

Per Egil Mjaavatt  
Department of Linguistics  
The University of Trondheim

## ISOGLOSSES OF TONEME CATEGORIES COMPARED WITH ISOGLOSSES OF TRADITIONAL DIALECT GEOGRAPHY

### Introduction

Can toneme categories be used as dialect markers in the same way as apokope, vowel- and consonant quality? Norwegian dialects are traditionally often divided into four main areas; Eastern Norwegian, Western Norwegian, the dialects of Trøndelag and Northern Norwegian. An acoustical analysis of Norwegian tonemes indicates that the fundamental frequency patterns may be grouped in the same way.

### Results

If we ignore toneme 2 and only examine the distribution of toneme 1-varieties, these may be divided into three groups:

1. The curve of toneme 1 falls off from a maximum in the stressed vowel.
2. The maximum of the curve is in the unstressed vowel.
3. There are two maxima - one in the stressed vowel and one in the unstressed vowel.

The distribution of these three fundamental frequency patterns of toneme 1 covers approximately the same areas as Western-Norwegian, Eastern Norwegian and the dialects of Trøndelag respectively. Northern Norwegian dialects have in toneme 1 words a fundamental frequency pattern with one maximum in the stressed syllable. Thus the dialects differ clearly from the Trøndelag dialects.

If we go into detail concerning the moment of the fundamental frequency maximum in toneme 1 and add the shape of the toneme 2 curves, we will find common borders with a lot of traditional isoglosses e.g. in Setesdalen, Sunnhordaland, Northern Rogaland, Romsdal and northern parts of Gudbrandsdalen.

In this way the isoglosses of the toneme categories seem to give an interesting supplement to the traditional dialect geography.