

Orientation towards the vernacular and style-shifting in speech of first-generation Polish migrant communities speaking Norwegian in Norway

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Background

Dialects in Norway

- Norway is characterised with high dialectal variation
- Four larger dialectal areas – Western Norwegian, Eastern Norwegian, the Trøndelag dialect, and Northern Norwegian (Krisoffersen 2000)
- Dialects are associated with one's background and identity
- Acquiring local dialects can be difficult for new learners of Norwegian, which may not match the variety typically taught in the classroom (the written standard Bokmål)

First- and second-generation migrants and their dialect use

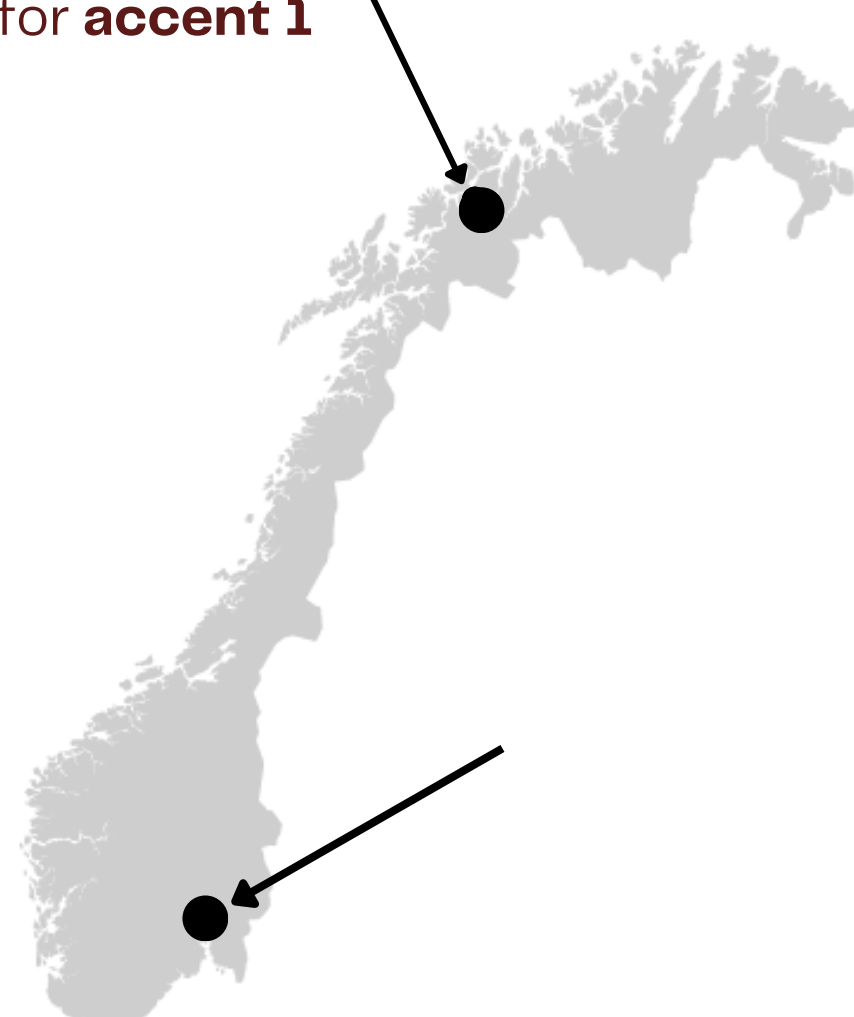
- Often only second-generation in-migrants orient themselves towards community standards (the vernacular) (Labov 2014)
- Their parents' phonological systems are governed by idiosyncratic and idiolectal structures (Labov 2014)
- L2 speakers more likely to shift dialect than L1 speakers (Gnevshva et al. 2022)
- L2 dialect shift very common in migrant communities in Norway (Sætermo and Solliid 2020)
- Polish migrants in Manchester shift towards regional STRUT when social factors are met (Drummond 2016)

