Longitudinal Studies of New Dialect Formation
A study of industrial towns in Western Norway

Randi Neteland
University of Bergen
randi.neteland@lle.uib.no

In this paper I will present an analysis of real time inter- and intraindividual variation and change in two industrial towns in Western Norway: Sauda and Årdal.

Dialects of industrial towns (‘new dialects’) are characterized by massive inter- and intraindividual variation, especially among speakers who grew up in the industrialization period (Trudgill 1986: 96). Speakers of this so called ‘chaos generation’ normally show a great deal of variation on both phonological, morphological, morphophonological as well as on the lexical level (Solheim 2006: 274–276). However, less is known of the development of these variation patterns over time. Solheim’s study of the industrial town Høyanger, demonstrates that the informants of this generation have either accommodated their speech to the new focussed dialect, or they use an idiolect different from the new dialect (Solheim 2006: 276). From this I postulate two dominating types of individual characterizations for this ‘chaos generation’ a) individuals that take part in the focussing process of the new dialect formation (Trudgill 1986) (i.e. less variation over time) and b) individuals that retain their massive variation from their youth throughout their life (i.e. the same amount of variation). My intention is to examine to what extent the informants in my own data from Årdal and Sauda group in these types.

In this paper I will investigate real time changes in the dialect of this generation in Årdal and Sauda using a combination of trend informants and panel informants. The trend informants can reveal how the degree of interindividual variation changes over time, while the panel informants can shed light on how intraindividual variation changes over time.

References