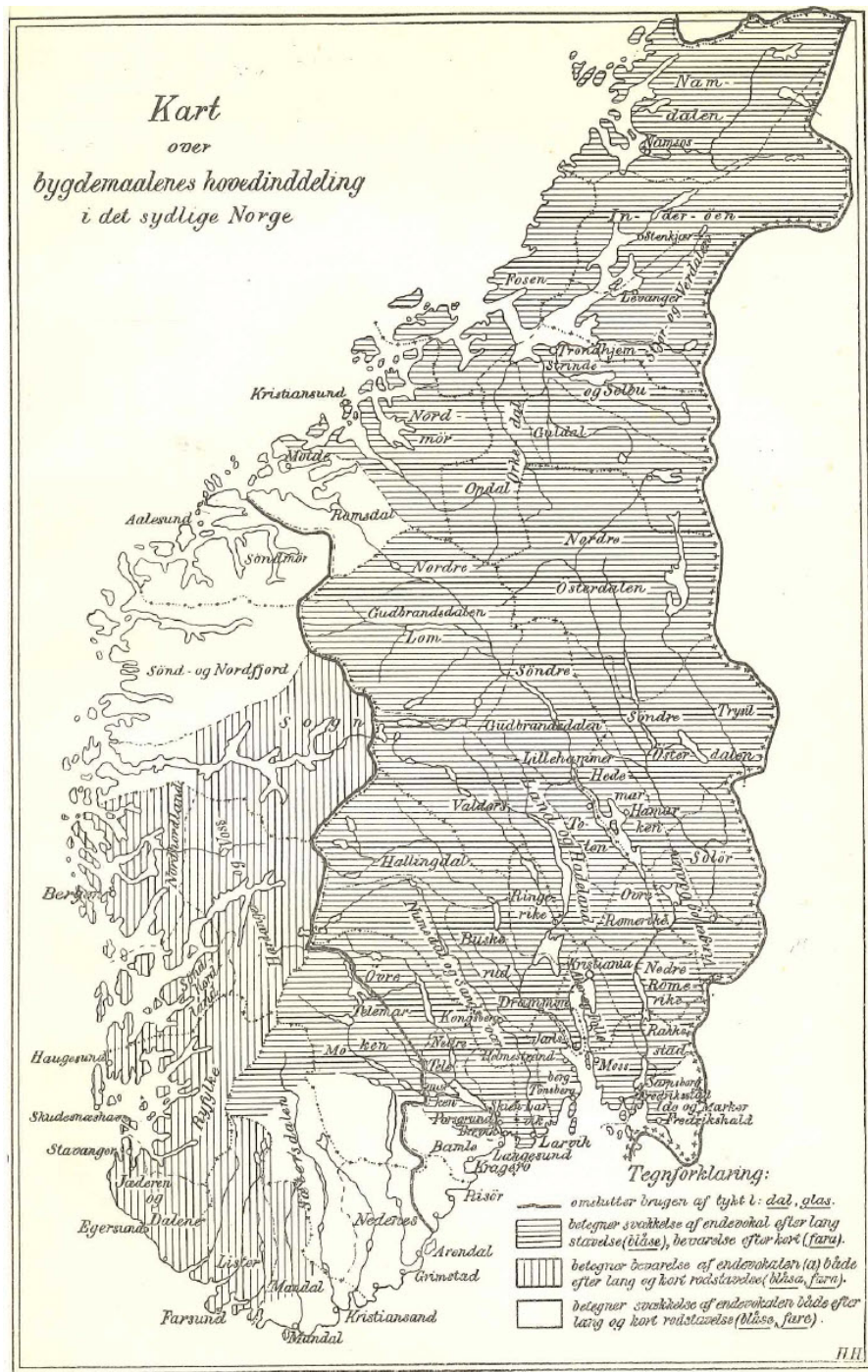
Venås (1998: 70) describes Larsen as too innovative and independent to be placed in any group or scientific school, and Hoel (2018: 94 ff) claims that «Larsens kombinasjon av dialektgeografi og indre språkhistorie vart så mønsterdannande at ein kan tala om eit nytt paradigme.» (p. 96) ‘Larsen’s combination of dialect geography and internal language history became so influential that one can call it a new paradigm’. The main features used by Larsen for his classification are listed in Table 5.

Grammar Field	Features
Phonology	Retroflex flap /ɾ/ /su:ɾ/ < ON <i>sól</i> 'sun', /ga:ɾ/ < ON <i>garðr</i> 'farm' Vowel balance + vowel assimilation /vøkʷ/ < ON <i>vikur</i> 'week' Monophthongization /ste:n/ < ON <i>steinn</i> 'stone' ON <i>hv</i> > <i>v</i> or <i>kv</i> Segmentation of alveolar consonants /fjedl/ < ON <i>fjall</i> 'mountain', /fidna/ < ON <i>finna</i> 'find' Differentiation of ON <i>rn</i> > <i>dn</i> /bjødn/ < ON <i>bjørn</i> 'bear' Nasalized vowels
Noun morphology	Indef. sg. of weak feminine nouns <i>ei flaska</i> / <i>ei flaske</i> / <i>ei flask</i> 'a bottle' Def. sg. of feminine nouns: same endings for all feminines or separation of weak and strong feminines Plural: same endings in the plural, or division according to gender and/or stem
Verb morphology	Infinitive endings -a, -e or a system with -a and -e distributed according to vowel balance
Pronouns	Personal pronouns 1. pers. sg. subj. <i>eg, æg, i, ei, je, jei</i>

Table 5. The main features used by Larsen for the classification of Norwegian Dialects

2.3.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Larsen's book *De norske Bygdemål. Med et kart* 'The Norwegian rural dialects. With a map'. In 1897 he introduced the dialect map into the Norwegian dialect literature. This map, however, only includes the southern half of the country (Map 2, from Larsen 1897: 103). The concentration on the middle and southern Norwegian dialects are partly due to the fact that the southern and middle dialects were explored to a much greater extent than the northern dialects. At least two reasons, one geographic and one ethnic, can lie behind this. Norway is, as the map shows, long and narrow, and the northern parts of the country were hard to reach from the learned institutions in the south. In addition, a substantial part of the population in the far north had Sami or Kven as their first language, and the Norwegian they spoke was not regarded as interesting for dialectologists. Ross, as we saw above, did include all of Norway in his maps, but neither on the maps nor in his classification, did he differentiate within the area north of Salten.



Map 2. Larsen’s map of southern Norwegian dialects (1897), Larsen did not provide a map of the northern part of the country (source: Norsk målføreakiv)

Larsen’s division of Norwegian dialects into two main groups following the traces of vowel balance in words with the vowel structure VK in Old Norse, has since been used by all those who have classified Norwegian. He uses this feature together with the use of the retroflex flap /ɾ/ as the base for his division into east and west Norwegian.

