

Dag F. Simonsen: Over the fence – and into English? Reflections on adolescents, academics, linguistic development and language policy in Norway in the early 2000s
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Over the fence – and into English? Reflections on adolescents, academics, linguistic development and language policy in Norway in the early 2000s

Dag F. Simonsen

The Norwegian Language Council, Oslo, Norway
dag.f.simonsen@sprakrad.no

Abstract

After a discussion of recent language-policy developments in the Scandinavian countries, and of the domain loss theory saying English may displace Scandinavian languages in crucial sectors of society, a model is sketched that links the progress of English to people's free choices, presupposing (1) bilingualism in the national language and English, (2) arenas where real choices are possible and (3) motives for preferring English.

This model is applied to youth language and academic language in Norway, on the basis of recent research. In both cases, there has been an increase in people's competence in English as well as in the number of arenas and motives for using English. As for the adolescents, in spite of the strongly positive symbolic value they ascribe to English, there are few indications that they are really dropping Norwegian, whereas academics tend to use English more, both in publishing and in other discipline-related activities.

Finally the author reflects upon the consequences that should be drawn in relation to language policy. Youth marks a period of freedom, and Norwegian adolescents' use of language doesn't necessarily forebode a transition into English, and so should be stimulated rather than limited. Contrary to this, academic language use is already governed by regulations, and may be further regulated, if necessary by law, so as to promote parallel use of Norwegian and English at the universities.

Introduction

In this article I will discuss some issues in Norwegian language policy that have been made topical by the general globalization – including especially some current politically managed tendencies in the knowledge system and also the increased social mobility in Norway and on a global basis – and by the international spread of English.

First I outline briefly the policy run by the state for the last decade and a half to restrain the increasing influence of English upon the Norwegian language, and then I go on to comment on a number of problematic aspects of the perspective underlying this policy. Here I will deal with the theory of loss of domains in particular that says that Norwegian language may lose whole societal areas of language use to English. Subsequently I look at some recent data from two large “areas” in

society that are considered to be important in this context, namely (i) adolescents and their language use, and (ii) the academic communities of knowledge – equivalent to the social groups made up by the professionals of the university sector when grouped together to deal with subject-related issues in their own field. Finally, after a discussion of what conclusions one may draw from this, I also assess what language policy challenges this poses to the authorities.

This article, then, does not deal with the traditional issues in Norwegian controversies on language policy, but rather with the development of new varieties of Norwegian linked to social mobility, with the increased use of English linked to globalization and also with what language policy measures the state should implement to meet with a radically new linguistic situation in Norway. So we should really keep in mind that a true *overall* assessment of this situation would have to include several other important factors as well – factors that cannot be discussed here – especially the relationship between written and spoken Norwegian and between the two written standards of Norwegian, named Bokmål and Nynorsk.

Recent state language policy in Norway and Scandinavia

Traditionally, Norway used to be one of the linguistically most homogeneous states in Europe. At the same time, national and nationalistic trends, very often in some socially orientated version, have been an important political force and have also put their stamp on the policy of culture and language. This country has an old and strong tradition of language planning and also, as opposed to Denmark and Sweden, has language legislation, both on the use of Bokmål and Nynorsk and on the use of the Sámi language. But Norway also has got an open economy and was for several hundred years a recipient of external social, cultural and linguistic impulses. In accordance with this, foreign language education in schools has long been given priority (for some years now, this tends to mean English only), and so people, broadly speaking, have a high competence in English, even though there are very few English mother tongue speakers in Norway.

Like several other countries, Norway is today affected by the great migrations of the world and has received both migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers, who have brought hundreds of new languages to the country. And yet, much less attention has been paid to this than to the spread of English in the media and other channels. At an early stage the spread of English gave rise to concern and to discussions, and led to specific language policy interventions from about 1990, but not to very much research. One can say the interventions originated from an experience of English as “getting closer” by becoming visible in Norway in new ways and new contexts. Recently, however, we have seen a substantial increase in research both on language use in immigrant related groups and on the relationship between Norwegian and English.

Today, the situation has changed in a somewhat surprising way. Around 1990, Norwegian language policy measures to limit the spread of English were criticized by the Danes for being puristic, whereas today, Danish authorities themselves are reconsidering their traditionally liberal language policy principles. Both in Denmark and in Sweden, official reports have recently proposed the establishment of a national language policy to strengthen the use of the national language in particular (*Sprog på spil*, *Mål i mun*, respectively). The Swedish report is the most far-reaching, as it includes proposals on legal regulations. In Norway, on the contrary, the authorities recently turned down a proposal from The Norwegian Language Council to establish a commission of the Swedish type. In addition, the Norwegian Parliament in 2002 abolished a regulation in the University Act which stated that in higher education, “the instruction should usually be given in

Norwegian”. This was due to concern that such a regulation might hamper what was considered to be an imperative globalization of the university and college sector.

Thus, the climate for new legislative regulations of the language use field in Norway does not seem very favourable right now. Certainly, there is an ongoing process to transform The Norwegian Language Council, the official advisory body on linguistic issues for more than thirty years, into a new kind of institution, the contours of which are only slowly emerging, and this change may lead to a new Act of Parliament. And since the conversion of the Language Council marks the end of a one-hundred-year-old state language policy which has been controversial and also criticized for its results, a new Act may well become less ambitious than the former Language Council Act. Now, all the aspects of this cannot possibly be assessed seriously without paying regard to the various language political tensions that may affect the result, but at any rate, the authorities now do have the opportunity to take stock and develop some new perspectives by viewing all the aspects of language policy and globalization in a broader context.¹

The language policy measures carried out in Norway about 1990 were mainly designed to influence people’s attitudes. Advertisements, newspaper, radio and television campaigns, and written materials on language-policy issues distributed to the schools, targeted the population in general and warned against what was called “unnecessary” and “harmful” use of English. These measures were implemented by The Norwegian Language Council and had in many ways been conceived in a language policy tradition stemming from the era of nation-building. The borrowing of English linguistic matter was naively seen as a hazard to the existence of the Norwegian language and the actions also tried to fan a kind of traditional cultural struggle in favour of the language. In a way, this was both puristic and moralistic.

Today it is evident that any new language policy measures should be built more systematically on research, which means that there is a need for a better platform of knowledge than what has been available. The language policy measures just mentioned had a weak scientific basis, and there is little evidence that they have affected the causes of the spread of English in the way they were intended to. On the contrary, one can say that English is more often to be seen and heard in Norway today than it was ten or fifteen years ago. At the same time, a conception of English as “getting closer” is really rather vague. What is this metaphor meant to imply, and how could we possibly measure the progression in such a process? To these questions, we have no splendid answers, and so the whole foundation for concern on behalf of Norwegian also remains vague. Actually, the national language seems to prevail as usual in most areas.

Domains and loss of domains

A theory of “loss of domains” has been discussed in Scandinavia during the last fifteen years and can be regarded as the most important bid up to now. Essentially, this perspective was introduced in the late 1980s though initially without making use of the term “domain” (Teleman 1989). Whereas especially Norwegians had been preoccupied with what appeared to be an increasing amount of English loanwords, the theory of loss of domains led to more focussing on another perspective: the possibility that the national language may fall out of use in important societal sectors, thus giving way to English. In Denmark and Sweden, too, this was considered a more serious reason for

¹ In the autumn of 2004, a group was appointed and given the task of writing a strategic paper for the new language institution of Norway. This paper is supposed to be presented in the autumn of 2005, and so it seems that the wish of The Norwegian Language Council for a linguistic commission in a way will come true after all.

concern than the importation of English linguistic elements, and so it attracted interest in all of Scandinavia.² One can assume that the theory of loss of domains has played an important part in the above mentioned language policy re-orientation in Denmark and Sweden.

