

THE NEW DIALECT OF HØYANGER*

Høyanger, a small industrial town on the west coast of Norway, is a point of reference for researchers who are dealing with new-dialect formation. It has been presented almost as a golden example of koinéization, by demonstrating how a new dialect could be formed over three generations under strong influence of in-migrants languages (see Omdal 1977, Trudgill 1986).

However, I would like to point out that the basis for our knowledge about the formation of the Høyanger dialect is rather narrow. In this paper, I will give a brief introduction to my ongoing PhD project, and present some results, by commenting the development of the Høyanger dialect as well as the language situation today.

Several studies of language in ‘new towns’ are designed on the basis of the *result* of the koinéization, and not on the *process* itself, since we often lack evidence from early stages. In addition to my own fieldwork in Høyanger, I have raw material from several older studies, which together represent different stages and generations in the koinéization process. This can offer valuable insights into the changing processes, for instance the degree of variation and the development of variables over time. Hopefully, this material will, in combination with a qualitative discussion, contribute to shed new light on the koinéization process, in Høyanger as well as in a more general perspective.

I also intend to say something about the further development of the established koiné. This is possible since my youngest informants represent the fourth generation after the industrialization. One interesting issue will be the comparison of today’s tendencies in the Høyanger dialect with the results of more extensive processes of language change, such as regionalization and standardization, which takes place in other areas of western Norway.

References:

- Omdal, Helge (1977): ”Høyangermålet – en ny dialekt” i *Språklig Samling* 1, p. 7–9.
Trudgill, Peter (1986): *Dialects in Contact*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

* A similar abstract was sent to ICLaVE 2003 in Uppsala, and approved there. But because of maternity leave I was prevented from presenting my paper in that conference.