These two features are, according to Larsen (1897: 23) coinciding diachronically and have a similar distribution, therefore, the difference between east and west is more profound than the difference between north and south.

By using vowel balance as a linguistic feature, Larsen is an innovator (see Larsen, 1905). 50 years earlier, when Aasen carried out his work, the understanding of the historical background for the split endings in the infinitives in some of the dialects, had not been recognized. Some of Larsen's other mappings are not entirely accurate, especially when it comes to the dialects of the north. Interestingly, he writes about nasalized vowels, a very marginal phenomenon that only existed in the village Larsen himself came from, and some very few other places. His interest in the phonological level of language may have hindered a deeper insight in morphology, syntax and lexicon (Hoff 1950: 7).

An area that has always been difficult to treat in the classification of Norwegian dialects, is the southernmost part. One reason for this that Larsen (1897: 61) mentions, is that while the border between east and west further north is marked by a mountain range, the border in the far south is not, and thus the dialect continuum makes it harder to divide the dialects. Larsen singles the Southern dialects out as a dialect group of its own, letting the ending of the infinitive define the subdialects. His terms e-mål and a-mål 'e-language' and 'a-language', are still used. But whereas Larsen uses the ending in the infinitive, the modern use of the terms usually includes the ending of the weak feminine nouns in def. sg., since these endings coincide: *å synge ei visa* vs. *å synge ei vise* 'to sing a song'.

Dialect	Subdialects	Varieties
East Norwegian	De rent østlandske mål [East – in the strictest sense] Fjeldbygdernes mål [Dialects of the mountains]	Vikske [South] Oplandske [North] Telemark & Numedal [South] Hallingdal & Valdres [North]
West Norwegian	De kristiansandske bygdemål [Southern coastline] Stavangerske mål [Southwest] Bergenske mål [Northern southwest] De nordlige e-mål [Northwest] De trondhjemske mål [Mid Norwegian] Tromsø stifts mål [North Norwegian]	e-mål [East] Lister [West] Hordelands mål [Coastal dialects] De indre bergenske mål [Inland dialects]

Table 6. Larsen's geographical classification

Larsen is much more detailed in his description of the southern than the northern subdialects. His division between coast and inland in the northern part of the southwestern dialects, is interesting, and not common. Apart from the East Norwegian dialects, he names the dialect groups from the main cities in each area: Kristiansand, Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim and Tromsø.

2.4 Hallfrid Christiansen (1946-1949)

Hallfrid Christiansen (1886-1964) was one of relatively few female linguists of her time. In 1935 she was the third Norwegian woman to become a doctor within linguistics (Karlsen 1998: 30, 37). Christiansen was also the first to explore a North Norwegian dialect as the topic of her dissertation. Her influence on Norwegian dialectology is mostly due to her university level text books that were published during the years 1946–1949: *Norske Dialekter I–III* [Norwegian Dialects I – III]: *I Innføring i almen norsk fonologi og dialektologi* 'Introduction to general Norwegian phonology and dialectology' II *Fra indoeuropeisk grunnspråk til norske dialekter* 'From the Indo-European base language to the Norwegian dialects', III *De viktigste målmerker og deres*

råderom 'The most important dialect features and their distribution'. These were based on her lectures in phonology, morphology and dialectology at the University of Oslo, and were used by Norwegian students all over the country until the 1980s. In 1954 she elaborated on volume III in an article called "Hovedinndelingen av norske dialekter" 'The main classification of Norwegian Dialects'.

2.4.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology and structuralism

Christiansen is generally acknowledged to be the first structuralist among Norwegian dialectologists, mostly due to her dissertation *Gimsøy-målet. Fonologi og orddannelse* 'The dialect of Gimsøy. Phonology and word formation'. Even if, as Sandøy (2013) claims, only one of the chapters in this dissertation can be labelled structuralistic in the strictest sense, he earlier (1985: 301) called the dissertation «første norske vitenskaplige dialektarbeidet som brukte moderne fonologiske metoder med fonemteori i tråd med pragerstrukturalismen» 'the first Norwegian scientific dialect investigation where modern phonological methods with phoneme theory in line with the Prague structuralism was used'.

It is clear, however, that the dissertation was very different from the previous Norwegian dialect investigations. It was synchronic, and Christiansen did not include the dialects of the area in the discussion (Karlsen 1998: 33). On the contrary, she wrote as if loan words were imported directly from other countries to the remote island of Gimsøy (Venås 1998: 75).

In her textbooks we find examples of the structuralist way of looking at language change. She explains linguistic change by pointing out how the language itself fixes asymmetrical linguistic features. In volume I of *Norske dialekter* (p. 39) she writes about changes in the vocabulary: «Lydlige utviklinger kan føre med seg at to forskjellige ord kan få samme uttale. Viss da disse ordene tilhører samme livsområde eller arbeidsområde, kan de komme i veien for hverandre, slik at det ene må ut av språket.» 'Sound change can lead to homonyms. If the words belong to the same domain, they can get in each other's way, and one of them must leave the language.' In the same

volume (p. 193) the topic is apocope. Her explanation to why this occurs in verbs more often than other word classes, is that the verb gets little stress in the sentence. And, she adds, the longer the sentence, the lighter the stress. This is quite far removed from both the historical-comparative and the neogrammarian way of looking at language change.

Table 7 gives an overview of the most important linguistic features Christiansen used for the classification of dialects. In most descriptions of Norwegian dialectology, segmentation of consonants (*finna* > *fidna*, *fjell* > *fjedl*) is kept apart from diphthongization (*á* > *ao*, *í* > *æi*). But Christiansen labels diphthongization as segmentation and explains this feature as a compensation for the homonyms that emerged after the Norwegian quantity shift during the Middle Norwegian period (Christiansen 1949: 166).