Now, a closer examination reveals that even the theory of loss of domains is a problematic one. Below, I shall deal rather briefly with this, to show why this perspective in my opinion should be nuanced and supplemented with other scientific and methodological approaches.

The current use of the notion of “domain” stems from Joshua Fishman (1972). Fishman’s contributions belong to the sociolinguistic tradition of the sociology of language, which gives priority to descriptions and analyses of social conditions by means of linguistic data and to the interpretation of linguistic variation as expressions of social phenomena. His theory of domains should be regarded as an early attempt to combine three aspects which seem to be important in relation to language choice, i.e. *interlocutors*, *topic* and *locale*. In Fishman’s view, these three elements work together to give the speakers a feeling that a specific language will be *appropriate* in a given situation, making them choose exactly that language.

It is easy to see that these three elements pointed out by Fishman correspond to factors that attract the attention of many sociolinguists. This is not least true of “interlocutor(s)” and “locale”. If we include network models, too, the “topic” aspect falls into place as well, since such models assume exactly that the social world of language users, including their subject matters, influence their language use. The domain model also touches on accommodation theories, which stress the importance of interlocutors in relation to linguistic adaptation, and Fishman’s notion of “interlocutor” also includes what he calls “role-relations”. Furthermore, the domain notion presupposes the perspectives of both intra-individual and inter-individual variation and maybe even the existence of registers as a part of speakers’ linguistic competence. At the same time, it presupposes a theory of context dependent variation, even though “locale” cannot be said to correspond completely to “situation”, by actually postulating the co-variation of three factors – saying that people and places and “social topics” occur together in fixed combinations.

So Fishman’s notion of “domain” is a formalized model which appears to both presuppose and integrate or contain a number of other perspectives on spoken language. This model is advanced and interesting. How well rooted it is in empirical evidence I wouldn’t dare to say, but sociologists of language adhere to it as a perspective on oral language use. What about the political notion of “domain loss”, then? In an article³, I have tried to show that Fishman’s notion of domain has very little in common with the domain loss notion from Scandinavian debates on language policy. The most problematic issue, which makes it rather difficult to link the two notions, is that Fishman’s discussions relate to domains in a context of *spoken language* and *the language choices of multilingual minority language speakers from among different languages which they master in principle equally well*, whereas the debates on “loss of domains” in Scandinavia are about Scandinavian majority language users who seem to drop their mother tongue in favour of English even when, or especially when *writing*. I will return to this below.

² The situation in relation to domain loss and language policy measures carried out in the Nordic countries was mapped for each country separately in 2001 due to an initiative from The Nordic Council of Ministers. Höglin (2002) gives an account of the results. Some of the mappings suffer from a too loose notion of “domain” and tend to be compilations of casual and incommensurable information stemming from rather heterogeneous sources.

³ This article exists in two versions, respectively Simonsen (2001) and Simonsen (2002). The latter in Norwegian is an elaborate version of the former, which was presented at a European Language Year seminar.

Accordingly, this discussion includes both spoken and written language, indeed maybe first and foremost the latter, and therefore a much broader approach is needed than what is usual in classical sociolinguistic investigations of spoken language variation alone. In my opinion, the domain notion as developed by Fishman fails to cover this. On the other hand, it may function well exactly in relation to *spoken language*, but then in a somewhat looser version which specifies more approximately the relationship between the three aspects, just the way it is explained in introductions to sociolinguistics and in terminology surveys.⁴

Some interesting attempts have been made to develop the notion of domain to make it fruitful in relation to written language too, in other words to bridge the gap between Fishman's notion and the language political use of "loss of domains". Ragnhild Ljosland (2003) bases a recent investigation of language use and language attitudes among Norwegian PhD candidates on a more advanced model, developed by Richard B. Baldauf jr. og Björn Jernudd. It includes a number of supplementing elements such as networks, societal expectations etc. in addition to Fishman's classical three to launch an "expanded" notion of domain. On the basis of this model, she studies the practice and the attitudes of the candidates systematically. In Scandinavian language policy, one should look forward to further discussions on these issues on the basis of new investigations both of Ljosland's kind and with the use of other methodological approaches.

What weighs against a domain notion that aims at covering both spoken and written language, is the completely different relationship that exists between the sender, the message and the recipient in the two settings and, consequently, between interlocutors, topic and locale. Where written language is used neither the "locale" nor the "recipient" can retain the same meaning as in the context of conversations, and texts dispatched by an author very often can become available to anyone, anywhere, which in turn is likely to influence choices you make as a "sender", etc. In addition, writing means contributing to a strongly institutionalized literacy community (school system, public administration, mass media including publishing houses, formal and stylistic demands based on genres and traditions, a technology that requires investments, etc.). A domain perspective designed to cover both this and spoken language may lock us up in analogies that are striking, but still provide us with limited insight.

This may prove especially important now that some of the institutional frames of written language are in a phase of change in connection with the development of data technology and the entry of hypertext, i.e. new Internet-based media. New written practices "marked" by oral language in that they are elusive and informal (home pages, e-mail, chat groups) seem to emerge, and a reorganization of the relationship between written and spoken language may be taking place as users alternate actively and quickly between media such as SMS messages and mobile telephone calls. If this relationship really is getting more dynamic than it used to be, then it becomes even more imperative to maintain a perspective that attends to both coherence and difference and here, an "extended" domain notion is not necessarily well suited.

A simplified perspective

The discussion of domains is a methodological one, a debate that has been necessary and probably will remain so. In my opinion, Fishman's domain notion is interesting, but should be reserved for oral language use. Below I will base my discussion on a somewhat simplified perspective. Referring to the conception that English is "getting closer" in Norway, we can specify the content of this

⁴ Cf. for example Richards, Platt and Weber (1987).

metaphor by means of a thought that lies implicitly at the bottom of Fishman's theory: *that there are "mental linguistic borders" which speakers can cross by switching to another language, even when they could just as well have continued to express themselves in the "initial language"*. Such borders cannot be shown on a map, but exist as options "within" the individual and can be realized in social encounters almost anywhere, geographically speaking, but still only under specific circumstances (depending upon interlocutor, topic and locale), according to Fishman.⁵

Without following Fishman's reasoning to the end, we can see both internal and external conditions that need to be fulfilled if borders of this kind are to be established (and thereby be possible to cross, also). These conditions are partly individual-subjective and partly intersubjective-objective. To specify: To the extent that Norwegian-speaking Norwegians (i) become *bilingual* in English and Norwegian, (ii) attain *arenas* (more or less institutionalized "locales" or "meeting places")⁶ which make both languages equally available, and (iii) get *motives* to choose English – to the same extent they will have approached the "linguistic option border" between Norwegian and English, both internally and externally.⁷ In this perspective, then, we should say that Norwegian speakers "get closer" to English, rather than vice versa – but as I have argued (Simonsen 2002:8), we should also say at the same time that *English* conquers domains in Norway (and not that Norwegian loses domains). Now, whether there are domains of the Fishman kind or not and whether they include oral language solely or not, we can imagine how domains come into existence – that their beginning may be in bilingualism, arenas or motives.

Let us now have a look at the two sub-fields "adolescent use of English in Norway" and "the use of English in Norwegian academic communities of knowledge" while keeping those three conditions in mind. I would like to stress that these two sub-fields have *not* been selected on the assumption that they can be grouped and compared without reservation.⁸ On the contrary, the groups involved – young Norwegians in general and university and academy employed scholars – are on the one hand heterogeneous, on the other hand they differ so much in age, societal position etc. that precisely a collated discussion of the two sub-fields in question may shed light on the total field of Norwegian and English language use in Norway and show how extensive and complex it indeed is. But they also share the position of being conceived as "gateways" for English language and are language planning sectors to which The Norwegian Language Council gives preference as well. Finally, the university system makes the involved groups touch because it attracts growing numbers of young adults as students.

