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STANDARDIZATION AS SOCIOLINGUISTIC CHANGE

A TRANSVERSAL STUDY OF THREE TRADITIONAL DIALECT AREAS

Edited by
Marie Maegaard, Malene Monka,
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Standardization as Sociolinguistic Change

This volume seeks to extend and expand our current understanding of the processes of language standardization, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine how linguistic variation plays out in various ways in everyday life in Denmark. The book compares linguistic variation across three different rural speech communities, underpinned by a transversal framework which draws on different methodological and analytical approaches as well as on data from different contexts across different generations, and results in a nuanced and dynamic portrait of language change in one region over time. Examining communities with varying degrees of linguistic variation within this multilayered framework demonstrates a broader need to re-examine perceptions of language standardization not only as a unidirectional process but rather as one shaped by a range of factors at the local level, including language ideologies and mediatization. A concluding chapter by eminent sociolinguist David Britain brings together the conclusions drawn from the preceding chapters and reinforces their wider implications within the field of sociolinguistics. Offering new insights into language standardization and language change, this book will be of particular interest to students and scholars in sociolinguistics, dialectology, and linguistic anthropology.

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1 Introduction

Standardization as Sociolinguistic Change

Marie Maegaard

1. Introduction

When meeting her friend Johanne at a local town festival, 15-year-old Aja exclaims: '[ˌvɒn̩ ˈcøʌð]' ('hvordan kører det?', *what's up?*) in the local Bornholmian dialect. Johanne, however, laughingly replies with a 'bonjour', apparently because she believes Aja to be greeting her in French. This incident illustrates several aspects of the dialect situation on the island of Bornholm. Aja grew up on the island of Bornholm, and so did her parents and grandparents. Both her parents and grandparents speak the local dialect and use it in their everyday communication. In Aja's generation, however, local dialect is not used as an unmarked everyday register. Instead, the young people speak Standard Danish and only use dialect in very specific contexts and with specific functions, usually highly stylized. The Bornholmian greeting deployed by Aja would be the norm in older generations, but among 15-year-olds it is a marked choice, which explains why Johanne mistakenly takes the utterance for a French greeting. These changes in the use of the local dialect across the generations are not only a matter of quantity, with young people using dialect less than the older generations, but also a matter of changing functions and social meaning of the dialect. This is why the development cannot be viewed only as *linguistic* change but rather as *sociolinguistic* change.

This book is about standardization processes seen as sociolinguistic change.

With the study reported in this volume, we wish to advance sociolinguistic understandings of language standardization in contemporary societies by tracking the significance of variation in people's everyday lives. We do so by presenting analyses and discussions based in the Dialect in the Periphery project, a large-scale comparative study of three different rural speech communities within the same nation-state. The book aims to deepen our understanding of sociolinguistic change; specifically, to investigate how linguistic standardization takes place in peripheral areas of an otherwise highly standardized language community (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011; Gregersen and Kristiansen 2015). By studying trajectories

of language standardization across different geographical places and communicative contexts, we demonstrate how linguistic variation, which appears to diminish more or less uniformly on a national level, is used in myriads of creative ways in local communities. Standardization is often studied as a linear process in time from past to present and in space from center to periphery. However, as the comparative analyses presented in this book will show, processes of standardization are complex and take different routes involving locally situated meanings and consequences. Drawing on insights from history, politics, media, social psychology, and human geography, this book goes beyond traditional explanations of language change, offering an in-depth understanding of the complexities of language standardization. Through the comparative and transversal design of the study, new insights will be obtained. By diving into a hyper-standardized language community from three different venture points, we offer nuanced understandings of change processes and decipher their varying elements of local dynamics.

Thus far we have touched upon at least three central theoretical and methodological concepts, which all need some explanation: *standardization*, *sociolinguistic change*, and *transversality*. Before turning to the empirical structure of the study, we will discuss these central notions.