Grammar Field	Features
Phonology	Retroflex flap /ɾ/ /su:ɾ/ < ON <i>sól</i> 'sun', /ga:ɾ/ < ON <i>garðr</i> 'farm' Apocope of stressless end vowel Verb + particle pronounced as one word, with stress only on the verb /gɔ:ʊt/ < ON <i>ganga</i> 'út 'go out' High or low onset of the tone on words with toneme 1 Vowel balance + vowel assimilation /vʊkʊ/ < ON <i>viku</i> 'week' Palatalization of <i>ll</i> and <i>nn</i> /fjeɻ/ < ON <i>fjall</i> 'mountain', /maɻ/ < ON <i>mann</i> 'man, acc.' ON <i>hv</i> > <i>kv</i> , <i>gv</i> or <i>v</i> Segmentation of alveolar consonants /fjedl/ < ON <i>fjall</i> 'mountain', /fidna/ < ON <i>finna</i> 'find' Differentiation of ON <i>rn</i> > <i>dn</i> /bjødn/ < ON <i>bjørn</i> 'bear' Lenisation of <i>p</i> , <i>t</i> , <i>k</i> > <i>b</i> , <i>d</i> , <i>g</i> : /ga:da/ < ON <i>gata</i> 'street' Diphtongization of old, long vowels /pʌʊ/ < ON <i>pá</i> 'on', /skæʊ/ < ON <i>skógr</i> 'forest' Monophthongization /ste:n/ < ON <i>steinn</i> 'stone'
Noun morphology	Morpho-phonetic alternation of velar and palatal: /veg/ 'wall' - /vejen/ 'the wall' Endings in indef. sg. fem.: -a, -e, apocope
Verb morphology	Endings in infinitive: -a, -e, apocope, -a/-e according to vowel balance
Syntax	Contraction of enclitic syllables without stress
Lexicon	Personal pronouns

Table 7. Overview of the main linguistic features used for the classification of dialects by Christiansen.

2.4.2 Classifications of dialects and subdialects

Christiansen 1949 divides the Norwegian dialects into three parts, East, West and North. This is the same as Aasen (Section 2.1.), but where Aasen included the Mid Norwegian dialects in the North group, Christiansen included them into the East group, see Table 8.

In her 1954 article about the classification of Norwegian dialects, she starts with analysing the results of dividing the country into two main dialect areas. She claims this to be a correct division for the southern part of the country, but not for the north. A classification that works typologically, but not geographically, is, according to Christiansen (1954: 31), not a good one. Since both west Norwegian and north Norwegian dialects lack vowel balance, north Norwegian ended up as a subdialect of west Norwegian, although they are geographically separated by the large mid Norwegian area.

She is positive to the use of vowel balance and the retroflex flap as criterion, but she insists on also using additional features, “komplekser av kriterier” (p. 35), for example apocope, as equally important dividing features. This leads her to four main dialect areas: Vestlandsk ‘Southwest’, Østlandsk ‘Southeast’, Trøndersk ‘Mid’ and Nordnorsk ‘North’. This division (Table 9) is the one that is most widely used in textbooks today.

Critics of Christiansen pointed to the fact that most dialect features in the north also were found in one or more of the three other areas. Ingeborg Hoff (1967: 9) wrote that “This can [...] not be accepted. Many of the features that Hallfrid Christiansen declared to be characteristic of North Norwegian also prevail in West Norwegian. In fact, it is not possible to find one single feature of any importance belonging only to the three northern administrative districts [...]”.

In addition to vowel balance, retroflex flap and apocope, she mentions a number of prosodic features. One reason for this is that “talemusikken” ‘the speech music’ is the main classifier for non-linguists: “Enhver kan kjenne en trønder, en nordlending, en

østlending eller en vestlending på vedkommendes talemusikk” (Christiansen 1954: 35) ‘Everyone can recognize a person from Mid Norway, North Norway, East Norway or West Norway on the basis on her or his speech music.’ It has not been common to divide Norwegian dialects according to intonation patterns; but both toneme realisation (cf. 2.8.2) and stress have been applied.

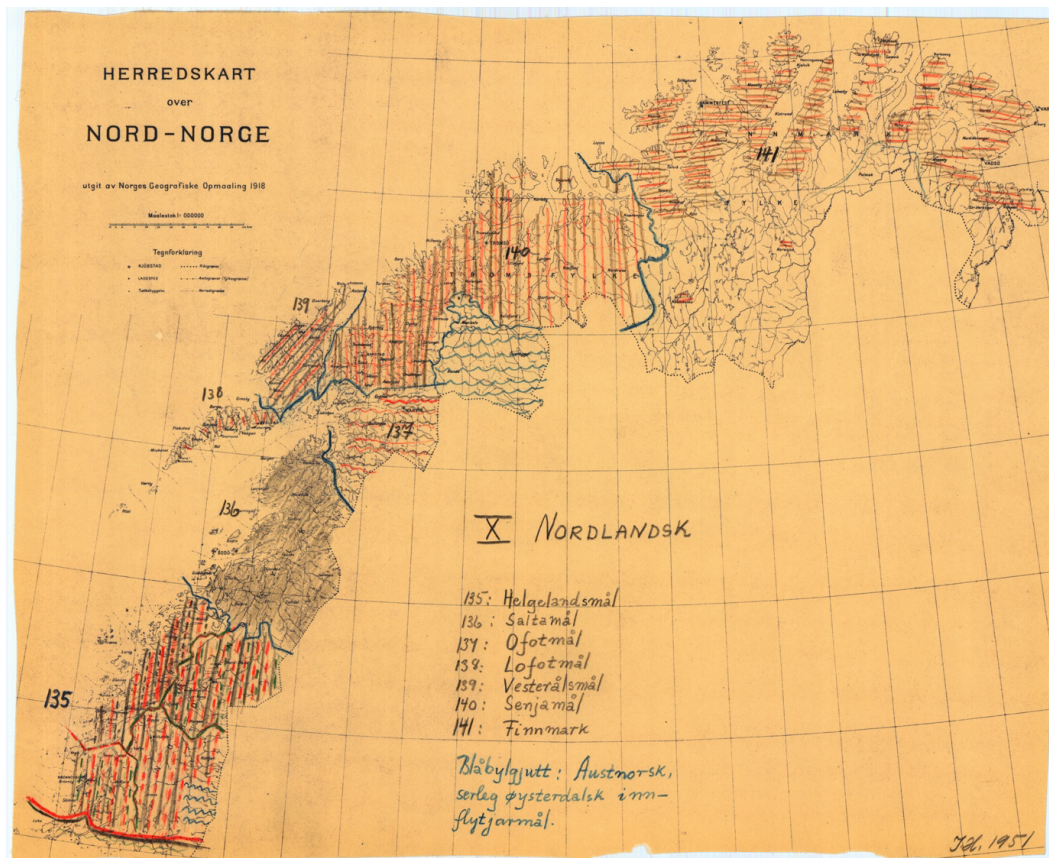
Dialect	Subdialects
Østnorsk [East Norwegian]	Østlandet [East]
	Trøndelag [Mid]
Vestnorsk [West Norwegian]	A-mål [Mid]
	E-mål [North and south]
Nordnorsk [North Norwegian]	Apokopemål [South]
	e/a-mål [North]

Table 8. Christiansen’s geographical division (1949)