⁵ In my understanding, then, one doesn't cross this kind of "linguistic option border" by switching to another language to make oneself understood. One does it only by *changing without any compelling reasons*.

⁶ The term "arena for language use" was launched by me (Simonsen 2001:44) to substitute "domain" in contexts where whole societal sectors are seen as language use arenas. Thus, my use of this term stems from a critique of the language policy marked use of Fishman's term. However, I have used it figuratively as well to denote any "place" with a fairly permanent existence where language is used in contact between people.

⁷ One must distinguish between the dropping of Norwegian and more occasional use of English, for example code-switching and the use of loanwords, which is often more symbolic than communicative and occurs within settings that are linguistically Norwegian. This kind of English use can be observed in many social groups including adolescents and researchers.

⁸ Whereas "adolescent" is an age category that includes *everybody* born within a specific period of time, "academic scholars" is a collective term based primarily on profession and after that on education, and so it also has social implications (class character). Consequently, there is a casual relationship between the two categories.

Youth language, media and subcultures

A general reason for taking an interest in youth language is the presumption that adolescents are language development pioneers, so that today's youth language may become tomorrow's general language. On this basis there are good reasons for studying more specifically young people's use of English for communicative and symbolic purposes as well as their attitudes to English and to their own mother tongue. As a matter of fact, we have lately seen a flourishing of this kind of research both in Norway and in the other Scandinavian countries, to a large degree inspired by work in Great Britain (Pedersen 2000:44ff). This research is frequently based on interactional sociolinguistics, where linguistic variation is studied in the context of social interaction (and thus also stresses individual and social motives), and it has produced some very interesting results.

Very often young people are exposed to competing language norms which may stem from their parents, their friends, the media etc. They may also have moved with their family from one dialect region to another and have to relate to this as well as to other social circumstances in their lives. Their social, and linguistic, development may also be influenced in a decisive manner by gender and social and cultural background. Thus, they are in a fundamental sense "diffuse" and innovation orientated. Youth language, however, is not at all a passive product of external influence solely. Adolescence is a period of identity-making, and this clearly also applies to the development and use of linguistic varieties, attitudes etc., as we shall soon see. In this context, naturally, both active and passive use of the media is an important field of study which calls for critical investigation.

We should, however, bear in mind that this is all about a particular phase of life, so we had better abstain from exaggerating the importance of the special traits of young people's language and their use of English, since their practice may change as they grow up and enter a new phase in life.

Now let us return to adolescent linguistic pioneering. The most remarkable general trend in today's spoken Norwegian is the emergence of new, regional dialects in major parts of the country. This makes up a general sociolinguistic background for analyses of language use, and here, we can assume that young people most likely pioneer by being the first to make use of the new, regional linguistic features. In addition, this linguistic regionalization is no doubt connected with domestic migrations and thus, on this basis, we may regard "new mobility" as a common denominator for what is taking place in Norway and the world, where crowds of migrants, in much larger numbers, make up a characteristic element. If this comparison is true the participation of young people in both dialect levelling and a "glocalised" youth culture (i.e. with both global and local orientation at the same time), which fluctuates linguistically between their mother tongue and English, a culture spread especially through the media, can materially be linked to new urbanization and migration – and ideologically perhaps to modernization and the introduction of common national and international frames of reference (as proposed by Mæhlum 2002).

These processes testify to considerable dynamics, and even though we definitely do not know whether we are heading towards stable new patterns of language use or not, the new regional spoken varieties do not seem to displace older varieties but rather to join them and supplement them (whether these varieties are local geographical dialects or spoken standards). Consequently, groups of young Norwegian speakers have the opportunity to switch between new regional varieties and traditional dialects and also use more specific "youth varieties" as we shall see.

Due to increased immigration, young Norwegian speakers now more frequently take part in linguistic interaction with adolescents with a different linguistic background. But not very many of

the latter have English as their mother tongue, and so there are few indications that Norwegian adolescents very often find themselves in social contexts where choosing or even using another language is an option.⁹ Thus, there is no language shift away from Norwegian, of course not. On the contrary, we can assume that there is a rather comprehensive transition *into* Norwegian, namely among adolescents with an immigrant background and with Punjabi, Urdu, Turkish, Spanish etc. as their home languages.

All in all, considerable groups with an immigrant background now live in Norwegian townships, such as in Oslo, where they put their stamp on certain parts of the town and are linguistically noticeable inside the classrooms as well. Of course, this is but a part of a larger Western European pattern. In Norway, the existence of new spoken “youth varieties” of the national language linguistically marked by immigrants seems to be less well documented than in Sweden and Denmark (cf. “Rinkebysvenska”, “Copenhagen multi-ethnolect”), but in time, inquiries into youth language use in the towns of Norway will most likely produce the same results as in the two neighbouring countries, namely that ethnically and linguistically mixed groups develop such varieties, available even to young Norwegians without an immigrant background.¹⁰

Researchers regard the new varieties as results of identity-making processes where young people – to use a popular poststructuralist term – “negotiate” identity and relationships by examining and drawing up borderlines by means of speech acts and by code-switching, “crossing” (which means traversing the border to a language that, strictly speaking, doesn’t “belong” to oneself, to attain special effects), developing new varieties etc. What is interesting in our context, then, is the opportunity provided to observe how new “mixed varieties” emerge or are being developed in real life and, thus, how linguistic changes take place. Closer examinations may even confirm that this is equivalent to observations of how new social forms emerge in and through language.

The domain notion is designed to fit the context of choice between different *languages*. If we transfer it to choices between *varieties*, it isn’t always evident whether the new immigrant language marked youth varieties should be regarded as dialects or as registers solely (Pedersen 2000:52ff) but this doesn’t have to be a decisive issue either.¹¹ In any case, it is exactly here – in a discussion on alternation between different variants of *spoken* language – that a domain perspective seems the most relevant and could possibly shed some light on the factors that determine the choice in a given situation. One may regard the development of new varieties as an expression of the emergence of both new social arenas and new motives.

In addition to dialect regionalization and new cross-ethnic linguistic contact, there is a third dynamic field where, in our context, it seems highly relevant to view the language and the language use of Norwegian adolescents in the light of the international linguistic development, and this third field is how young people use the *media*. It is well known that both boys and girls are eager

⁹ Actually, even code-switching to English may to be less frequent among adolescents than in other groups of Scandinavians. Harriet Sharp (2001:189ff) indicates this for Sweden, comparing a spoken youth language corpus with recordings from a number of business meetings in a Sweden-based shipping company.

¹⁰ The Nordic youth language research project “Språkkontakt og ungdomsspråk i Norden” (<http://www.uib.no/uno/>) was recently finished, and has produced several studies from the Nordic countries including a number by the Norwegian Inger Kristine Hasund (2002), who discusses varieties like “Kebab Norwegian”, “Salsa Norwegian” etc. (which I conceive to be tentative terms). At present, there is some delay in Norwegian research in this field.

¹¹ A simplified definition of “dialect” may be that it is a variety of a language spoken by a specific group and different from other varieties of the same language spoken by other groups. Similarly, “style” may be said to be variations belonging to an individual’s linguistic competence, variations that the individual applies for instance in specific situations. Cf. Richards, Platt and Weber (1987:80; 243; 277), headwords “dialect”, “register” and “style”.

consumers of the programmes supplied by the media, the range of which has been remarkably extended during the last decades. One also assumes that the mass media have a considerable linguistic influence, especially by passing on new words and phrases, and that they play an important role by dispersing linguistic matter from English and positive attitudes to English in particular. Thus, to us this is a most interesting field of study, for some of the most conspicuous traits of young people's linguistic varieties are moulded right here – i.e. not the varieties themselves, but the elements of English in youth language in general and the ways they function.