2. Sociolinguistic Change

We use the theoretical frame of sociolinguistic change. The concept of sociolinguistic change is based in a critique of the variationist paradigm and its interpretation of *language change*. Within the variationist paradigm, change is construed as a measurable difference in frequency of linguistic features, e.g. between two generations or between speakers at different points in time (cf. Labov 1972). However, if we see changes in frequency of specific linguistic variables on their own, we risk missing the point that the changing use of linguistic features is embedded in *social change*. This means that language change cannot be seen as a measurable process separable from social change. As Coupland argues, the core process of change 'is not language change but language-ideological change, embedded in wider processes of social change' (Coupland 2009: 36). In this way, the perspective of sociolinguistic change reconceptualizes language change by viewing it as embedded in social change, and it relates it to changes in beliefs and evaluations of language. Evidently, many variationist studies, straight from the beginning of the field, have been interested in the social motivations for language change (it is even part of the title of Labov's 1963 seminal paper on variation in Martha's Vineyard). In many of these studies the observed linguistic changes have been linked to social categories, like class, gender, or ethnicity (e.g. Labov 1990; Wolfram and Beckett 2000; Gordon 2000), and the linguistic forms to standard vs. vernacular or new vs. old. But the studies

tend to disregard changes in what it *means* to speak—e.g. standard or vernacular—or what it *means* to be—e.g. working-class or woman. This type of research has been focused on linguistic change and has used social parameters as explanatory factors behind this change. From the perspective of sociolinguistic change, however, we would have to view social change as integral to linguistic variation and we would have to examine, for instance, whether the linguistic features, which had changed in use, are associated with the same social meanings across time.

Similar to Androutsopoulos (2014) we build on Coupland's approach to sociolinguistic change (Coupland 2009, 2014a, 2014b, 2016a), and will attempt to ground the theoretical work empirically. Our point of departure is the quantitative patterns of variation that we present in Chapter 2. In order to fully understand how and why these patterns have developed the way they have, we include analyses of the specific places (Chapter 3, 4 and 5), geopolitical history (Chapter 3 and 8), ideology (Chapter 6 and 8), and mediatization (Chapter 7). Thus, the overall idea of this book is to use variationist models of language change as a methodological starting point, which will provide us with descriptive quantitative patterns of language use. Yet we need additional types of approaches and analytical work to understand why the patterns look as they do and to understand the social functions and meanings of variation (see following section on transversality).

A fundamental challenge in studies of language change is the notion of change itself. Examining or even defining change is not straightforward. Establishing difference and sameness between two objects of research is in itself challenging, and interpreting the difference as change evokes further problems (e.g. Gregersen et al. 2017). This is a philosophical problem that we are not aiming to solve with this book, but we do find it relevant to mention some of the assumptions underlying much variationist research on language change. Examining language change by counting and coding instances of linguistic variables at one point in time across generations (the apparent time model) is a well-known variationist method, but it is nevertheless problematic for several reasons, many of them tying into the overall problem of not seeing language change as embedded into larger social changes. We delve more into the apparent time model and its implicit assumptions in Chapter 2, in which we present the quantitative analyses. Nevertheless, in the present discussion, it should be noted that the variationist paradigm in its traditional form—in which change is described solely on the basis of frequency in the use of specific features—offers very limited insights when it comes to understanding the meaning of these changes. For instance, a high frequency in the use of standard variants is often interpreted as based in an orientation towards norms external to the local community (e.g. Labov 1963). Although this may be an appropriate way to describe variation and indexicality in some communities, the so-called standard variants

may have taken on specific local meanings, contributing to the construction of locally meaningful identities and stances (e.g. Moore and Carter 2015, 2017). This means that processes of standardization (understood at the descriptive level as uniformity in language use) cannot be directly interpreted as orientations towards external (e.g. national or urban) norms but may reflect other types of locally and socially meaningful linguistic actions carried out by the speakers. Consequently, standardization must be analyzed at a much more detailed and socially sensitive level, if sociolinguists wish to understand why it happens the way it does. Later chapters in this book will demonstrate how interaction analyses of spoken and written discourse can contribute insights into indexicalities and social functions of variation, which complements the quantitative patterns of use showing in descriptive terms an ongoing process of standardization and dedialectalization.

