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STRESS AND TONEME AS USED BY NATIVE TRONDHEIM SPEAKERS -
A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

Introduction

In Trondheim as in the rest of Trøndelag there is a tendency to pronounce words like avis ("newspaper") and generation ("generation") with stress on the first syllable and with toneme 2 -["av:is] and ["gen:erəʃu:n]. This pronunciation is often regarded as non-standard Norwegian, as opposed to [a'vi:s] and [generə'ʃu:n] which is considered to represent standard Norwegian, spoken by the upper social stratum.

The purpose of the present investigation was to study how native Trondheim speakers use stress and toneme in words of the type mentioned above, and to relate these linguistic variables to the sociologic variables sex, age, profession, education, economy, political sympathy, and attitude to use of dialect.

Method

50 adults of both sexes born and grown up in Trondheim were randomly chosen. The material was elicited through an interview of about half an hour with each informant and through two types of word lists and a questionnaire. The informants were interviewed by a person speaking the Trondheim/Trøndelag dialect. The setting was informal, mostly the informant's living-room.

The topics of conversation were meant to be the same for all the interviews, but even so the sample of data naturally differs from one informant to the next. This set of data and the data provided by the word lists have first been separately analyzed and then analyzed as a whole. The two sets of linguistic data have been studied in relation to each of the sociologic variables mentioned above.

Results

40 informants tended to use one of the standards. 10 informants used different standards in the two sets of data, and 6 informants (3 of whom were among the former) used different standards in the two types of word lists.

As other sociolinguistic investigations have shown the women used more standard forms than the men did. - For the women age, political sympathy, profession, and attitude to use of dialect seemed to be the more important sociologic variables. For the men political sympathy, economy, education, and profession seemed to be the more dominant variables.