In a qualitative in-depth inquiry into a number of US inspired subcultures in Denmark (hip-hop, data, rock etc.), conducted by Bent Preisler together with culture sociologist Kjeld Høgsbro, one of the conclusions is that English coming “from the bottom” is a decisive force in the spread of English in Denmark (Preisler 1999:231ff). This is about both ideological and linguistic impulses which to a great extent emanate from the subcultures. English linguistic matter spreads from the core groups to the layers of “wannabes” before it is passed on to all adolescents and all of society, via the mass media, and in particular into the arena of marketing. My reading of this is that subcultures create much of the dynamics characterizing the adolescents' relationship to English, since those groups see themselves as being in opposition to the establishment and thus can be said to have an international or even internationalist orientation. English words and phrases have an intrinsic value, and knowing and using them means mastering an internal code, and serves as a means of social climbing, which is associated with specific (American) social idols and integrated in “tales of conquest”, around which the cultures are built.

Now, research into hip-hop culture and language (Androutsopoulos 2003, Androutsopoulos and Scholz 2003) has broadened this perspective on subcultures and language by specifying and supplementing the picture given by Preisler and Høgsbro. This is done by pointing out more precisely how the dialectics between the participant groups functions, in particular in rap music, which is a part of the hip-hop movement that during the last two decades has taken over much of rock music's role as a leading oppositional music style and a cultural form of expression among young people. Now, the strong international impulses which emanate from this subculture and spread via the Internet, television etc. in no way mean a farewell to the local settings. On the contrary, they are refracted and strongly transformed in the local context, linguistically too (a trend that not only testifies to the social orientation of hip-hop culture but also to its great flexibility, thereby shedding light on its strengths). At a certain point of time, French, German, Italian, Norwegian and even Indonesian artists started rapping in their mother tongue, whether this happened to be their national language or a dialect thereof or some other variety. This is, in other words, a twofold (or manifold) process of simultaneous rebellion and adaptation which may seem to produce more new local differences than world-wide assimilation.

Of course, the background of this is to a great extent material and technological: Commercial satellite television has linked the youth of the world more closely than ever before. Secondly, the Internet has given major youth groups in many countries new media, and thereby arenas, for the use of written language – e-mail, chat groups, home pages etc. – and radically new access to direct participation in a global pop culture where English is the dominant language, thereby clearly creating new motives for using this or that language in specific contexts, too. In turn, this has led to a cultural flourishing that also implies a new local orientation (also named “glocalization”).

Jannis Androutsopoulos (2003) also analyzes text making and text use in rap music (and pop culture) and the dialectics between the groups involved, on the basis of a threefold model originating from theories of television culture. He states that there are three different spheres, each

with their own types of texts: (i) the artists' primary texts, including song texts, video clips, CD booklets etc., (ii) (professional) secondary texts, like reports and reviews by critics, interviews etc. and (iii) tertiary texts or fan texts, i.e. fan talk, singing after the idol, group discussions, personal home pages etc. Between the participants in the different spheres there is mutuality and dialogue, with impulses moving in both directions, and a tendency for "intermediality", a complex relationship that Androutsopoulos names "vertical intertextuality". In these contexts new linguistic conventions emerge, for example orthographical innovations inspired by American Black English (like "da boyz" = "the boys"), which play an important part and are also transferred to Norwegian and other languages.

Certainly, this is interesting in more than one way. First, adolescents are not at all just passive receivers of cultural and linguistic impulses, but rather active linguistic creators. They use and reuse and also take part in the creation of texts within a context of interaction between a global culture and a domestic social and cultural foundation. This implies at the same time that they develop their English language competence. Secondly, this is about introducing Norwegian into new practices *which seems to be nearly the opposite of domain loss*. Thirdly, we should look at both written and oral media together, and it is likely that future discussions of the domain notion should start right here, in the interaction between written and oral language use in new media.

To sum up this part of the discussion, one may thus say on the one hand that young people pioneer in the development of regional spoken varieties, and also develop their own "youth varieties", varieties that sometimes have an ethnic stamp. Here, they no doubt take part in developing Norwegian. On the other hand, they make up precisely that group which picks up English words and phrases and passes them on into Norwegian. But they do not thereby drop Norwegian, which they speak most of the time, as a matter of fact. They do not cross any linguistic borders, but make extensive use of English linguistic matter, which, however, is basically designed for the symbolic universe of the social stage more than for communicative purposes, if we can distinguish clearly between the two in connection with young people's social life.

The development of youth language raises several interesting issues, both scientific and language political in nature. On a scientific basis, one could examine more clearly the symbolic value of English among the adolescents and ask them whether they experience any conflict between an attitude to English that may be very positive, and the limited opportunities for speaking English in practice, and how they think this will turn out in the future. Among the language policy issues, we find the question about media, money and social power and whether language use in this field could or should be legally regulated by the state to reduce the influence of English.

For if there is one single factor that may give rise to anxiety on behalf of Norwegian, it is this strongly positive symbolic value that English has got. Already, the question of why young people don't use English *more* than they actually do is quite as important as why they do use English.

Academic communities of knowledge

Of course, there are also several reasons for taking an interest in language and language use among those groups that work with scientific subjects at an academic level, such as researchers etc., to whom I have referred by the collective term *academic communities of knowledge*. Academics traditionally belong to the elite and thereby to the powerful, and they have come to play a gradually more important part as knowledge providers and suppliers of conditions in political and public debates. Finally, they are identified as key groups in a state policy of globalization that breaks away

from much traditional thinking but is still resolutely implemented. In the development of the new social mobility pursued by the authorities, the academics are in the front.

Norway has a rather strong tradition for university system studies, and gradually, several studies of language use within this sector have also been presented.¹² But before we take a closer look at this it appears to be fruitful to view the whole field in a general analytical perspective since this may enable us to assess scientific results and their implications more clearly.

The Norwegian communities of knowledge are made up of tens of thousands of people engaged in very complex activities including text production on a considerable scale. Basically, these activities are carried out within politically determined, and *managed*, frames, today mostly through globalization measures. In particular, international orientation and international mobility are pushed, since this is considered necessary to ensure scientific quality, and in addition, because it confirms ideological conceptions of the “knowledge society” and of international cooperation as an arena for competition, where you have to prove yourself. The decision to do away with the regulation which gave preference to Norwegian as the usual language of instruction, then, was an intervention from the central political power basis of society. In addition, the knowledge communities are managed at lower levels, both through self-management at the institutions and by customers, company managements etc. (where research is carried out on a business basis).¹³

The communities of knowledge are complex, and here I would like to make use of a model developed by the Norwegian sociologist Ragnvald Kalleberg (2004). According to Kalleberg, an academic discipline is made up of a bundle of five different types of activities, and the academic professionals will relate to a set of roles corresponding to this while having access to five different types of linguistic interactions:

As a *researcher*, the professional (at least) talks with researchers within his or her special field, as a *teacher* with students, as a *disseminator* and *public debater* with interested laymen (non-specialists), as an *expert* with clients and other users and as a *colleague or institution member* with other members (or relevant persons outside the institution). (Kalleberg 2004:89) [translated here from Norwegian into English by DFS]

Specific studies and analyses of language use will vary quite a lot depending on what type of activity one happens to deal with, and there cannot exist only one academic “domain”. For example, scientific publishing is involvement in subject-related discourses between (frequently) highly specialized researchers, whereas expert activity tends to be something external, taking place outside the academic groups and in interaction with outsiders as well, so that the language choices

¹² The research institute NIFU STEP, previously known as The Norwegian Institute for Studies in Research and Higher Education (NIFU), has provided knowledge about this field for decades and has documented a generally increasing tendency among Norwegian researchers to publish in English. In addition, Norway has a tradition for extensive general reports on power in society where elites and other powerful groups, including academic elites, are critically studied on a scientific basis. One such report recently made some comments on the relationship between power and language, certainly in rather general terms, applying a kind of “neo-colonialism critical” view on the relationship between English and Norwegian. Even a number of university based researcher groups (in Oslo led by Professor Stig Johansson) carry out studies in this field. And recently, The Norwegian Language Council has supported some studies in language use and language attitudes among academics (Ljosland 2003, Schwab 2004, Schwach 2004).