3. Standardization

In the previous section we used the term 'standardization' without giving much information on how the concept is to be understood in this context. Standardization has been a focus in many sociolinguistic accounts throughout the past 50 years, and in the following section we will briefly touch upon the general treatment of the concept of *standardization*, before moving on to the approach taken in this volume.

Haugen's (1966) classical description of four stages of standardization is used as the starting point in many writings on standardization (e.g. Kristiansen 2019; Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003; Coupland and Kristiansen 2011). However, as pointed out by Deumert and Vandenbussche, this model is lacking an account of the motivations for standardization, both from the people and institutions representing the standard norm and from the people apparently striving to meet it. It is evident that standardization has often been part of a nation-building project in which powerful social groups define the linguistic and national norms and culture (Joseph 2004). In much sociolinguistic literature on the matter, speakers have been viewed as dominated and suppressed by elite groups of society through the acceptance of the language of the elite as 'the standard' (Lippi-Green 1997; Milroy and Milroy 1985; Kristiansen 2019). The generally shared idea of a 'best language' Milroy and Milroy refer to as 'standard ideology' (Milroy and Milroy 1985), while describing language standardization as a process that reduces variability in language use. Thus, standardization has been described in influential writings as both use and ideology and often there is some confusion on how exactly to conceive of the term (see Coupland and Kristiansen 2011 for an overview of approaches to standardization).

Turning to the way we regard standardization in this book, approaching standardization both as language use and ideology can be a fruitful

way to examine sociolinguistic changes. This book is about standardization, but it is also about dedialectalization. When we examine standardization as the increasing use of what we have labeled standard features, it is clear from all three field sites that language use becomes increasingly more standardized from one generation to the next. Aiming to explain this pattern, we include analyses of interaction, ethnographic data, and experiments, all helping us shed light on the ideological aspects of local variation. Still, it is important to note that standardization (at the level of language use) is not only driven by a motivation to acquire standard features but also a motivation to refrain from using local dialect. In the data presented in this volume, as we shall see later, the participants are in some cases not so much adhering to the standard norm as they are avoiding local dialect. From one point of view, it amounts to the same thing—the point is that the speakers use more standard features than older generations—but their motivation may be to distance themselves from a certain social identity rather than to embrace another (cf. Kristiansen et al. 2018). Because the focus of this book is the use of local dialect and its status among young people, we are concerned both with ideologies connected to the use of the standard and with ideologies connected to the use of local dialect. Speaking more standard is not necessarily a consequence of an attempt to sound more Copenhagen, even though what is usually considered 'standard' in Denmark is a Copenhagen-based way of speaking (Pedersen 2005; Kristiansen 2001; Brink and Lund 1975). To young people in Hirtshals, it may be the case that a high use of local dialect features indexes 'farmer-type' or 'old-fashioned', and to avoid these indexicalities young people tend to speak in a way that is closer to 'the standard' (cf. Chapter 4 and 7). Therefore, to understand why the increase in the use of standard forms is taking place, we need to consider why the simultaneous decrease in the use of local dialect forms is taking place, and this is very much a question of ideology. All of this means that in order to explain the changes we find at the level of language use, which we could term standardization, we need to understand the local language ideologies motivating this change. There is no doubt that in Denmark a very strong standard ideology prevails, but it is not the only ideological orientation to language that is at work. As people reproduce the hegemonic status of the standard in discourse, they also express strong affiliation with local nonstandard ways of speaking. This has been shown repeatedly in language attitudes research in Denmark (cf. Kristiansen 2001, 2009), where people express positive affiliation with the local dialect but at the same time downgrade it compared to standard speech. The data in this study support these findings and add nuances to the ideological representations present in the specific field sites (see Chapter 6 and 8). In this manner, we approach standardization both at the level of language use (e.g. Maegaard et al. 2013; Jensen and Maegaard 2010, 2012; Monka

2013) and ideology (e.g. Irvine and Gal 2000; Lippi-Green 1997; Milroy and Milroy 1985; Kristiansen 2009).