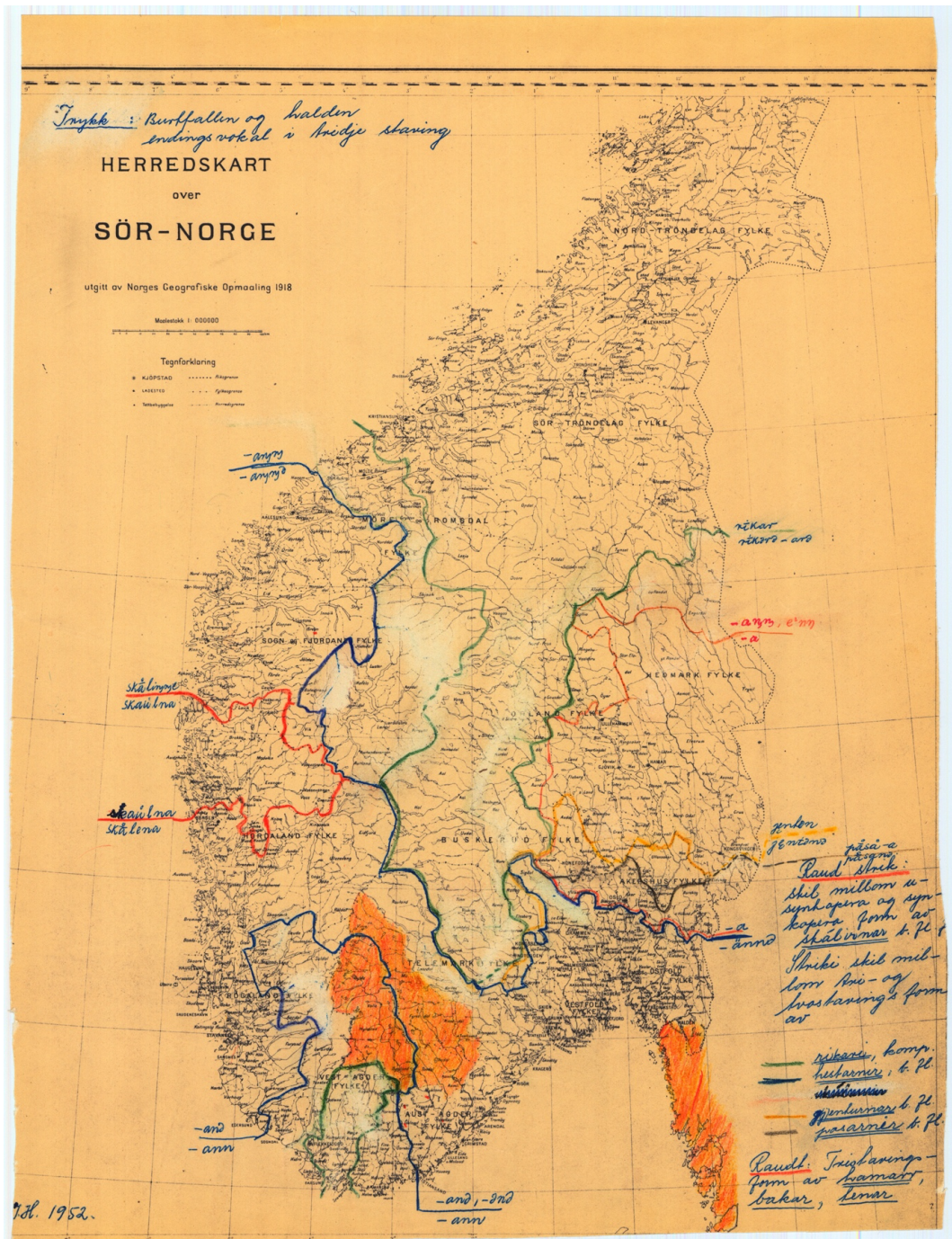
Dialect
Østnorsk [Southeast Norwegian]
Vestnorsk [Southwest Norwegian]
Trøndersk [Mid Norwegian]
Nordnorsk [North Norwegian]

Table 9. Christiansen’s geographical division (1954)

In her article from 1954, she does not operate with subdialects. Rather, for each of the four dialect areas, she presents the geographic area in more detail (counties with some exceptions) and is more specific about the linguistic criteria. See Map 3 for the northern and Map 4 for the southern part of Norway.



Map 3. Hallfrid Christiansen's dialect map of the northern part of Norway (source: Norsk målføreaktiv)



Map 4. Hallfrid Christiansen’s dialect map of the southern part of Norway (source: Norsk målføreaktiv)

2.5 Sigurd Kolsrud (1951)

Sigurd Kolsrud (1888-1957) claimed, in his book *Nynorsken i sine målføre* ‘New Norwegian in its dialects’ from 1951, that Aasen’s classification of Norwegian dialects

was still the best (Kolsrud, 1951: 130). In the last chapter (ch. X. "Målgransking" 'Dialect research'), he claims that "det er eit sermerke for vårt land, at måkløyvingi er so liti, og Aasens normalform har derfor slege rot på dei mest ulike stader", 'it is a characteristic feature for our country, that the dialect diversity is so minimal, and therefore Aasen's norm has taken root in the most different places' (ib: 134). This is meant to support Aasen's written language, Nynorsk, as a common norm for all dialects. It is, however, also an interesting claim in opposition to the more common view, that there are extraordinary many different dialects in Norway. Kolsrud's claim must be understood in a more sociolinguistic perspective, meaning that there is minimal social difference within a dialect area. He underlines this by saying that "målbruket i bygdene gjerne har vore det same for rike og mindre rike" 'the use of dialect in villages may have been the same for both rich and less rich people' (ib: 134). In this manner, Kolsrud is an early sociolinguist.

2.5.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology

Kolsrud's classification nevertheless mainly remains a traditional dialectological project. In addition to his own classification, Kolsrud presents and discusses earlier dialect classifications, like Aasen, Ross and Larsen (1951: 64). Kolsrud attempts to base the classification on linguistic features (phonology and morphology) primarily, and geography secondarily. He explains and almost excuses that linguistic considerations may divide the country into different areas than the traditional geographical-administrative areas.

According to Jahr (1996: 87-89) Kolsrud's classification is pre-structural and neogrammarian. The classification is based on Aasen's work on the connection between dialects, and between dialects and Nynorsk, and like Aasen, Kolsrud explains dialect features historically. Vowel balance is for instance explained by changes in late medieval period, involving different geographic distribution. Kolsrud's Chapter VI (1951: 56) is even titled "Gamalnorsk grunnlag" 'Old Norse basis/origin', and here he

explicitly states that to understand the Norwegian dialects one must view them as a continuum of Old Norse (Table 10).