¹³ This character of managed-ness seems to collide with the traditional idea of academic freedom, especially that of scientific freedom, and may of course be regarded as a real, alarming disruption of a critical balance of power, but it does not necessarily have to be, since academic activities are not – or at least used not to be – controlled in detail. Mostly, political management of academic activities is a question of framework conditions that may influence processes and results without making the involved persons feel tied or bound.

obviously may turn out rather differently according to whether the context is, say, consultations at a Norwegian hospital or a classification of ships in China. We know little about this, but may presume there is a main pattern where Norwegian is used in contact with Norwegian (Scandinavian?) customers or clients and English is used in other contexts.

Regarding scientific publishing, it has been shown that 80 percent of the contributions written by university employed Norwegian researchers during the years 1998–2000 were in non-Scandinavian languages (mainly English) compared to 65 percent in the period 1979–81 (Kyvik 2001:15f). This is the only activity where there is solid evidence for a transition from Norwegian to English over time in academic contexts. Now, it also turns out that such numbers have been rather stable with regard to natural sciences and other disciplines with a well-established international culture, so that the transition into English takes place first and foremost within the social sciences and after that within the humanities where Norwegian used to hold a strong position as a language for scientific purposes (cf. also Schwach 2004:28ff for a more detailed description).

How should we interpret this? It can easily be shown that the transition to more frequent publishing in English is due to specific changes in media use since Norwegian researchers now switch to writing more articles for international journals, frequently in collective authorship with foreigners (Kyvik 2001:12f; 16f). No doubt these media are new arenas, and if we look for motives for this transition we may find them in systems for promotion by merit, international agreements on cooperation etc. But let us now view scientific publishing in connection with another activity in the discipline bundle, namely *dissemination of knowledge*. The dividing line drawn by Kalleberg between research and dissemination is clarifying: Whereas the researcher within his knowledge community is faced with a circle of peers, his colleagues in a very specialized sense, research based dissemination is about the *transmission of knowledge to people who lack the kind of specialized knowledge that the disseminator himself has got*.¹⁴ And we all are laymen once outside our specialized field, a fact that clearly is rich in practical consequences.

So in theory, there is a “division of labour” between publishing and dissemination. In fact, one can argue that a lot of Norwegian research *should* be published in English because this is the best way to ensure both a broad foundation and a high quality. No scientific knowledge can remain private, and all findings must be presented to one’s fellow researchers for evaluation. This functions as a broad profession-based public sphere where the scholars collectively take responsibility for the results.¹⁵ But if the knowledge is to be for the benefit of society, the results will have to be made public. Therefore, dissemination of knowledge can be expected to have an audience primarily in the general public sphere, which in Norway understands and speaks Norwegian. In this way, the division of labour can be expected to correspond to a particular linguistic distribution: publishing in English, but dissemination of knowledge in Norwegian.

¹⁴ For the time being, this is hardly a generally accepted definition, but it underlies a programme for dissemination of knowledge set up for the University of Oslo. A considerable confusion still prevails as to what *dissemination* means (Kalleberg 2004:85ff), even though all university institutions in Norway are obliged to carry out this.

¹⁵ An instructive discussion of why scientific results should be secured on the broadest possible basis is given by Gunnar Sivertsen (2004). Moreover, international communities of knowledge are very heterogeneous with regard to size and probably also when it comes to discipline exerting forces. Within some fields, they may well resemble infinite public sphere, whereas in other fields they are made up by limited networks of people who know each other more or less (acquaintances based on scientific contact). The degree of anonymity may influence the linguistic practice of the participants, which perhaps could be studied on the basis of both Fishman’s domain theory and theories of language and social networks. This is a methodologically interesting field where factors like linguistic competence, attitudes, media, ambitions, systems for promotion etc. also may be examined together.

Even if the research is conducted in a university sector marked by a reorganizing process with social aspects as well (new mobility and new structures), the transition to more frequent publishing in English doesn't necessarily rest on social or material motives, but may well be rooted in scientific ethics and methodology. When researchers in the humanities and social sciences make this transition, it can be considered necessary on the basis of science's own rationale: When research is globalized the number of peers increases, and then one has to use the language with the widest range of understanding to make the system work. On the other hand, scientific research clearly has ideological and material aspects as well and publishing in English is in no way equally called for in all disciplines, or all contexts, in particular not where the research has its main foundation in Norwegian culture or society.¹⁶

Based upon the principle that knowledge should be generally available and on the close connection between knowledge and the democratic formation of opinion, then, one should expect dissemination in Norwegian – maybe even to the same great extent as publishing in English, relatively. But this is hardly the situation today, and we should ask why. Why is the dissemination of knowledge in Norway an activity mostly carried out by individuals and individual institutions and therefore more scattered and casual than the rest of activities in the discipline bundle? Why do not the authorities link dissemination directly to the university funding systems as they now do with publishing and instruction? The answer is not necessarily that Kalleberg's model is wrong, but clear and binding language policy decisions may be needed to make a Norwegian language "knowledge market" start working. If so, the state should promote dissemination very actively and establish good systems for promotion by merit. As far as I know, neither the scale of the current dissemination nor the possible future "market potential" has been mapped. If this were done, we would get to know whether or not systematic dissemination of knowledge really would give new motives for the use of Norwegian at universities and colleges.

A key field in the globalization of this sector, and therefore in our context, too, is *instruction*. It is exactly here that the question of linguistic competence (and many social aspects of globalization and language use as well) is made topical. Actually, increased mobility across national borders is an important political goal. We really lack good studies of language use within this part of the discipline bundle, but the signals coming suggest that instruction in English is now introduced on a large scale in major parts of the sector.¹⁷ The institutions are expected to attract foreigners and offer English-based arrangements, and since it is easy to measure participation and throughput one can understand why this sub-field has become so important and why the former regulation on the language of instruction could be perceived as a threat to these processes. There is a great demand for better English training of both teachers and students, and this is considered to be of critical importance.

¹⁶ Some of the knowledge communities which are not primarily international may well benefit from being globalized anyhow, whereas others will hardly ever attract more than national interest. In the humanities and in social sciences in particular there are some disciplines mainly oriented towards Norway, and a lot of *applied* science is carried out, especially studies in Norwegian society conducted by non-university research institutes, which in general haven't been very much investigated themselves. Now, if the use of English goes up in such contexts as well one should ask why and also ask whether it might not be based on subject-matter related elements.

¹⁷ The Norwegian Department of Education and Research in 2003 turned down a proposal from The Norwegian Language Council to register the language of instruction at higher institutions systematically in a data base for national records on higher education. Still, this was no surprise and should possibly be understood as a sign of a temporary limited insight in the problematics. From Sweden there are data, though more than ten years old. See Gunnarsson (2001) for a discussion of these data and the general situation at Swedish universities in the 1990's.

Here it is striking, though not very surprising, to see how the authorities actively promote instruction in English on a large scale in Norwegian institutions, a practice which cautiously may be characterized as *experimenting* with instruction in a foreign language, without having studied in advance how this will or can work. Contributory to this could be the fact that it is easier to manage instruction than research, and this applies both at a higher level (through programmes, curricula etc.) and in more specific contexts (like classroom teaching).

This field is marked by tensions and conflicts, and statements about effective communication and wishes to take part in international scientific development often clash with a limited foreign language competence among students as well as teachers. The future model may prove to be a distribution where the instruction is given in the national language at the bachelor level but in English at the master level, an idea which was supported by a number of Nordic university professionals at a conference in Oslo in June 2004 (cf. <http://www.sprakrad.no/templates/Page.aspx?id=7385> for a summary in Norwegian of the debates at this conference).