Tromsø Dialect

- palatalisation on /t/, /d/, /l/, /n/ in words like **vann, fjell**
- lowering of /i/ to /e/, e.g. in **fisk**
- lowering of /e/ to /æ/, e.g. in **sett**
- dokker / dokkers** for **dere / deres**
- ka / kor / kær** for **hva / hvor / hvem**

Oslo Dialect

- retroflexion for /r/, /r/, /rd/, /rn/ → [r̠], [r̠], [r̠]
- tjukk /l/, e.g. in **sola**
- tone 1 – tone 2 distinction <â> for **accent 1** and <â> for **accent 2**
- merger of /ç/ with /ʃ/ into [ʃ]

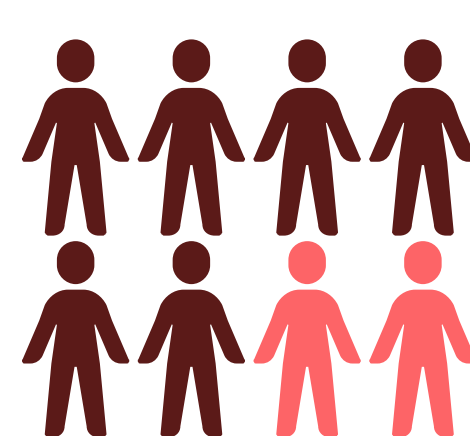


Research Questions

- Do non-native speakers acquire dialect features from areas where they live?
- Do L3 speakers develop a sensitivity toward the standard and the dialect?
- What are the social predictors of L3 dialect use?

Participants

- 18 L3 Norwegian speaker living in Trømso (F= 15, M= 3)
- 18 L3 Norwegian speakers living in Oslo (F= 13, M= 5)
- 15 L1 Norwegian speakers living in Trømso
- Mean age = 36.1
- Mean years of residence = 7.4



Procedure

- Recorded sociolinguistic interviews (eliciting various speech styles)
- Sociodemographic questionnaire
- Proficiency test in English (Cambridge)
- Proficiency test in Norwegian (adapted from Language Trainers)



DIALECT SCORE INDEX

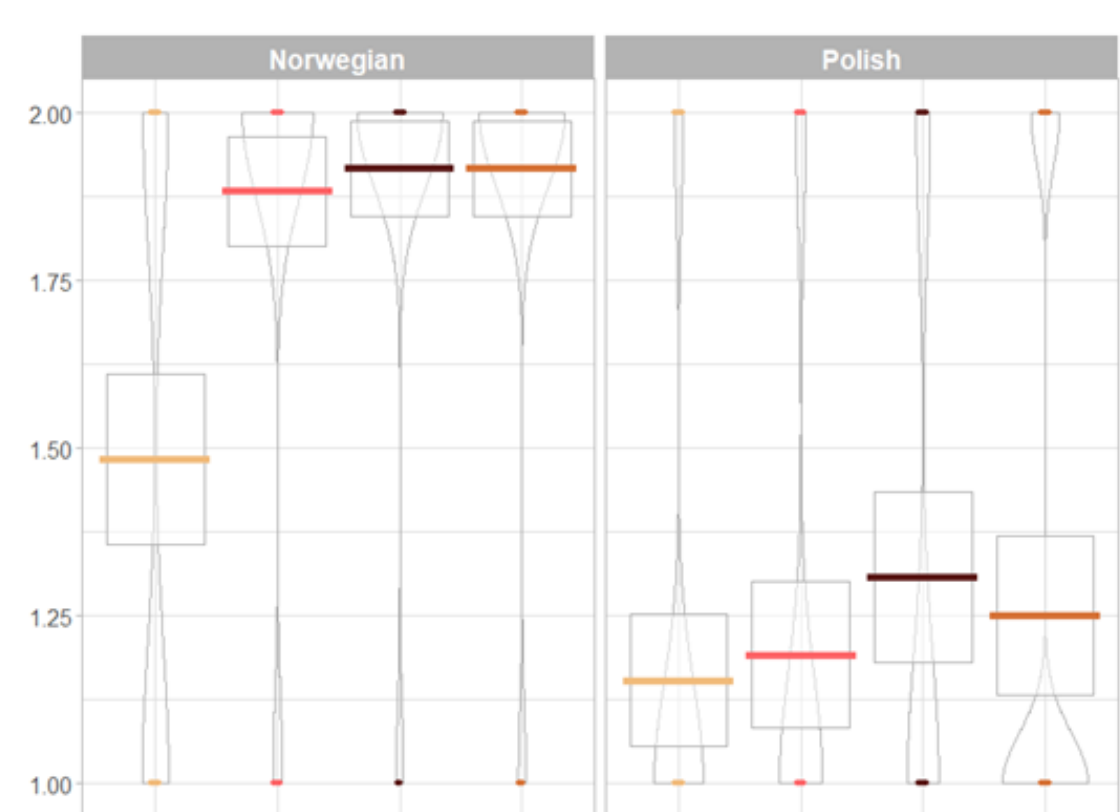
Wordlist
Reading
Picture description
Unscripted speech