4. Standardization and Dedialectalization in Denmark

Although standardization has taken place in language communities all over the world, Denmark has been described as a particularly standardized society (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011; Grondelaers and Kristiansen 2013; Maegaard et al. 2013; Pedersen 2003). Phrases such as 'Danish dialects are disappearing' or 'Danish is one of the most standardized languages in the world' have formed headlines in both public and academic debates on the dialect situation in Denmark. Although these statements are not wrong, they are rather simplified. With a strict focus on the prevailing processes of language standardization and dedialectalization, Danish dialect researchers and sociolinguists (including the authors of this book) have contributed to the overall narrative of the disappearing Danish dialects. As a result, today we know little about the uses and functions of the dialect that still exists in certain areas that used to be thought of as traditional dialect areas. In some places in Denmark, speakers use more dialect than in others, but little is known about how these speakers use dialect and what they use it for. One of the aims of the present volume is to address this problem by combining methods from traditional dialectology with recent developments in sociolinguistics.

As mentioned earlier, Denmark is one of the most linguistically standardized societies in Europe (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011; Grondelaers and Kristiansen 2013; Maegaard et al. 2013; Pedersen 2003). The standardization and dedialectalization were strongest in particular during the second half of the 20th century. Speakers have generally reduced their use of local variants and have adopted Copenhagen variants. This goes both for variation at the individual level, as individuals change language over their lifespan and, more pronounced, for variation at the intergenerational level, with younger speakers using significantly less dialect features than their parents (Jensen and Maegaard 2010, 2012; Maegaard et al. 2013; Schøning and Pedersen 2007). Nevertheless, these patterns are challenged by recent studies of peripheral speech communities. Studies in different parts of Denmark show that some speakers go against the general trend of dedialectalization and use local dialect features occasionally and more frequently than their peers (Monka 2013; Schøning and Pedersen 2009).

Processes of dialect levelling or dedialectalization are often thought of as counter to and incompatible with processes of dialect vitality (Pedersen 2003; Kristiansen and Sandøy 2010; Maegaard et al. 2009; Maegaard et al. 2013; Jensen and Maegaard 2010, 2012). However, scholars have pointed out that large-scale levelling effects of globalization may be counteracted by particular regional loyalties promoting language awareness, preservation, and revitalization of traditional dialect features

(Johnstone 2010a; Britain 2002). This has not yet been proven to be the case in Denmark, and we do not see any evidence of it in the data discussed in this book, but recent interest and use of dialect in commercial contexts (Monka et al. 2015; Scheuer et al. 2015; Karrebæk and Maegaard 2017; Maegaard and Karrebæk 2019) may result in a different view of the use of dialects in the coming years.

When discussing standardization in Denmark, the concept of 'Rigsdansk' is central. The concept has a long history in Danish discourse on variation in speech, both among linguists and lay people. Brink and Lund use the related concept 'Rigsmål' in their influential and extensive work on standardization in Danish, *Dansk Rigsmål*, from 1975. They use it in the meaning 'Danish language which is not locally bound' (1975: 763), by which they mean that 'Rigsmål' is a set of linguistic forms that can be found all over the country. Thus, in their understanding, whether or not a way of speaking is 'Rigsmål' is an empirical question. Brink and Lund argue that the only forms found all over the country are Copenhagen forms; therefore, 'Rigsmål' is 'Copenhagen dialect disseminated to the entire country' (1975: 769). They do acknowledge that the terms 'Rigsmål' and 'Rigsdansk' have no generally accepted definition, and it is their declared hope 'that this looseness must come to an end' (1975: 763) and that people will generally adopt the proposed definition of 'Rigsmål' and stop using the term 'Rigsdansk'. Of course, the 'looseness' has not come to an end, and today, 40 years later, the term 'Rigsdansk' is still the most commonly used term in discourse on standard language, while at the same time having different meanings. As described by Svenstrup and Thøgersen, the term 'Rigsdansk' is associated with quite a few different meanings and values in Danish discourse, including intelligibility, correctness, geographic neutrality, or the Queen's Danish (2009: 195). All of these can be found in our data too, and later chapters will offer more detailed analyses of uses of the term. Here it is enough to stress that 'Rigsdansk' is an ideological concept, which at the same time constructs relations and contrasts to local dialects as well as Copenhagen speech.