Now, the general relevance of teaching in our context depends upon its form. The instruction is not free, in particular not as seen from the students' angle, since it is organized to achieve some knowledge goal and since the teacher can arrange this more or less on the basis of his own wishes and needs, so that the students do not necessarily have a "language choice". Traditional classroom teaching is mostly one-way communication, which in various ways limits the linguistic interaction (and the students' chance to pick up the content). Contrary to this, several dialogue-based types of teaching, such as project work, tend to be much more interesting as they allow the students to make their own choices and reveal the social aspects of language use in teaching activities more clearly. A popular method which up to now has been applied mainly in secondary school, but at present enters the university sector as well, is the language immersion inspired model where the pupils or students are supposed to "swim" in English, and all the instruction is given in the foreign language. For several reasons, however, this will hardly prove to be the kind of linguistic educational magic wand that some people certainly hope.¹⁸

However, the most interesting academic function in our setting all in all seems to be the role of the *colleague* or *institution member*.¹⁹ This activity, which may also be named "discipline-related self-administration", in a way makes up the frame around all the other activities in the discipline-bundle. Thus it becomes the most comprehensive and most multilateral arena, of course, and a correspondingly manifold role, but researchers, teachers, disseminators and scientific experts are members equally and take part in this kind of activity which reaches from discipline-related issues and discipline development over university administration and university politics to colleague relations at the job and networks and external relations.

Institutions, departments etc. make up social and cultural worlds where both conflicts and group pressure emerge, where alliances and networks are built, where discipline or profession related cultures are developed as well as self-images, and where power games of many kinds are played. As a matter of fact, those organizations are and probably have to be arenas for "struggles of content",

¹⁸ An arrangement of this kind at The University of Oslo is described by Roald and Stray Pedersen (2004). For a critical and more thorough discussion of experiences with language immersion models in the Swedish school, see Hyltenstam 2004.

¹⁹ Here, I understand the notion of "colleague" or "organization member" rather broadly: In my reading, it covers any role that does *not* include research, knowledge dissemination, teaching or expert activity. In other words, it covers all the heterogeneous practices at the institution that involve all groups from professors down to fellows, and in particular it covers participation in a national and an international research and education bureaucracy.

fought on both teaching methods, curricula, research profiles, cooperation arrangements and other issues linked to this particular discipline or profession culture. Subject or discipline issues are interwoven with social issues. In addition, “discipline-related self-administration” also includes – if I have understood Kalleberg correctly – the social life “backstage” which means it is here we can observe the involved academic groups in freer linguistic self-expression and may even compare them with the adolescents we have described.

So researchers who want to study the linguistic practice and language attitudes of academic professionals in a social context, should start here. However, up to now, we have no major studies from this field, neither of well-established academics in the role of colleague or institution member nor of how such community or institution cultures are built up. What we do have are studies of students and fellows who enter established academic cultures, where we may assume that the results tell us something about the cultures in question as well. Ragnhild Ljosland (2003) observed a group of PhD candidates and found that most of them take it for granted they should write their thesis in English. In her opinion, this attitude stems mainly from their linguistic socialization into the culture at their institution. In a study by Inger-Lise Schwab (2004), a group of Business Administration master degree students are followed in a linguistic anthropological perspective. Here too, the institution clearly and strongly propagates the use of English. But even though the students interviewed argue that English will be a matter of necessity in their professional lives, their use of “buzzwords” and “business talk” according to Schwab satisfies a need for symbolic markers rather than real communicative demands.

In both Ljosland’s and Schwab’s groups, English seems to serve as a kind of “symbolic capital” (Bourdieu), and so the language use may be more or less part of a conscious combined professional and social strategy to build oneself up. It is interesting to note that this very much resembles the role of English words in youth subcultures as described by Preisler and Høgsbro. The language choice expresses social adaptation or even an act of identity, and to the PhD candidates, publishing in English implicitly gives an opportunity to show one’s professional profile and make a name for oneself. On the other hand, the students studied by Schwab know very well that they should limit their use of “buzzwords” outside the group to avoid negative responses.

Now, we shouldn’t draw too far-reaching conclusions on the basis of slender information, but one may dare to hypothesize that the use of English by self-administering academics in freer contexts can have something in common with adolescents’ use of English words and their code-switching to English – given this is a question of symbolically motivated language use in a (free) social game. However, as we know, a decisive difference at the same time is that where young people have created their own framework more or less in opposition to the establishment and make use of English in identity-making and generation revolt, university academics, for their part, act within institutional frames where informal use of English is probably less important than politically managed use of English in instruction and other discipline related academic activities. If this is true it also makes academic use of English less interesting in a certain sense since in principle it only reflects economic and political globalization on a large scale.

Is English “getting closer” in Norway?

How should we then sum up the tendencies within those parts of Norway’s current linguistic landscape that we have touched on so far? What is the situation concerning adolescent and academic use of English? Is English more “present” in these fields today than it used to be?

Let us now return to what was said in the paragraph “A problematic notion of domain”, that Fishman’s theory of domains is based upon the existence of mental “linguistic option borders” that are crossed when someone changes between two domains. I also asserted that in our context one may schematically formulate three conditions for the existence of such borders, i.e. (i) bilingualism, (ii) arenas and (iii) motives, and then study the two fields mentioned to look for tendencies showing that English is “moving closer” through the fulfilment of at least one of those conditions.

The first point, *bilingualism in English and Norwegian*, is the easiest one to comment on. Such bilingualism apparently is an aim in current Norwegian educational policy, but it is in fact more remote than most people imagine, since bilingualism is something quite different from being “good at” a language. Very few people are even close to mastering those two languages equally well. What can be stated safely, however, is that Norwegians’ active and passive *competence* in English has improved quite a lot. As we have seen, this applies to children and young people in particular, and is no doubt connected to their active use of media, and, of course, also to their learning English at school, an activity which now starts earlier than ever. Teachers often confirm that some of their pupils have a high English competence. Today, this development has been going on for so long that it also includes students and young adults.

When young people become involved in international subcultures, English linguistic matter becomes part of the social dialects. Clearly, they thereby also improve part of their English competence – familiarity with (ethnic) American youth slang, musicians’ jargon, technical terms etc., maybe even syntax and literary style as well. But they hardly become bilingual in this way.

That the kind of bilingualism aimed at by the authorities is scarce can also be seen from the fact that institutions make use of instruction in English without preceding investigations, thus forcing the students to follow or introduce language immersion inspired methods. Nor should anyone think that scientific publishing in English necessarily reflects bilingualism. But the scarcity of this kind of linguistic competence in Norway should not surprise us. To become bilingual, one has to be raised with two home languages or at least socialize closely and permanently with people of another mother tongue in contexts that are – existentially, economically, socially, culturally etc. – so important that the other language is picked up and acquired. But this presupposes large multilingual population groups which haven’t been seen in Norway.²⁰

The most important question in our context, then, is whether the increasing English competence implies that (part of) the population may be on their way to a bilingual level. In principle, it should be possible to reach such a level at an adult age as well – but whether or not the development in Norway has been going in this direction is far from clear. What the combination of better linguistic knowledge of English among children and adolescents and a progression to university instruction in English at the master level may lead to, remains an open question.

In Norway, a lot of things have definitely changed, but conditions in many respects also remain the same. All in all, the majority of what I have called *arenas for language use* are possibly made up of meeting places that have existed for a long time (even if there also *are* some important new arenas, as we have seen). Now, as defined above (cf. note 6) this category is a very heterogeneous one. To assess the development more closely, let us first distinguish between physical meeting places and

²⁰ In Norway, the real bilinguals are first and foremost Sámi speakers and then maybe immigrants of the second generation, and for both of these groups we talk about bilingualism in their mother tongue and Norwegian.

technology based (mass) media. Secondly, we can group more or less private (social) arenas together as opposed to public sphere orientated arenas.