Coding the data

- Each interview listened and coded by a trained NO linguist
- Dialect features listed down and dialect score (0–6) calculated

Dialect users vs. non-dialect users in Trømso

- Norwegians perform significantly differently to the L1 Polish speakers in terms of dialect use for all words except **ikkje**.
- This lack of difference in **ikkje** is driven by the Norwegians, as this form is fading from the Tromsø dialect.
- ka (p = 0.0053)
- kem (p = 0.0071)
- kor (p = 0.0047)
- ikkje (p = 0.0880)

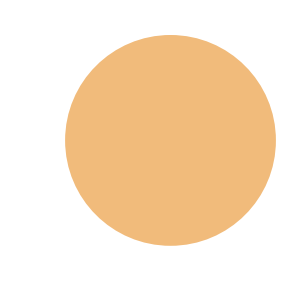
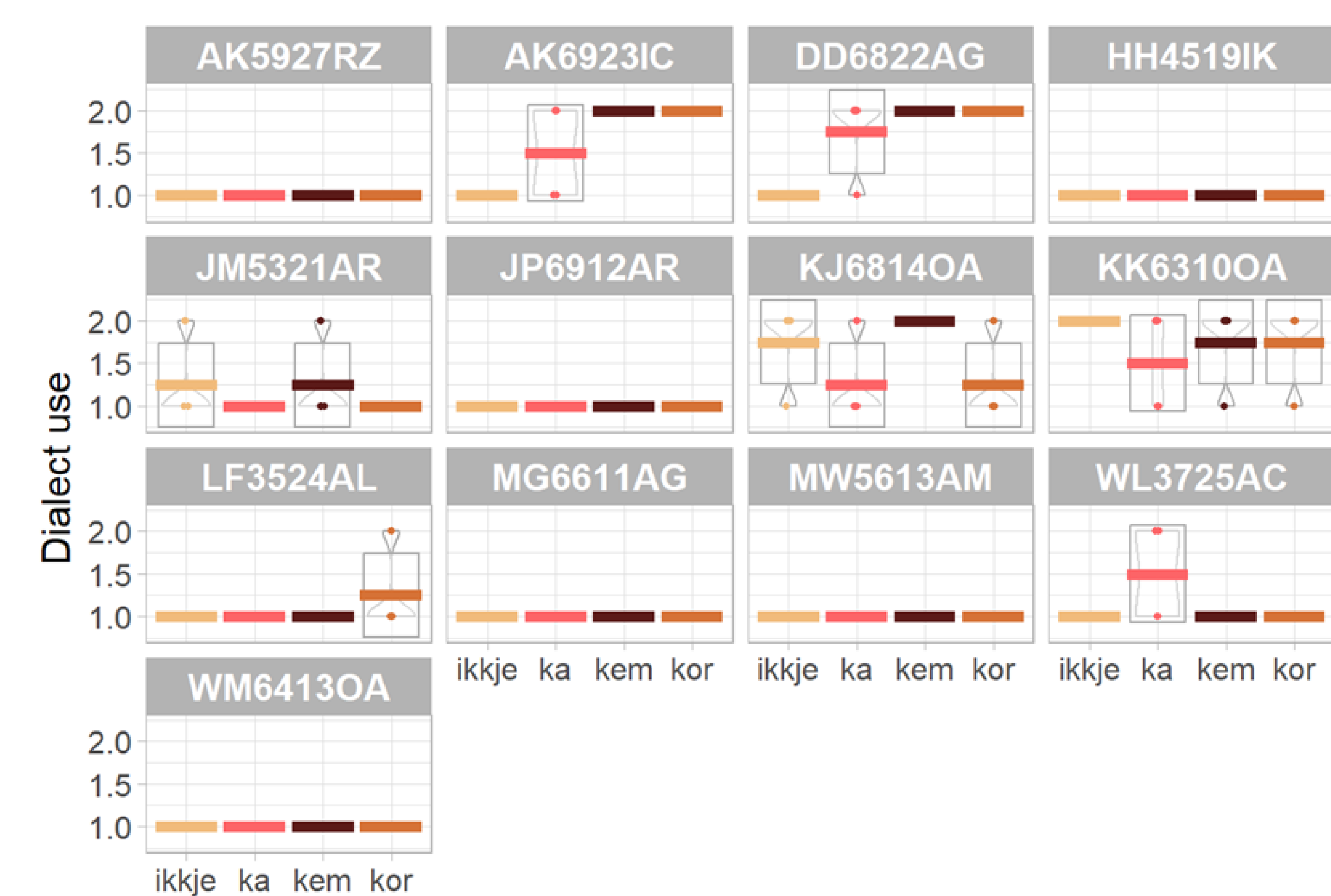