5. Dialect and the Symbolic Construction of Place

To most people, dialect is primarily associated with location. The use of dialect, therefore, may construct symbolic connections between speakers and places. On the one hand, place is an outcome of historical processes, on the other a situated achievement of social agents (Pred 1984, 1985; Cresswell 2004; Tuan 1991, 1996; Blommaert 2010). With respect to language, place is produced by speakers in social interaction by use of local and global indexical linguistic items. Recent research points to the complexity of speakers' use of language to orient towards place, arguing that linguistic practice not only reflects but also defines place (Britain 2010a, 2010b, 2013; Johnstone 2004, 2010a, 2010b, 2011; Stjernholm 2013; Quist 2010, 2018).

Sociolinguistic studies have pointed to competing conceptualizations of places among people—from within communities and from an outside perspective (Ito and Preston 1998; Myers 2006; Svendsen 2012). Use of standardized language may index dissociation from the local place, whereas use of local language has been seen to support local orientation (e.g. Labov 1972; Sundgren 2002). The latter is especially salient when the speech in question is associated with a specific locality and not with a social group (Monka 2013). On the other hand, as mentioned in Section 2, the use of standard features does not necessarily index an orientation out of the local community but may contribute to the construction of locally meaningful identities and stances. Therefore, following Britain (2010a), Johnstone (2004), and Horvath and Horvath (2001), we prefer understanding each place in its own right with regard to a variety of factors capable of influencing language use; that is, social, cultural, political, historical, socioeconomic, and attitudinal factors.

As is clear from the following chapters, the three field sites selected for this study are very different, and they are constructed very differently by the participants. This will be especially clear from Chapters 3, 4 and 5, where central aspects of the sites are described in detail, and from Chapters 6, 7 and 8, where comparative analyses of the places are offered.

6. A Transversal Approach

As mentioned earlier, in order to fully understand the meaning of dialect in contemporary society we must aim at approaching the subject from different sides. While a large-scale survey of the distribution of local features in the speech of different people provides insight into dialect use by offering a quantitative measure of analysis, that type of approach does not reveal much about the social meaning and functions of it. As argued by Coupland and Kristiansen:

> From any critical sociolinguistic perspective, use means far more than the distribution of features or varieties as these are captured in variation surveys. Language in use might well reveal attitudinal/ideological loadings, but only if we look at how variation is made meaningful and how social meanings are made contextually in salient practices. . . . Experimental and survey work on use (in the variationist sense) and on attitudes therefore needs to be supplemented with close critical examination of indexicality in social interaction, where 'critical' means trying to access and expose covert ideologies operating behind and through discourse.
>
> (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011: 24)

In this book, we approach the subject of dialect by the use of quantitative survey methods of language use (both spoken and written in social media), experiments yielding quantitative data on language attitudes

or indexicality, ethnographic fieldwork methods offering situated and context-specific interpretations of the social world of our participants, and interaction analyses of spoken and written discourse. This way we seek to investigate different aspects of the sociolinguistic variation among the participants, and the eclectic methodology helps us understand in more detail how and why processes of standardization take place.

Traditionally, dialectology and variationist sociolinguistics have been preoccupied either with describing older dialects in categorical ways or with exploring variation quantitatively at a macro level. However, the last few decades have seen a development within both traditions where combinations of quantitative and qualitative approaches are applied to understand how variation works at a more local or interactional level (e.g. Eckert 2001; Bucholtz 2011; Sharma and Rampton 2015). As argued earlier, there is a need for a *transversal* approach to variation, which is an extended form of triangulation. Our use of the concept *transversality* is not simply about a study being multisited, or multimethodological (as in e.g. Heller et al. 2014; Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes 2014; Pietikäinen et al. 2016) but also about collecting different data types, as well as data from different contexts and across different generations. Our approach to the study of language standardization as sociolinguistic change is transversal with respect to methodology, analytical approaches, and data collection in time and space. It is methodologically and analytically transversal because it combines variationist sociolinguistics, ethnography, interactional sociolinguistics, and experimental sociolinguistics. The study includes a variety of different data sets from different contexts, for example data from media (especially social media), interviews, group recordings, and self-recordings conducted in different contexts such as in schools, at leisure time activities, and in families. Furthermore, the data are collected in three different geographical areas, and from three generations at each site. We use different methodological approaches to the same data but also similar approaches across a variety of data. Using this combined approach, we are able to shed light on key aspects of the multifaceted phenomenon of sociolinguistic change, by studying it from different angles and different perspectives. We thus take transversality to concern mainly methodology and data, arguing, with Meyerhoff (2016); Erickson (2005) and Heller (2001) that such an approach allows us to achieve a fine-grained account of the meaning of variation in people's everyday lives that allows for a better understanding of language standardization.