Grammar field	Features
Phonology	High or low onset of the tone on words with toneme 1 Verb + particle pronounced as one word, with stress only on the verb / 2 gɔ:ʌt/ < ON <i>ganga</i> 'út' 'go out' Diphthongization of old, long vowels /paʊ/ < ON <i>pá</i> 'on', /skæʌ/ < ON <i>skógr</i> 'forest'. Monophthongization /ste:n/ < ON <i>steinn</i> 'stone' Assimilation of ON <i>nd, ld</i> > <i>nn, ll</i> Lenisation of p, t, k > b, d, g: /ga:da/ < ON <i>gata</i> 'street' Vowel balance + vowel assimilation /vʌkʌ/ < ON <i>viku</i> 'week'
Noun morphology	Two cases (nom./acc. + dative) vs. one
Verb morphology	Infinitive endings -a, -e, apocope, or a system with -a and -e distributed according to vowel balance
Adjective morphology	Number and gender concord (noun + adjective)

Table 10. The main features used by Kolsrud for the classification of Norwegian Dialects

2.5.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Kolsrud builds on the traditional division between west and east, and Norwegian dialects are sorted in these two main groups. The western dialect group is however defined negatively: "Vestnorsk er eit samnamn for alle norske målføre som ikkje i streng mening er austnorske" 'Western Norwegian is a common name for all Norwegian dialects that are not in a strict sense Eastern' (Kolsrud, 1951: 70). Despite this, the two main groups are much the same as in Ross' and Larsen's division. The geographic groups are furthermore divided into regional subcategories, which include many more varieties, based on both phonological and morphological features. The most striking with Kolsrud's classification presented in Table 11, is that the dialects along the southern coast of the country are included in the eastern dialect group, not the western. In this area, there is a large difference between the dialects along the coast and those in the inland, and it seems that Kolsrud, unlike most other scholars, put more emphasis on the inland than on the coastal dialects. However, Kolsrud does

not rank the dialects in a hierarchy with dialects, subdialects and varieties, instead he presents them in an almost linear way.

Dialect	Subdialects
Austnorsk [East Norwegian]	Austlandsmål [East]
	Vikværsk [Southeast]
	Midaustlandsk [Middle East, around Oslo]
	Upplandsmåli og måli i Upplandsdalane [North East]
	Midlandsmål [Middle West]
	Egdamål [Southwest]
	Trøndsk [Mid Norwegian]
Vestnorsk [West Norwegian]	Vestlandsmål [West]
	Sudvestlandsk [Southwest]
	Nordvestlandsk [Northwest]
	Nordnorsk [North Norwegian]

Table 11. Kolsrud's geographical division of Norwegian dialects

2.6 Helge Sandøy (1985)

Helge Sandøy (1947-) is one of the most influential linguists in Norway. His dialect classification in *Norsk dialektkunnskap* (1985), '*Norwegian dialect knowledge*', is the most structuralist dialect classification study of Norwegian. The traditional divisions are rejected and replaced by a new categorization, merely based on differences between the linguistic systems. He claims that a systematic and structural division "kan vere til hjelp for minnet og såleis ha pedagogiske fordelar", 'might be helpful for the memory and thus have pedagogical advantages.' In addition, he argues that this classification can provide better understanding of the historical development, because linguistic features will spread geographically where the social conditions support the changes (p. 112). Despite these arguments, Sandøy's dialect classification has still not conquered the field, probably because the main focus lies on linguistic (morpho-phonological) features (p. 33), and the geographic and social distributions, which have a very strong position in the Norwegian dialectology as taught in schools and even higher education, are subordinate aspects.

2.6.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology and Structuralism

Chapter 2 is titled “Dialekten som system” ‘The dialect as system’, and here Sandøy introduces structuralism as his theoretical stance. Dialects are seen as independent linguistic systems, like languages, and analysed as linguistic systems within three levels: phonology, morphology and syntax. Sandøy underlines that viewing dialects as homogeneous systems based on grammatical rules serves a practical purpose, because in reality dialects are more heterogeneous. As a pedagogical method, he shows how written sentences can be predicted to be pronounced in a specific dialect by using grammatical rules. Table 12 presents the three morphological features that are the basis for Sandøy’s classification.

Grammar Field	Features
Noun morphology	Indef. sg. of weak feminine nouns: -a, -e, apocope Def. fem. sg. The same ending in all fem. nouns, or a system with one ending for weak and another for strong fem. nouns
Verb morphology	Endings in infinitive: -a, -e, apocope, -a/-e according to vowel balance

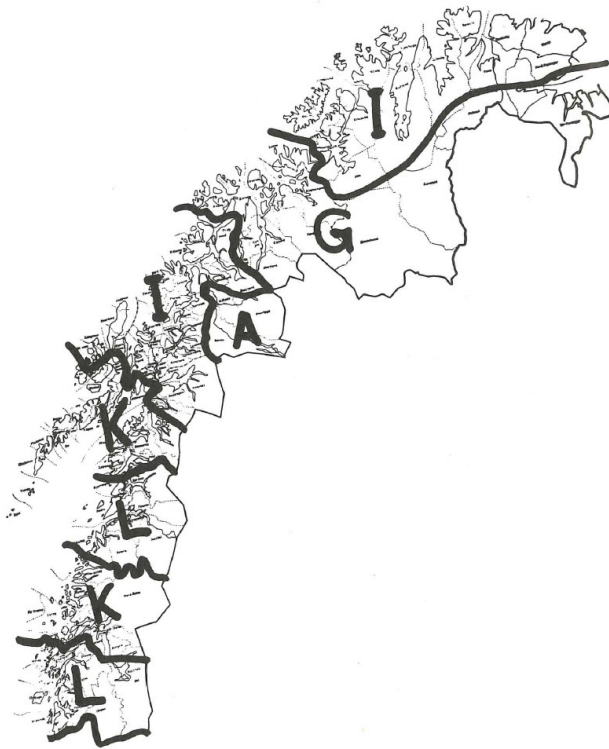
Table 12: The features used by Sandøy for the classification of Norwegian Dialects