- There is variability in use of the dialect forms for the Polish group, even within the individual.
- They can be split into two groups: **Dialect Users (DU)** and **Non Dialect Users (NDU)**.

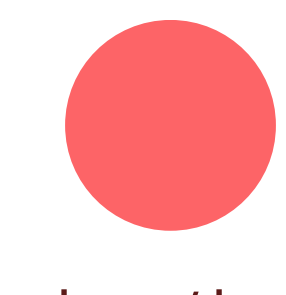
- LoR **DU**: 108 months, **NDU**: 42 months
- % Friends Norwegian **DU**: 55%, **NDU**: 19.2%
- Like Norwegian **DU**: 6.5, **NDU**: 4.2 | Like Tromsø dialect **DU**: 5.7, **NDU**: 3.5
- Proportion use passive English **DU**: 4.4, **NDU**: 5.3 | Proportion use passive Norwegian **DU**: 6.4, **NDU**: 3.8
- Proportion use active English **DU**: 3.6, **NDU**: 5.8 | Proportion use active Norwegian **DU**: 6.1, **NDU**: 3.8
- Learning method of **DU**: Naturalistic, combination naturalistic and formal, **NDU**: formal, combination naturalistic and formal
- Tromsø dialect frequency of use **DU**: Very often, often, sometimes, very rarely, **NDU**: Sometimes, rarely, very rarely, never
- Partner level of Norwegian **DU**: Native, intermediate, advanced, **NDU**: basic, intermediate, proficient, native