7. Field Sites and Data

7.1 Selection of Sites

To know more about the advanced standardization in Denmark, and the accompanying dedialectalization for the Dialect in the Periphery project we aimed to find places where some dialect might still be spoken. We

Figure 1.1 Map of Denmark with the three field sites and Copenhagen.

therefore selected three field sites, which were known to be among the most dialect speaking areas in Denmark: Southern Jutland, Northern Jutland and the island of Bornholm (see Figure 1.1).

It is apparent from Figure 1.1 that the research sites are peripheral in terms of geographical space from a nationwide perspective. However, in the era of globalization, concepts like *center* and *periphery*—once fixed and obviously meaningful—become variant and fluent and may no longer be regarded as stable phenomena (Appadurai 1990; Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes 2013). Rather, peripheries and centers are discursive constructs and as such subjects to complex socio-political processes. The 'center' is typically construed and defined in terms of advancement, metropolitanism, urbanism, and political and economic power, while the 'periphery' is construed as marginal to and dependent on the center (Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes 2013; Britain 2009). This is manifest to a certain degree in the three sites. All are geographically peripheral to the borders of Denmark, as they are situated close to these borders. However, defined in alternative terms, they are peripheral to different extents—if peripheral at all. This will be elaborated later in the presentation of the sites.

Sociolinguistics has been preoccupied with urban variation and variation in cities in a globalized world, whereas peripheries have seldom

been investigated within the context of globalization. However, peripheral sites may be new centers of normativity, since globalization in terms of social, political, and economic processes may lead to peripheral sites developing new linguistic norms. These dynamics typically involve negotiations of issues like language ownership, commodification, and authenticity (Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes 2013; Monka 2013). The three sites are quite different in this respect.

The three selected locations represent areas that in the public and by politicians are thought to belong to the 'periphery' ('udkantsdanmark'). From a dialectologist's perspective, however, these locations are 'central' dialect-speaking areas. Globalization has affected the demographics of these locations: roughly and generally speaking, all three places are characterized by a stagnated number of inhabitants, more men than women, more older than younger people, and fewer people who make a living by agricultural production and fishery, even though these trades used to be the primary source of income to many locals. Such changes are likely to influence the use of dialect, and this book examines the consequences of such changes to contemporary uses of dialect.

The fieldwork takes place in the three locations in Denmark that are considered beyond doubt (by both linguists and laypeople) as the places where most local dialect is spoken and where dialects are considered to differ the most from Standard Danish. Characteristically, the local dialects have labels—'Bornholmsk', 'Vendelbomål', and 'Sønderjysk'—generally known and used by laypeople. This is unique within the Danish speech community. The locations are similar in some respects, but they also differ in important ways. In each site, different aspects of peripherality are significant, as will be evident from the following accounts.

7.2 The Field Site Bylderup in Southern Jutland

Originally, the name 'Southern Jutland' was ascribed to a region separated from the Danish kingdom in the year 1122 and henceforth known as the Duchy of Schleswig. The duchy was lost to Prussia in 1864, bringing the area under German rule until 1920. Following the Versailles treaty after WWI, plebiscites on national belonging were carried out in Northern and Central Schleswig. Northern Schleswig inhabitants voted for reunification with Denmark; Central Schleswig inhabitants voted for maintaining German affiliation, thus creating the present-day border (Hansen and Becker-Christensen 2009). Today 'Southern Jutland' encompasses the southernmost 60 km of the Danish part of the Jutland peninsula (see Figure 1.2).