On the one hand, many new social fora of a more traditional kind have emerged, and they make up corresponding language use arenas. This occurs when people move to new places or when newcomers move in in their own neighbourhood, and follows from the continuous social restructuring in society which involves most social groups, including, of course, both adolescents and academic professionals. On the other hand, we have seen how the new Internet-based media function as language use arenas by virtue of their new technology and favour both a global and a local orientation. Such media are, to a varying degree, used by everyone and, naturally, by young people and professionals in the university sector as well, like mobile phones, of which young people in particular are heavy users. To this must be added well-established media including broadcast media.

More permanent groups tend to be organized around a conversational “room” which in a certain sense always makes up a kind of minor “public sphere”. Still, this word becomes misleading when we come to groups that spend their time together and nothing else. Especially where the groups are organized around some specific subject or purpose (Simonsen 2001:50f) we may call them *public sub-spheres*. So we should distinguish between groups that are basically social and therefore clearly have a *private* character, and more *subject-related* communities. Both traditional meeting places and networks that are media and technology based can be used by purely social groups and sub sphere communities as well, and new and old media and meeting places clearly can be combined and can supplement each other.

For example, adolescents make use of both mobile phones and email as an integrated part of their social contact. But they also participate in more interest orientated conversation on the Internet about topics like music as described by Androutsopoulos and Scholz (2003),²¹ and researchers exchange points of view partly on the Net, partly in printed articles and partly at conferences. To the academics, the role as an institution member or a self-administrator in particular offers opportunities to take part in both formal and informal social practices, and here one may therefore find both large and small language use arenas of all the four kinds, whereas scientific publishing clearly implies conduct in a broad professional public sub-sphere – being at the same time the most important area for systematic transition to English, as we have seen.

It would be useful to have youth meeting places and networks analyzed in this perspective. I believe that young people’s communities usually are predominantly private or social, appearing only rarely to be real public sub-spheres. But I also believe that occasionally groups are formed with a public sphere orientation, especially when Internet based media are involved, because the communities may then be organized around themes. This can be important because the degree of anonymity, which in Internet contexts may be manipulated, probably affects the language use and may discipline the participants in fora of different types differently, a subject I cannot account for in more detail. As we know, adolescent linguistic practice is marked by both intra-personal and inter-personal variation, and this may be due to factors of precisely this kind.

But even if young people make creative use of the new media and heavily utilize English linguistic matter in this context, it seems that they do *not* generally have many arenas where extensive use of

²¹ To what extent young Norwegians take part in Internet fora administered from *abroad*, and write in *English* on the Net, for example tertiary texts of the kind Androutsopoulos (2003) refers to, I don’t know, but this should be mapped.

spoken and written English is an option. Contrary to academics who commonly may travel a whole lot abroad in their jobs and also may extend their social circle by receiving foreign colleagues, young people basically travel in their private lives and do not very often meet with native English speakers, and so do not very often get the opportunity to speak English for a long time themselves.²²

In other words, there are few linguistic meeting places in Norway which seem to offer people an opportunity to develop any kind of bilingualism in English and Norwegian. However, if such arenas happen to occur, it must be the Internet based rather than the traditional ones that stand out in this context, and also the public sphere orientated rather than the social fora, as we have seen. Researchers who publish on the Net will fulfil both criteria.

Where *motives* are concerned, we have seen that English elements in Norwegian youth language more often serve symbolic than communicative purposes. Large youth groups ascribe a very strong symbolic value to English according to Preisler and Høgsbro. This emanates from the subcultures and is mediated by the media, and the question is how we should interpret it. Do the young Danes and Norwegians desire to drop their mother tongue, or should this simply be considered to be part of a general youth discourse on a Danish, respectively a Norwegian linguistic basis? Is it about communicative issues at all?

Adolescents have a variety of motives for putting their stamp on language and the extent of this variety seems to have increased due to migrations, new social and ethnic groupings, extended and globalized media and an extensive spread of computers. Here, influence from the international subcultures joins with a globalized pop culture and enters into a media orientated universe where new user's technology is always available. And there are new motives for linguistic development as well, linked to geographical and social mobility and new kinds of social patterns in Norway. Most probably, the motives vary with social, cultural and gender based hierarchies, life-style, class, consumption habits etc. – but all in all, young people need Norwegian language as a social means in Norway more than they really need to cross the linguistic border to English.

Even in the academic knowledge societies, people clearly have varying motives. As mentioned before, researchers habitually need to ensure the quality of their contributions by making them available to the largest possible circuit of colleagues. In this way, scientific publishing functions as a broad public sphere where one has to use international languages. In addition, the individual researcher can profit within the university system by publishing in English. Therefore, there is here a strong twofold impulse to use English, which can explain why such use increases in this sub-field, as we know it does. On the other hand, if dissemination activities are strengthened by good systems for promotion by merit, this may give the involved professionals motives for using Norwegian, which, for the time being, is mainly hypothetical.

In several types of academic activity, motives in both directions can emerge. Thus, engagement in expert activities abroad definitely promotes English in a powerful way (but this is rather a result of compelling circumstances than of motives), whereas jobs in Norway (of course) imply motives for the use of Norwegian. Even the colleague or institution member role which can embrace all the other parts of the discipline bundle may well lead to substantially differing motives. Within this manifold activity, motives will manifest themselves for now this, now that. Since the institutions are

²² To young people with an immigrant background, Norwegian adolescents most likely occasionally also speak English. Whether the social intercourse between those two groups is influenced by the Norwegians' position as speakers of the dominant majority tongue is an interesting question to which I have no answer.

based in Norway, Norwegian would be the natural language for administration and social intercourse, but this doesn't always come through. Besides, internationalization indicates that academics involved should establish networks across the national borders and also engage in international (sub)cultures that are partly subject-related and partly social. So, they face both the need and the motives to switch between available languages.

As to instruction, this is an arrangement-marked activity which nevertheless may very well motivate teachers and students, in particular when successful. Good instruction in English will definitely strengthen one's motivation to use this language in the long run.

To summarize this discussion of linguistic competence, arenas for language use and motives, very few things indicate that the conditions for the development of bilingualism will be fulfilled in the foreseeable future. Such a development would have meant creating a situation where adolescents and university professionals may switch freely between English and Norwegian. In particular, this seems to be out of the question for young people who develop their language use in interaction with media and pop culture and relate to both domestic and international migrations, but who live and express themselves within the Norwegian linguistic community. On the other hand, linguistic development in the academic communities of knowledge is mainly produced in a political process where a restructuring of the knowledge system is a very central issue. Here, important groups get both the opportunity and the motives to make use of English, depending upon what kind of activity they are involved in, and the social aspects of this should probably be regarded as secondary compared to those that are subject-related. The very real contact across the borders causes the professionals to make "partial language shifts", if one can put it this way, i.e. a binding and lasting choice of English in some cases, in terms of time and/or space, in connection with an article, a book or a series of lectures. This may very well be interpreted as a *domain loss* (but whether it really *is* a loss of "domains" in Fishman's sense is quite another question).

With a metaphor, then, we can say that whereas Norwegian adolescents in their relationship to the world may stand gazing over what they conceive to be a fence to the big world, and dream they were there, on the other side of the fence, or that the world was here, academic professionals for their part have plenty of opportunities to climb this fence both to and fro – or rather to cross geographical and also linguistic borders, because they have been selected for such a role by the authorities and by society. But neither of the two groups is in a position that can be compared to the multilingual minority-language speakers whom Fishman described.