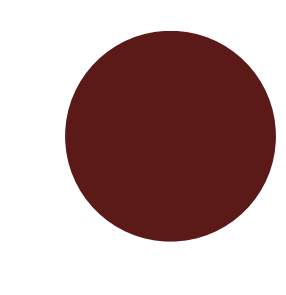
Non-Dialect Users



ikke / ikkje



hva / ka

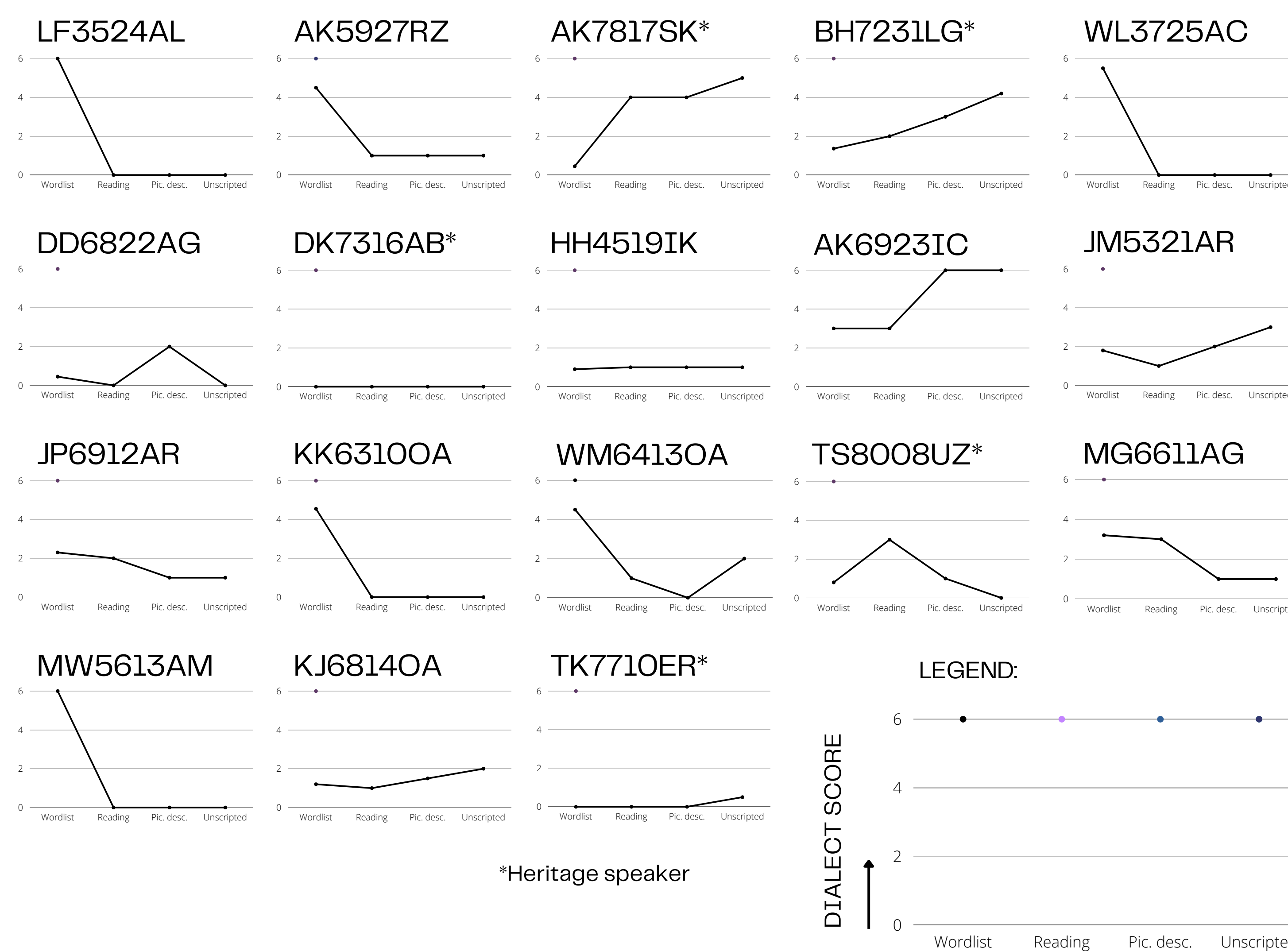