The period from 1864 to 1920 is significant to the self-understanding and identity of the inhabitants (e.g. Adriansen and Pedersen 2007), generating discourses of difference constructing Southern Jutlanders as standing out from Danes as such, not only with regard to local tradition, cuisine,

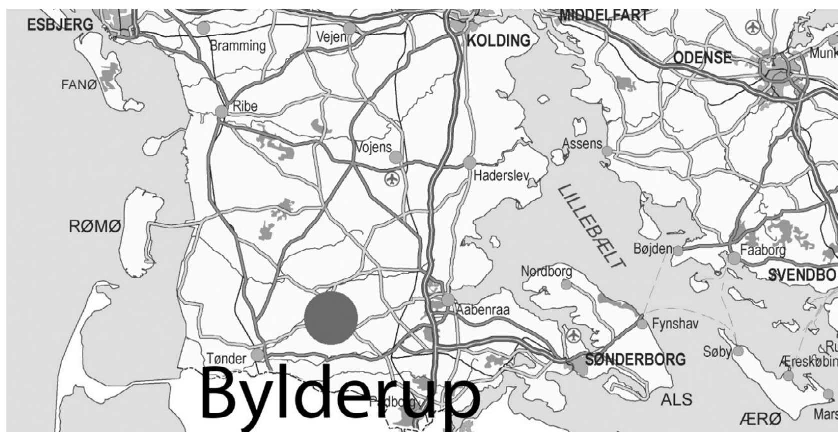

Figure 1.2 The field site Bylderup situated in the region of Southern Jutland.

and language but also when it comes to inhabitants' 'Danish-ness'. Many Southern Jutlanders consider themselves to be 'genuine Danes' because they voted to become Danish after WWI in 1920 (Monka 2013).

Southern Jutland is geographically peripheral in the sense that it is far from Copenhagen, as are the other field sites. It is a special case of peripherality, though, because of the geographical attachment to continental Europe, because of the special history as an area under German rule for more than 50 years, and finally because of the history of making national identity a matter of choice.

Bylderup is situated 10 km north of the Danish–German border and has around 1,400 inhabitants. The region of Southern Jutland has approximately 250,000 inhabitants.

7.3 The Southern Jutlandic Dialect and Previous Studies

For Danish dialectology, research into the Southern Jutlandic dialect was a starting point. The present-day Section of Dialectology at the University of Copenhagen was founded in 1909. The first fieldtrip went to Southern Jutland and the national political aim of the study was to show that the Southern Jutlandic dialects are Danish and, thus, the geographic area rightfully belonged to the Danish kingdom (Gudiksen and Hovmark 2009).

For the development of the dialect, the period of 1864 to 1920 is an important factor in explaining the strong dialect of the area. Since all government posts were held by Germans in the period, the dialect was without direct linguistic influence from Standard Danish (Olsen 1949).

Earlier studies have pointed to an excessive use of dialect in the area, and several of the privileged market towns had a dialect of their own, which is exceptional in Denmark (Nielsen and Pedersen 1991). A study from the late 1990s showed that local dialect was still used in the daily lives of young people around the town of Tønder (Maegaard 2001). A study from the 1980s found dialect to be the most widespread linguistic variant used by adolescents in the town of Tinglev (Pedersen 1986). In a recent real-time panel study, the speakers from Tinglev were re-recorded (Monka 2013). It was found that, in comparison with similar data from two comparable towns in Eastern and Western Jutland, dialect in Tinglev is well-preserved, whereas it is in decline in the other towns. Monka argues that the different patterns of real-time language change may be explained by Southern Jutlandic speakers' conceptualization of dialect as a hallmark of authenticity (Monka 2013).

Southern Jutlandic dialect differs from Standard Danish grammatically, phonologically, morphologically, and with regard to lexicon and prosody (Kristensen 1909; Olsen 1949; Bjerrum 1953; Pedersen 1986; Nyberg 1991; Maegaard 2001; Monka 2013; Westergaard 2013). Examples are 1) phonological variation between dialect diphtongization of standard long [e], [o], and [ø] to [ei], [ow], and [øi]; 2) morphological variation, such as the prefixed definite article 'æ hus' for standard 'huset' (*the house*); 3) the use of dialect lexicon, e.g. 'æ' and 'it' for standard 'jeg' (*I*) and 'ikke' (*not*); and 4) prosodic variation, such as the lack of 'stød' (glottalization) and tonal accents.