2.6.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

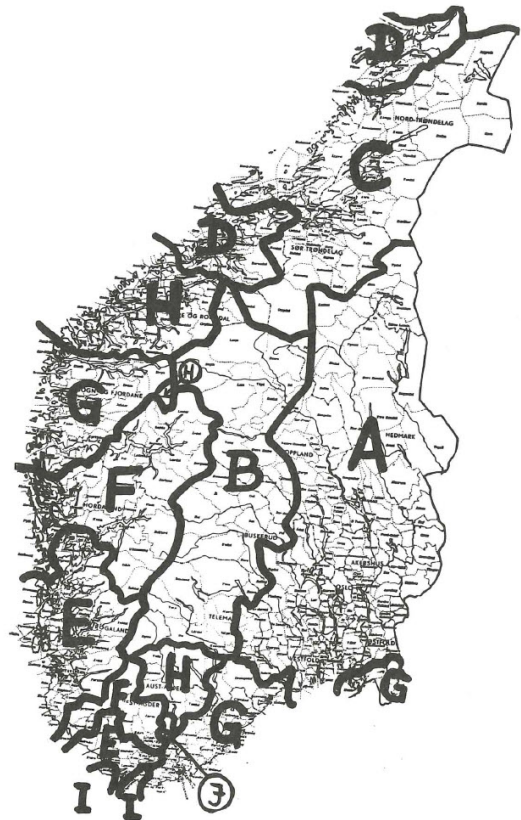
Sandøy’s dialect division is based on three main morphological features (Table 12), not geography. This typological division furthermore results in 12 main dialects which cover 26 geographic areas. Map 5 (north) and Map 6 (south) show how his classification is geographically distributed. It shows that his classification is dominated by a linguistic analysis, and not by an attempt to link the different areas geographically.

Dialects	Geographic areas including number of subvarieties
A. Dialects with vowel balance, without apocope, with the same endings in all def.fem.sg.	2: Austlandet og Bardu/Målselv [East + a small migrant area in the North]
B. Dialects with vowel balance, without apocope, with different endings in def. fem. sg.	1: Midlandsmål [The mountain area between West and East]
C. Dialects with vowel balance, with apocope, with the same endings in all def.fem.sg	1: Trøndelag [Mid Norwegian]
D. Dialect with vowel balance with apocope, with different endings in def. fem. sg.	2: Nordmøre og ytre Namdalen [North and south of Trøndelag]
Dialects	Geographic areas including number of subvarieties
E. Dialects with -a in infinitive and indef. fem.sg., with the same endings in all def. fem.sg	2: Ytre sørlig a-mål [Southwest, coastal]
F. Dialects with -a in infinitive and indef. fem.sg., with different endings in def. fem. sg.	2: Indre nordlig a-mål [Northwest, inland]
G. Dialects with -e in infinitive and indef. fem.sg., with the same endings in all def. fem.sg	4: Søre Østfold, Sørlandet, Nordvestlandet og Finnmark/Nordtroms [Southeast, Southern coastline, Northwest and North]
H. Dialects with -a in infinitive and indef. fem.sg., with different endings in def. fem. sg.	3: Indre Agder, Sunnmøre og Romsdal + Jostedalen [South Inland, Northwest + a small area in West Inland]
I. Dialects with -e in infinitive and -a in indef. fem. sg., with the same endings in all def. fem. sg.	4: Sørlandet og Troms/Finnmark [three areas along the southern coast, and two areas in the North of Norway]
J. Dialects with -e in infinitive and -a in indef. fem. sg., with different endings in def. fem. sg.	1: Indre Agder [South Inland]
K. Dialects with apocope in infinitive and indef. fem. sg., with the same endings in all def. fem. sg.	2: Salten og Rana [Two areas in the Mid North]
L. Dialects with apocope in infinitive and indef. fem. sg., with different endings in def. fem. sg.	2: Helgeland og Salten [Two areas in the Mid North]

Table 13. Sandøy's structural division linked to geographic areas



Map 5. Sandøy's classification of dialects in northern Norway. The letters refer to the classification in Table 13



Map 6: Sandøy's classification of dialects in southern Norway. The letters refer to the classification in Table 13

As can be seen from the tables illustrating Sandøy's classification, he treats vowel balance as a part of the verb morphology, whereas earlier classifiers treat vowel balance as a general, phonological feature. Even if vowel balance is found in some nouns as well, the most prominent result of this process is the so called *kløyvd infinitiv*, 'the split infinitive', where different endings apply to different verbs.

2.7 Martin Skjekkeland (1997, 2005)

Martin Skjekkeland (1943-) has focussed on the dialects of the southern coast of Norway in his research, but has also written a number of textbooks. The title of Skjekkeland's dialect classification, *Dei norske dialektane. Tradisjonelle særdrag i*

jamføring med skriftmåla, 'The Norwegian dialects. Traditional features compared to the written norms' (1997), signals that he considers that the diachronous perspective and the written languages (nn and bm) are the two important dimensions to consider when describing Norwegian dialects. The first chapter presents Norwegian dialects as a continuum of Old Norse. In his book from 2005, *Dialektar i Noreg. Tradisjon og fornying*, 'Dialects in Norway. Tradition and renewal', the written language is removed from the title as well as from the content.

2.7.1 Framework: Isoglottic dialectology

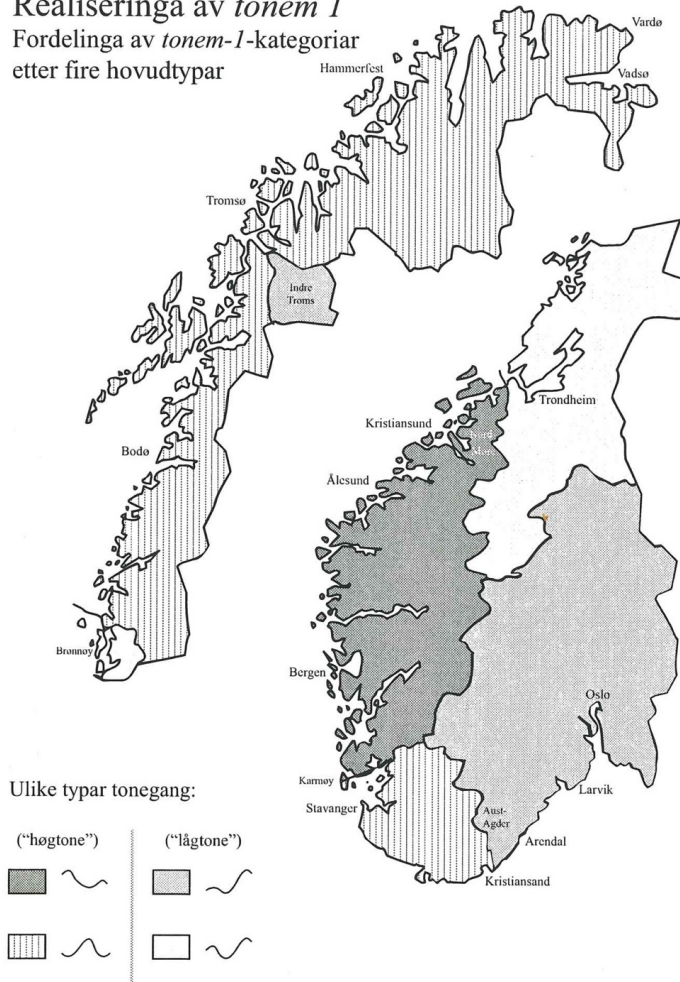
Skjekkeland presents an overview of previous dialect studies (1997, chapter 1 and 5, 2005, chapter 5). The majority of the Norwegian pre-war studies, but also later ones, are placed within a historic and diachronic framework. Christiansen was an early structuralist, followed by Sandøy. Even if Skjekkeland underlines that the sociolinguistic explanations of variation and change have become more important in the last decades of the 20th century, he appears to be more of a traditional dialectologist than a sociolinguist in his own dialect classification. His division of Norway into two main dialect areas, East and West, is based on tradition, expressed as "i samsvar med mykje av tradisjonen" 'in accordance with much of the tradition' (p. 209). In addition, Skjekkeland (1997) also compares some of the dialect features with the written standards, e.g., in what way different dialect realisations of infinitives are treated in written Norwegian. Table 14 does not show this oral/written comparison, but some of the main dialect features he uses for his classification, which is in the historical-comparative linguistics tradition (Map7).