hvem / kem

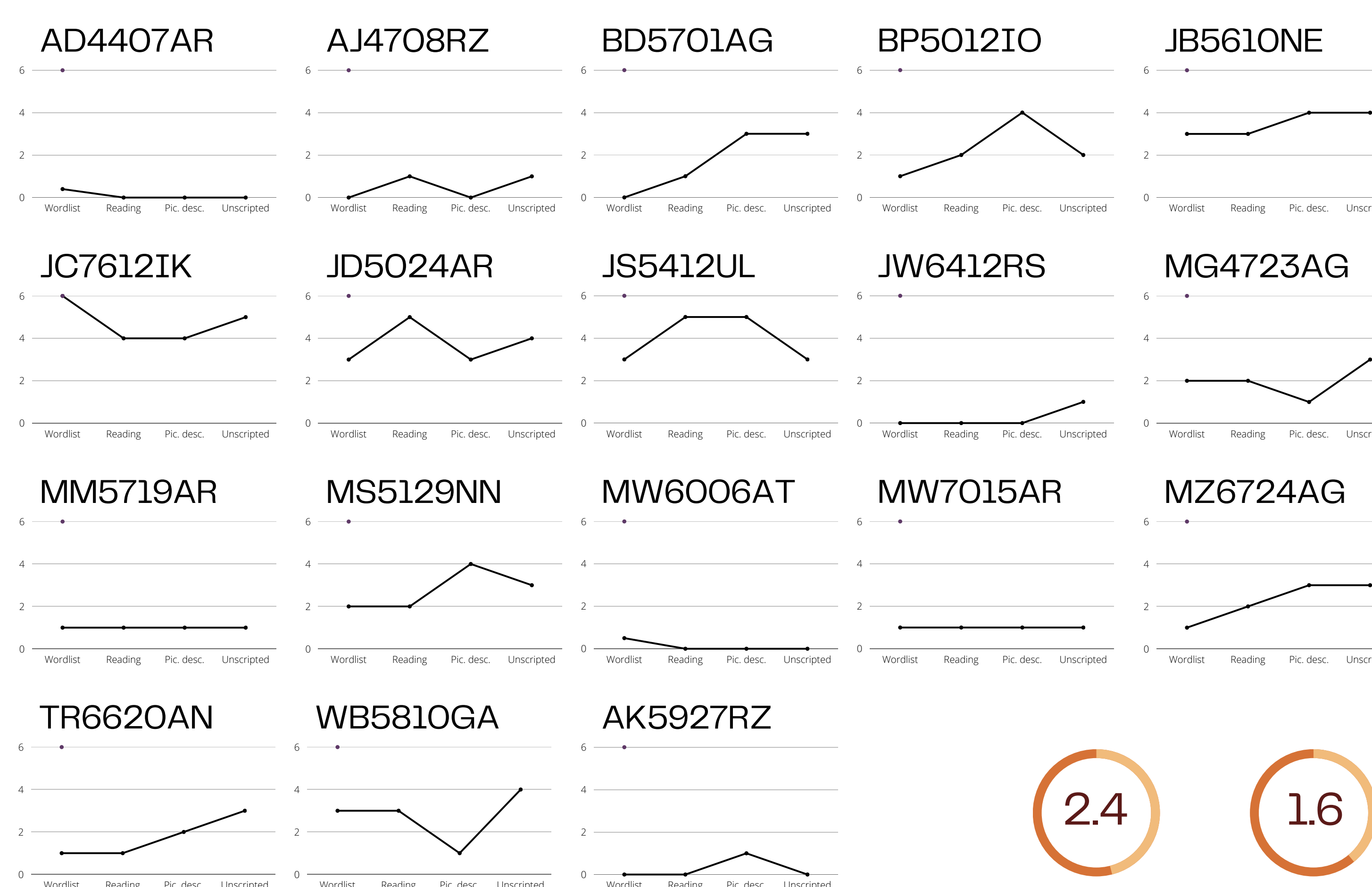


hvor / kor

Results for style-shifting (Trømso)



