

Helen White



# The Spread of the Norwegian Multiethnolect: Syntactic and Morphological Features

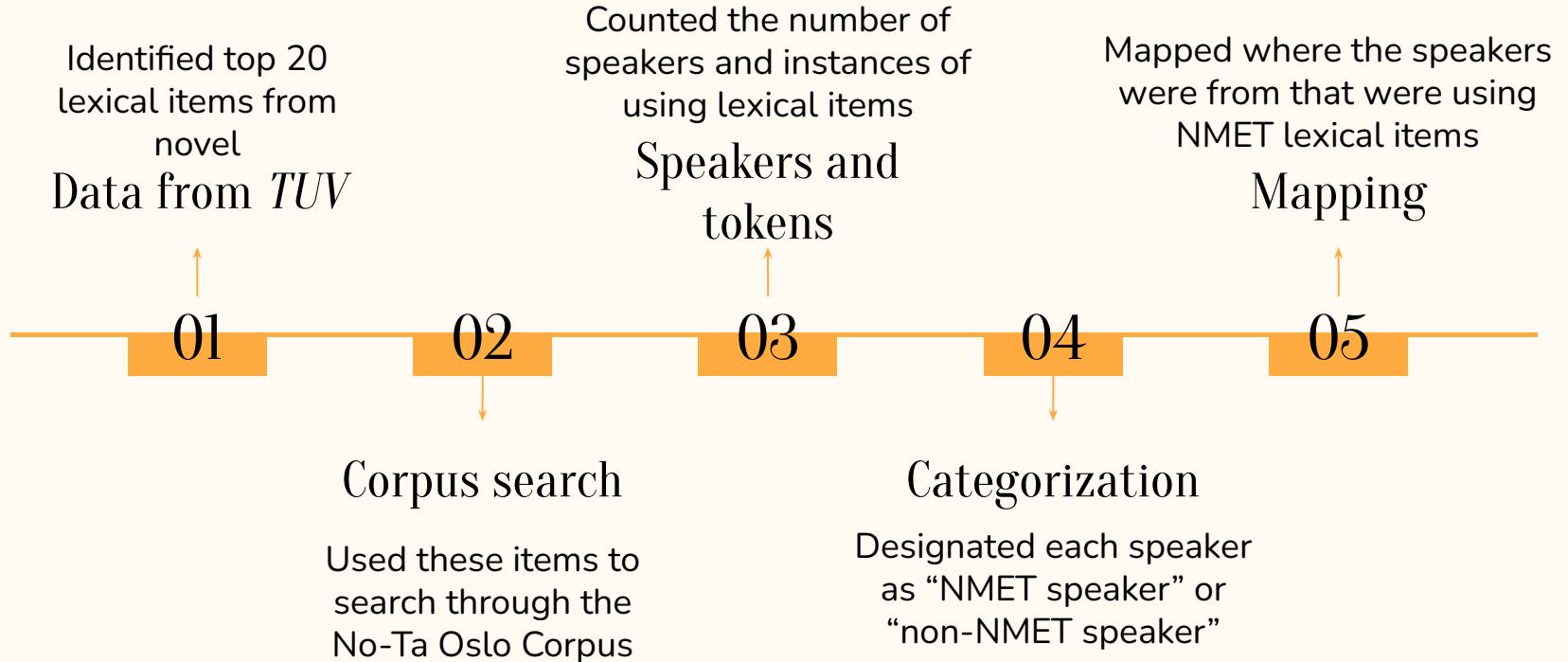


Photo: A Frog in the Fjord

A continuation of previous analysis using the No-Ta Oslo Corpus

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# Previous research steps





Simple | Extended | CQP query

Search

heftig

Or...

Show speakers

Concordance

Statistics

Found 21 matches (1 pages)

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016		og så tapte jo Lyn	heftig	# kan man si # tapte en sånn seks en eller noe sånt noe # fem fire
030		*_latter_*	heftig	
030		e ja vi har en del # vi har mye norsk da #	heftig	mye norsk
030		må være	heftig	betalt
030			heftig	da ja knakk en båt i to # sånne store liksom ?
030		nei men det var sånn	heftig	heftig nå Aker bygge en gang

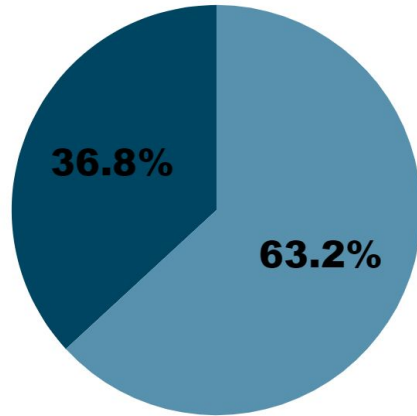
# Data

# The corpus

166 speakers total

Collected from 2004-2006

Speaker background (Number of speakers)



● **NMET speaker** ● **Non-NMET speaker**

# Sample

Interviews of previously identified 19 speakers who used NMET lexical items

12/19 were categorized as NMET users

*Easier to parse,  
interviews  
question  
meta-linguistic  
awareness*

# Morphological and syntactical features of NMET

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## Overgeneralization of masculine gender

Using *en* when the gender should be *et* in Standard Eastern Norwegian

Når du kjører på T-banen, du kan se **den røde husen** ved politistasjonen.