Still, when Norwegian academics, or even young Norwegians, make use of English we should assume that they do this for communicative reasons, to make themselves understood, not because they really belong to circles that can switch freely between the two languages and equally well could have chosen either of them. They do not cross any "linguistic option border" in the sense that I have extracted from Fishman's theory. To repeat this once again: They really aren't bilingual in English, because they seldom get into situations that could promote bilingualism, and for the same reason, the great majority of them also lack the motives for acquiring competence in a foreign language at this level. But as to linguistic competence in English, both academics and adolescents have got "closer" to English in that they read and speak it much better than before, an improvement that has taken a few decades. As opposed to young people, the academics also have got "closer" in the way that they really can go abroad, and practise their linguistic skills frequently. What this may lead to in the long run remains to be seen.

Conclusion

As I suggested in the introduction, an *overall* assessment of the situation as to language policy in Norway hasn't been an aim in this article. In that case, one would have to cover all the strong cleavages in this field, such as the general status or position of Bokmål and Nynorsk (in varieties supported by the state or private groups), state-authorized or private standardization, the social stamp of standardized speech, language use in the media, language teaching in schools, the equal status of Bokmål and Nynorsk in governmental use and immigrant languages – to mention only a few of the issues that we haven't touched on and therefore cannot comment on either. For the same reasons I have not been able to discuss possible future trends that may affect the linguistic situation, including a radically increased immigration and a thoroughgoing political regionalization in Europe.

So, basically, I will seek to assess the situation with respect to the use of English and Norwegian in two important sectors. At the same time, I will strive to take into consideration the rest of the language use field in Norway as well, thereby hoping to be able to establish a total outlook.

In what direction, then, does the linguistic development within the youth groups and the societies of knowledge point? Here, one should sketch a twofold answer, because the landscape observed is clearly twofold, too. On the one hand, there are the adolescents, who represent a general age group where a lot of later social patterns are adopted. In spite of its generation character, youth language may well give an indication of what tomorrow's general language will look like, because young people are linguistic pioneers. On the other hand, there is the university and college sector, the knowledge system, which in our context, all in all, should be counted as a *special* part of society, i.e. a "particular sector" and no general public – although politically steps have been taken to make this sector include as many as possible and apparently with some success, too.

Young people live their lives at home, at school and in social meeting places during their leisure time, and in this article, I have frankly taken for granted that the arenas for the development of youth language basically are to be found among the last-mentioned. This implies that youth language unfolds within the framework of civil society, and belongs to those sectors of life that are not managed directly by the authorities. Of course, this in turn does *not* mean that adolescent language use isn't influenced by the media, by school etc. – on the contrary, the use of media is especially important, as we have seen – but it implies that *youth language corresponds to a freedom period in one's life history*. Since there seems to be a close connection between linguistic development, identity-making and social development, i.e. development of society, youth language can hardly, any more than the general language, be regulated in detail by any single body. This is a development that simply has to take its course. Therefore, youth language is in an important sense linked to the general language. When for example young Norwegians frequently make use of English words and phrases, it seems neither tempting nor in any way realistic, to seek to restrain it.

We have seen that a considerable development is taking place in spoken Norwegian, linked to new social mobility. From what we know about young people's role in this, one can say that trends of this kind should only be dealt with in the general public sphere, and balanced there – if they are to be balanced – by the tending of Norwegian carried out by both private bodies and the authorities, through the media, the Language Council and others who in practice steward the standards (professional groups etc.), and by the teaching of Norwegian in schools. At the same time, there may very well be a kind of connection at a deeper level between adolescent linguistic variation and the role of written standards, in particular the dominant Bokmål. So for several reasons, the

dialectics between linguistic standards and adolescent linguistic practice should be studied more extensively.

As we have also seen, considerable groups of young Norwegians may now stand “at the fence to English” and they may wish to “climb over” it. At the same time, there are indeed very few English mother tongue speakers in Norway, so that English in an important sense is not “present” here at all, and the adolescents basically have few opportunities to speak English with anyone.²³ If this positive attitude to English is a problem, and one could certainly argue in favour of that, the authorities should take an open-minded stand in relation to this. In addition to strengthening the teaching in Norwegian and English (competence), they can take steps to stimulate the use of Norwegian and other languages (motives) in schools, and make sure there is a supply of media and language technology (arenas) that young people really feel give them what they need.

What is said above about the necessity of free development of youth language, combined with measures for balancing and stimulation, at the same time, naturally, represents a big challenge to the language policy of a state that seeks to promote as functional language standards as possible on the broadest possible basis of speakers’ participation. And this should not be read as a rejection in principle of more specific legal regulation of the use of English and Norwegian in society.²⁴

Even within the academic knowledge societies, a freer social life unfolds, but *the linguistic practice of those knowledge workers should definitely be viewed in the light of their professional and institutional connection*, i.e. the bundle of activities that any discipline is made up of. So, the language use here is not only *managed* in a different sense from what youth language is, but the language is also a kind of *special language*, for scientific and technical purposes – even if such language continuously irrigate the general language with words and phrases. Even more important, of course, in our context are the opportunities that the groups in question are given by the state to conduct real “language shifts” (in research, instruction, expert activity and self-administration).

Paradoxically, it may well be inside the knowledge system that clear and purposeful language policy measures are accepted, even though this was the sector where a statutory provision on language use was recently abolished because it might hamper globalization. But precisely because this sector definitely *is* still regulated, and changes are made systematically to promote not globalization alone but also *quality* (a key word), it is feasible to propose or demand – even, for example, by legal regulation – measures to ensure linguistic quality at the institutions, now that a general “language stipulation” is abolished: monitor systems to generate statistics and other data on

²³ The reason we shouldn't regard adolescents' use of English linguistic matter or their code-switching to English as an ominous token for Norwegian, is that there is hardly any general and necessary connection between loanwords and code-switching on the one hand and language shift on the other – even though in real language-shift areas we may well observe that heavy borrowing and extensive code-switching occur together with domain loss. I would say that English can hardly threaten Norwegian without first becoming (socially) dominant in Norway. To obtain this, it would have to become the mother tongue of considerable (high-status) groups, and, thereafter, it might expand if groups of Norwegian speakers under certain circumstances, such as mixed marriages, eventually turned to speaking English with their children, a decisive step in a process of language shift. Such can be observed where language shift is really taking place, but this is very far from the situation in Norway.

²⁴ If the use of English really proves to restrain the availability of knowledge, co-determination, the right of access etc. for example in working life – a large “area” that we have hardly touched on – a state that really wants to promote democracy will have to stop this, if necessary through legal regulations. But this, then, is something quite different from seeking to restrain adolescent use of English linguistic matter.

actual language use, language centres to offer translation, proof-reading and text improvement, terminological assistance, teaching in scientific writing (Norwegian and English) etc. One can boldly strive for this since everybody realizes how useful it is. In Scandinavia and Finland, a number of university units have started making their own language policy in accordance with this (cf. <http://www.sprakrad.no/templates/Page.aspx?id=7385>). Besides, one can argue politically for a strengthening of the activity of dissemination of knowledge funded by the ordinary system.

Let us now, at the very end of this article, once again take a Nordic outlook. If in Norway right now – as opposed to Sweden and perhaps Denmark – there isn't a favourable climate for extensive legal regulation of the language use field, this may seem surprising, but the real differences are clearly smaller than one should assume. What is really surprising in the *Mål i mun* report is the rather radical proposal to regulate so to speak “all” language use in Sweden by means of the very same Act of Parliament. Such an Act would hardly be passed in Norway today, but still, the language use field in Norway is, and will probably remain, relatively strongly regulated by law. What we have experienced is that a language restriction has been removed from the University Act and that the Act on the Language Council is abolished, but it may be replaced by a new Act for a new kind of language institution. Consequently, it may be reasonable to state that Norway and Sweden will take similar positions if the new proposals are adopted. The former becomes a little more liberal, the latter more restrictive. And somewhere inside this picture, Denmark probably will find its place, too.

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