Results for style-shifting (Oslo)



2.4

GENERAL DIALECT SCORE (Oslo)

1.6

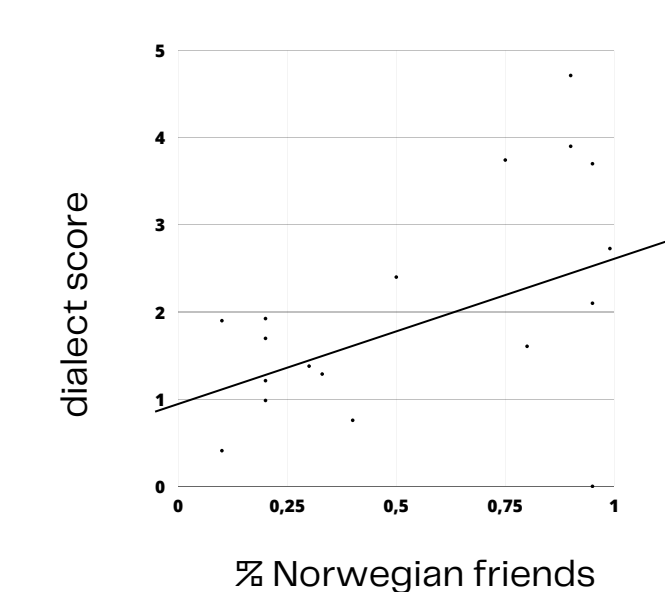
GENERAL DIALECT SCORE (Trømso)

4.5

GENERAL DIALECT SCORE (L1 Trømso)

Results for general dialect use

- The general use of dialect is quite low for both groups (1.6 and 2.4)
- Those who have mostly Norwegian friends in their circles tend to use more dialect (Pearson's R = 0.33 p<0.05)
- Those with the most proficient Norwegian tend to use more dialect (Pearson's R = 0.43, p<0.05)
- The length of stay in the region seems to play a role (Pearson's R = 0.45, p<0.05)
- Level of English (L2) does not seem to play a role for the acquisition of L3 dialect in our groups of speakers (Pearson's R = 0.07, p>0.05)



Individual results

- Speaker AK6923IC has her word-final /n/ palatalised in unscripted speech, but much less so while reading the wordlist (listen → to the words **hun, mann, kan**)
- Speaker AJ4708RZ from Oslo is a low dialect scorer. They, however, improve on their NO accent and NO proficiency between reading and free speech. They were a naturalistic language learner.



unscripted



wordlist



unscripted



reading

Conclusions

- L2/L3/L4 dialect acquisition in Norwegian is attainable but there is a lot of intra-speaker variation
- High dialect index in a foreign language may even be an indicative of one's belonging or assimilation in a new country
- Some L3 Norwegian speakers also display style-shifting, i.e. sensitivity to what the vernacular / dialect means in formal and informal speech styles
- Most L3 Polish speakers do use dialect features in at least one of the tasks that they performed
- The dialect forms identified belong to lexical, phonological and morphosyntactical (analysis underway) categories
- L1 Norwegian speakers did not always use the dialect forms (see: lexical tasks in Tromsø) which may inform about the formal nature of the interview

Discussion

- The Oslo group scored higher for general dialect use than the Trømso group. This may inform about the status (more standard) of the Oslo dialect and the Trømso dialect (more variation e.g. in lexicon or morphosyntactical forms)
- The two groups were also dissimilar in terms of their sociodemographic profiles which may have impact on their dialect use (the Oslo speakers tended to be older, and had stayed in Norway for a longer time)
- This is research in progress, we need more speakers to work better with the data
- We are also planning to compare L3 dialect acquisition among Polish-born speakers from more dialect regions (Kristiansand, Trondheim)

References

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