Grammar field	Features
Phonology	High or low onset of the tone on words with toneme 1 (see Map 6) Stressed syllables: ON long v > diphthongs: /pɑʊ/ < ON <i>pá</i> 'on' Unstressed syllables: reduction, vowel balance, apocope Retroflex flap: /ɾ/ /su: ɾ/ < ON <i>sól</i> 'sun', /ga: ɾ/ < ON <i>garðr</i> 'farm' Lenisation of p, t, k > b, d, g: /ga:da/ < ON <i>gata</i> 'street' Palatalization of ll and nn /fjeʌ/ < ON <i>fjall</i> 'mountain', /maj/ < ON <i>mann</i> 'man, acc.' Segmentation of alveolar consonants, n. /fjedl/ < ON <i>fjall</i> 'mountain', v. /fidna/ < ON <i>finna</i> 'find' Differentiation of ON <i>rn</i> > <i>dn</i> /bjødn/ < ON <i>bjørn</i> 'bear'
Noun morphology	Indef. fem. sg. ending: -a, -e or apocope Def. fem. sg. The same ending in all fem. nouns, or a system with one ending for weak f: <i>vi:so/vi:så, vi:sæ, vi:sa</i> , 'the song' and another for strong f.: <i>byggdei, byggdi, byggde, byggdæ, byggdå, byggdo, byggda</i> 'the village' Indef. pl. strong m. ON -ar > <i>båtar/-er/-ær/-år/-a/-e/-æ, -er</i> , 'boats' Indef. pl. weak f. ON -ur > <i>visu(r)/-o/-e/-er/-år/-a</i> , 'songs' Retention of -r in plural of nouns Dative: only remnants
Verb morphology	Infinitive ending -a, -e or apocope, or a system where some verbs have -a or -å and some verbs have -e or apocope due to vowel balance
Lexicon	Personal pronouns 1. pers. sg. <i>e:(g), æ:(g), i:, æi:(g), ai, je:, jæ:, jæi</i> 'I'. 1. p. pl.: <i>me:/mi:(d), vi:/ve: oss</i> 'we'

Table 14. The main features used by Skjekkeland for the classification of Norwegian Dialects

Kart 3

Realiseringa av *tonem 1*
 Fordelinga av *tonem-1*-kategoriar
 etter fire hovudtypar



Map 7. Skjekkeland’s map of the pronunciation of toneme 1

2.7.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Skjekkeland’s classification is presented in Table 15. Even if Skjekkeland discusses more appropriate divisions into three or four dialect areas, he concludes that the traditional division into two main areas is the best. The linguistic feature that constitutes the main distinction between east and west is for Skjekkeland, as for the previous dialectologists, *jamvekt*, ‘vowel balance’.

Dialect	Subdialects	Varieties
Austnorsk [Eastern Norwegian]	Midlandsk [West] Austlandsk [East] Trøndsk [North]	
Vestnorsk [Western Norwegian]	Sørlandsk [South] Sørvestlandsk [West] The dialect in Bergen Nordvestlandsk [Northwest] Nordnorsk [Northern Norwegian]	Helgelandsk [Near Helgeland] Nordlandsk [the dialect in Nordland] Troms-Finnmarks-mål [the dialect in Troms and Finnmark]

Table 15. Skjeggeland's geographical division

2.8 Brit Mæhlum & Unn Røynealand (2012)

Brit Mæhlum (1957-) and Unn Røynealand (1967-) are first and foremost sociolinguists, and even though they have both written substantial works on Norwegian dialects, the classification of dialects in geographic areas has not been the focus of their research. We include them in this overview, due to their textbook, *Det norske dialektlandskapet. Innføring i studiet av dialekter* (2012) 'The Norwegian dialect landscape. Introduction to the study of dialects', which is used in several universities and colleges in Norway. It is reasonable to believe that the classification used in this book will have some influence on the way students look at dialects, and even how some of them – potentially dialectologist of the future – will classify dialects themselves.

2.8.1 Framework: Isoglotic dialectology and sociolinguistics

Whereas Christiansen combines geographic dialectology with structuralism in her textbook, and Sandøy combines structuralism and sociolinguistics, Mæhlum and Røynealand try to combine geographic dialectology with sociolinguistics. One of their chapters presents dialectology and sociolinguistics as "to ulike tradisjoner som må ses i sammenheng" 'two different traditions that must be seen in context'. Here, the

diachronic tradition of dialectology and the synchronic tradition of sociolinguistics are discussed, together with the use of maps as a linguistic illustration in the 21st century.

The classification of dialects in a geographic perspective is primarily a pedagogic tool for Mæhlum and Røynealand. The conflict between this and their interest in variation and change becomes evident in the presentations of the dialect features (see Table 16 for the most important ones). When a feature is presented, it is typically followed by a reminder that this feature is “på vikande front” ‘receding’ or “under press” ‘under pressure’ at the end of the section. After four chapters dedicated to the four geographic areas, one chapter is called “Dialektendringar” ‘dialect changes’, where they are on familiar sociolinguistic grounds and discuss prestige and other external factors.