SEN: *det røde huset*

## Violation of V2 rule

After a time marker or other modifier at the beginning of a sentence, the pronoun and noun must switch places

Hvis dem gidde skikkelig uføretrygd, **ting var bedre.**

SEN: *var ting bedre*

## -a ending on definite plural nouns

Trading the Standard Eastern Norwegian ending *-ene* for definite plural nouns for a simpler *-a*

Jeg jobber så heftig for **dem flusa.**

SEN: *de flusene*



# Limitations

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- Existence of Upus-corpus
- Primary research at the lexical level (Svendsen and Røyneland 2008)
- “...experimental setting [is] unsuitable for capturing the characteristics of a multiethnolectal speech style” (Opsahl 2009)
- Interviews, not conversations, where more tokens originally came from

# Morphological and syntactic features versus lexical features

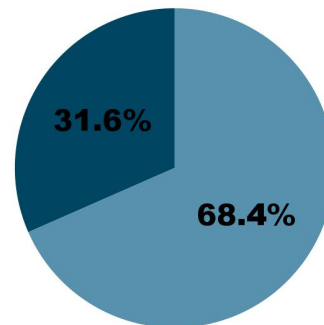
Initial findings indicate that **more speakers used lexical items than morphological and syntactic features**

Out of sample, 13/19 used morphological and syntactic features

30 tokens of morphological and syntactic features versus 91 tokens

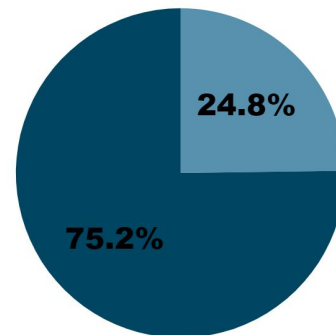


Type of feature (Number of speakers)



● morpho/syntac ● lexical only

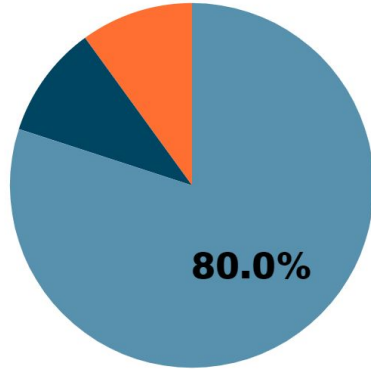
Type of feature (Number of tokens)



● morpho/syntac ● lexical

# Type of feature-spread

Type of feature (Number of tokens)



- **Violation of V2**
- **Overgeneralization of gender**
- **-a ending on definite plural**

Overwhelmingly, the majority of the tokens were the violation of V2

Potentially because this rule is easier to break

*The vast majority of these examples came after the word "så" meaning "so".*



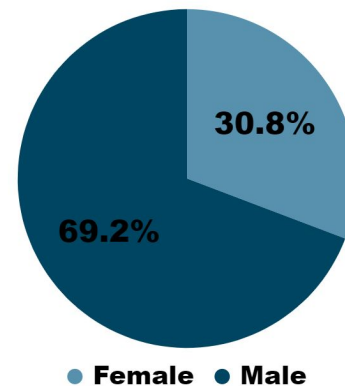


# Gender

## distribution

Roughly as expected, very similar percentages to overall sample

Speaker gender (Number of speakers)



# NMET user versus non-NMET user

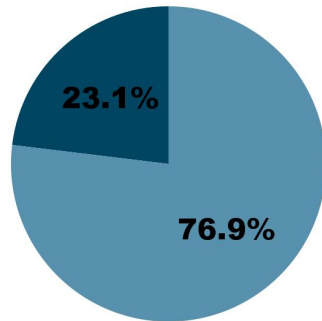
*Categorized based on respondent's description of language background.*

*Higher percentage of speakers are NMET speakers in the morphological and syntactic features*

Speakers using morphological and syntactic features

**10/13** are classified as NMET users

Speaker background (Number of speakers)

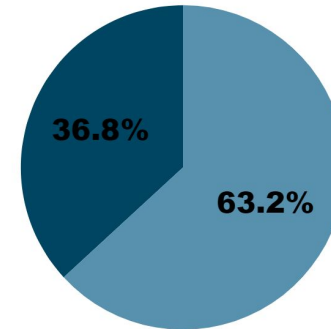


● NMET speaker ● Non-NMET speaker

Speakers using lexical items

**12/19** are classified as NMET users

Speaker background (Number of speakers)



● NMET speaker ● Non-NMET speaker

# NMET user versus non-NMET user

*Categorized based on respondent's description of language background.*

*Significantly higher percentage of tokens of morphological and syntactic features spoken by NMET users.*

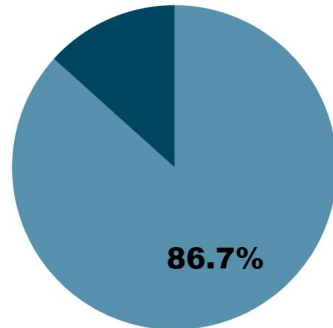
Tokens using morphological and syntactic features

**26/30** spoken by NMET users

Tokens using lexical items

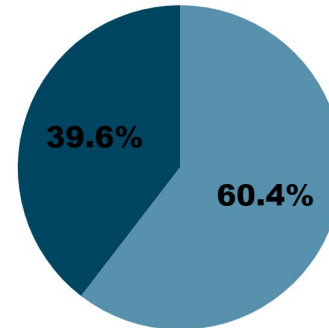
**55/91** spoken by NMET users

Speaker background (Number of tokens)



● NMET speaker ● Non-NMET speaker

Speaker background (Token count)



● NMET speaker ● Non-NMET speaker

# Geographical distribution

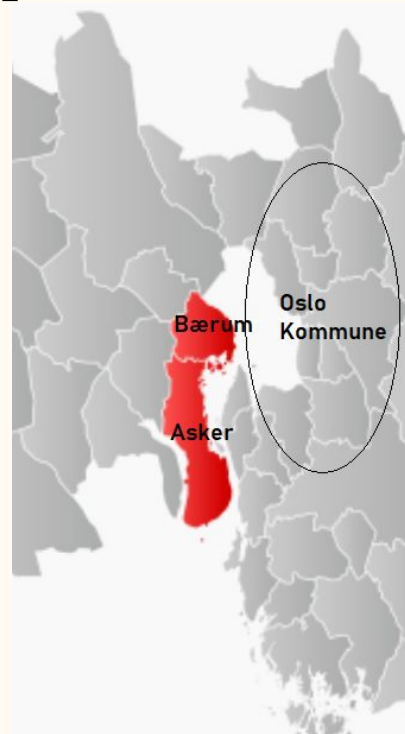


## Grünerløkka

No speakers used morphological or syntactic features, average distribution of minority-background populations

## Nordre Aker

No speakers used morphological or syntactic features, lower than average distribution of minority-background populations



**Other areas**  
All other areas had speakers using morphological or syntactic features

**Søndre Nordstrand**  
Highest number of speakers using morphological or syntactic features, as with lexical items

# Why?



## Quist and Svendsen (2010)

“One reason for the young peoples’ emphasis on words may be that words are probably one of the linguistic strata that are most cognitively available, and most easily describable from a folk linguistic point of view.”

*These features do not contribute to semantic meaning, they are grammatical constructions.*



## Svendsen and Røyneland (2008)

“In both of the Oslo corpora there seems to be a link between the use of the multiethnolectal speech style and engagement within music scenes such as hip hop and rap.”



## Opsahl (2009)

“...there is, for instance, a discrepancy between adolescents’ reported and actual use of multiethnolectal features.”

# Sociolinguistic findings: examples

## Respondent 32

Says the area is affected by “bad Norwegian”  
Demonstrated violation of V2, although not NMET speaker

## Respondent 165

Has minority background, but considered herself to have outgrown NMET: *fjortisspråk*  
No morpho-syntactic features

## Respondent 28

Considers herself to speak “pretty Norwegian”  
No morpho-syntactic features

## Respondents 37 and 23

Mention that NMET slang words have spread all over Oslo  
Both contribute violation of V2

## Respondent 138

Says that because of high migrant population “the Norwegian is of course not very good”  
Violation of V2

*All of these participants used lexical tokens of NMET.*

# Conclusion

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In general, speakers were less likely to demonstrate morphological or syntactic features of NMET versus lexical features.

*This can only be said  
about interview setting.*

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- Lack of research into areas other than lexical spread
- Data collected 2004-2006
- Might be more in use in peer conversations
- Likely less use of morphological or syntactic features due to colloquialism of lexical items

# Sources

Svendsen, B. A., & Røyneland, U. (2008). Multiethnolectal facts and functions in Oslo, Norway. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 12(1-2), 63-83. doi:10.1177/13670069080120010501.

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