Grammar field	Features
Phonology	High or low onset of the tone on words with toneme 1 Apocope of unstressed end vowels in several grammatical categories Retroflex flap [ɾ] [su:ɾ] < ON <i>sól</i> ‘sun’, [ga:ɾ] < ON <i>garðr</i> ‘farm’ Palatalization of alveolar consonants [fjeʌ] < ON <i>fjall</i> ‘mountain’, [huj] < ON <i>hundr</i> ‘dog’ /r/ pronounced as alveolar tap [ɾ] or uvular fricative [ʀ] Segmentation ³ of alveolar consonants /fjedl/ < ON <i>fjall</i> ‘mountain’, v. /fidna/ < ON <i>finna</i> ‘find’
Noun morphology	Fem. sg. def. the same endings for both weak and strong nouns, or two different ones
Verb morphology	Endings in infinitive: -a, -e, apocope, -a/-e according to vowel balance
Lexicon	The adverb ‘not’: <i>ikke, ikkje, itte, inte, ente</i> Personal pronoun, 1. pers. sg. subj. <i>jei, je, eg, e, æg, æ, i, ei</i> < ON <i>ek</i> Personal pronoun, 3. pers. pl. subj. and obj. <i>di, dei, dem, døm</i> > ON <i>þeir</i> (nom) and <i>þeim</i> (dative)

Table 16. The main features used by Mæhlum and Røynealand for the classification of Norwegian Dialects

³ In Norwegian dialectology the term *segmentering* or *segmentasjon* is used if one segment (ll, nn) is split into two (dl, dn).

2.8.2 Classification of dialects and subdialects

Mæhlum & Røyneland (2012) are the first in our overview who use the distribution of high or low tone in the onset of words with toneme 1 as a criterion in the division. However, since this isogloss to some degree follows that of vowel balance, there are no consequences for the geographic classification. Their geographic division (Table 17) makes it clear how the differences in Norwegian dialect follow a north-south dimension, both when it comes to the main dialect groups and when it comes to the subdialects. The exception from this pattern is the Mid Norwegian area, where the division goes between the coastal dialects in the west and the inland dialects in the east (Map 8).

Dialects	Subdialects
Austnorsk [East Norwegian]	Nordautlandsk [North] Midtautlandsk [Middle] Sørautlandsk [South]
Trøndersk [Mid Norwegian]	Inntrøndersk [Inland East] Uttrøndersk [Coast West]
Vestnorsk [West Norwegian]	Nordvestlandsk [North] Sørvestlandsk [Middle] Sørlandsk [South]
Nordnorsk [North Norwegian]	Sørleg nordlansk [South] Nordleg nordlansk [Middle] Troms- og finnmarksmål [North]

Table 17. Mæhlum and Røyneland's geographic division



Map 8. Mæhlum & Røynealand (2012) classification. It is similar to the classification proposed by Christiansen (1954)

10. Discussion

This article has revealed that different classifications for Norwegian dialects have been and are still used. While Aasen divides the dialects into three main areas (east,

west and north), both Ross, Larsen, Kolsrud and Skjekkeland divides Norwegian dialects into two main groups (east and west). Christiansen and Mæhlum & Røyneland recognizes four main groups (east, west, mid and north), and Sandøy's categorization reveals twelve groups.

After the presentation of the classifications of Norwegian dialects, it seems clear that the tradition of classifying dialects according to historical and geographical factors in spatial dialectology, is very strong. In fact, it is so strong, that even linguists within structuralist or sociolinguistic paradigms, have adjusted to this tradition. An obvious reason for this is that geography and history go well together: Geography tells you where in the country people share a dialect, and history tells you why it came to be that way. Even during the Danish-Norwegian union the Danish written language did not – according to common assumption - influence the grammar of the rural dialects. The dialects therefore served as a symbol in the nation building process of the 19th and 20th centuries. Norway is still a country where the inhabitants have strong, regional identities, displayed every day through dialects, and displayed on special occasions by national – that are in fact regional – costumes.

Another reason why the tradition is so strong, lies in the research itself. There has been little research on classification since Sandøy's attempt to renew the tradition in 1985. There are some case studies in the tradition of perceptual dialectology (Røsstad 2005, van Ommeren 2019, Gulliksen 2019) and dialectometry (Holmen & Grønvik 2012). Furthermore, the last 40 years Norwegian dialectology has been dominated by sociolinguists. During the last decade, also researchers with a background in generative grammar have joined in the research of Norwegian dialects. Their main contribution has been to deepen the understanding of syntactic variation, a field that has long been neglected, but it has not yet resulted in attempts to provide new dialect classifications.

What could be said about the actual, linguistic features that are chosen in the overview given in this article? One cannot discuss classification of Norwegian dialects without mentioning the vowel balance. All of the scholars, with the exception of Ivar Aasen, have used the vowel balance as the first main criterion, that draws the border between east and west. A question that needs to be asked, is if time has come to

change this, since the linguistic reality has changed. Due to language change, vowel balance is no longer a part of all the dialects that fall into the eastern and middle dialects, even if the dialect maps still include half the country in the vowel balance group. Today, urban East Norwegian has the ending -e in the infinitive, like dialects in the south, northwest and the far north. Urban Middle Norwegian has apocope, like the dialects in the southern part of Northern Norway. From a pedagogical perspective, using vowel balance as a main criterion is difficult to defend. Our experience is that even university students find the vowel balance the most difficult of all dialect features to understand.

The retroflex flap [ɾ], that follows the vowel balance in most classifications, is far easier to defend. Not only is its historical background relatively straightforward to explain, it is a salient characteristic, easily perceived by most Norwegians. In addition, it is widely used, and has even expanded socially. The same could be said for the feature apocope.

The authors of this article have their background in sociolinguistics and have worked with multilingualism and historical sociolinguistics as well. Our approach to dialect classification is that in addition to the factors presented in this article, the field would benefit from including folk linguistic perspectives. The fact that Mæhlum and Røyneland have included a tone feature in their main classification is in line with this. Most Norwegians use tonal features as a guide when they meet someone new and try to figure out where they come from. It must be added here, that asking a new acquaintance where they are from based on the way they speak, is not insulting in Norway, but a normal thing to do.

Another feature that could be added to the main classification from a folk linguistic perspective, is the pronunciation of /r/, since this is also a feature that unschooled ears easily pick up. We acknowledge Ross' claim that a uvular [ʁ] can emerge as a speech impediment in dialect areas where an alveolar tap dominates, but in opposition to him, we do not see this as a major problem for introducing /r/ into the classification.

To end this article, an interesting, new approach to dialect classification can be mentioned. In an article from 2015, Randi Neteland and Edit Bugge investigated the difference between urban and rural dialects around the country, focussing on morphological simplification. This is a long way from the traditional classifications that do not acknowledge urban vernaculars at all. We believe that in the future, this kind of classification, where external factors other than merely geography are included in the classification, will be important. And when an increasingly larger part of the population lives in urban centres, urban vernaculars should be included in future dialect classifications. This would also reflect that the Norwegian language is comprised of both traditional and modern rural and urban varieties.

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