7.4 The Field Site Hirtshals in Northern Jutland

Northern Jutland is the northernmost part of Jutland and is situated north of the Limfjord separating Northern Jutland from the rest of Jutland. Norway is 120 km off the west coast of Northern Jutland, whereas Sweden is a little closer to the east coast. The Hirtshals area on the west coast (see Figure 1.3) is connected by ferry to Norway, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands. Historically, Northern Jutland has been connected by sea especially to Norway, merchant ships being central in the trade between the countries.

Although it is historically connected to other parts of Scandinavia rather than to Copenhagen, Northern Jutland is peripheral to contemporary Denmark in the sense that it is far from Copenhagen, the place of cultural, political, and economic power since the 17th century.

The area of Northern Jutland has around 300,000 inhabitants, and the Hirtshals district has approximately 14,000 inhabitants. The history of the town of Hirtshals only goes to around 100 years back, to 1919, when the large engineering construction, the Hirtshals Harbor, was initiated. The town of Hirtshals grew during the first part of the 20th century, concurrently with the expansion of the Hirtshals Harbour, which today is

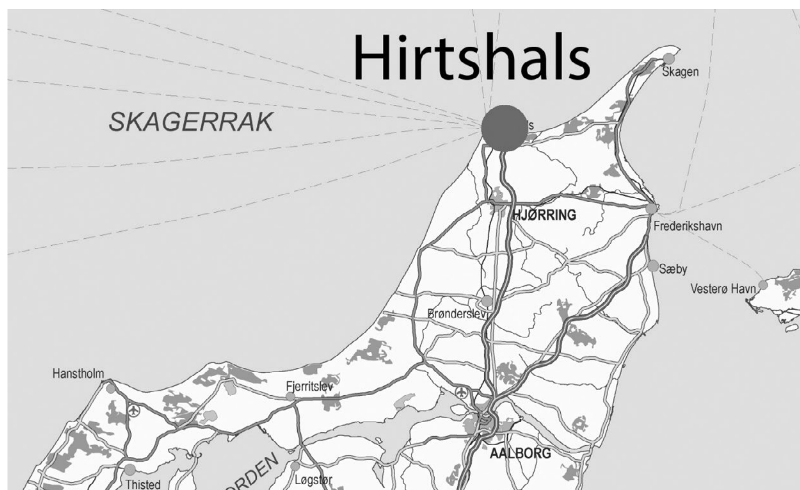

Figure 1.3 The field site Hirthals situated in the region of Northern Jutland.

one of the largest fishing ports in Denmark. The majority of the Hirtshals inhabitants have traditionally made their living by the fishing industry. This is still the case today, although tourism and the ferry companies also provide jobs to people in Hirtshals.

7.5 Vendelbomål and Previous Studies

The traditional dialect in Vendsyssel (the part of Northern Jutland where Hirtshals is situated) is labelled 'Vendelbomål'. Vendelbomål is the subject of several dialectological studies (e.g. *the Jutland dictionary* [www.jyskordbog.dk], Bengtson 1981; Bennike and Kristensen 1898–1912; Espegaard 1974; Feilberg 1896–1914; Jensen 1897–1902; Larsen 1914). Although the traditional dialect is relatively well-researched (as in Southern Jutland, see section 7.3), linguistic variation in contemporary Vendsyssel has not been investigated in any detail. The sole exception is the Hirtshals study (Hansen and Lund 1983). Childrens', parents', and teachers' linguistic practices and language ideologies were studied by researchers from the University of Ålborg, University of Copenhagen, and the Danish School of Educational Studies with a focus on dialect and education. The study was comprehensive, focusing on the use of dialect among the school pupils and their parents, their reading and writing skills, and elementary school teachers', pupils', and parents' language awareness and ideologies. Results showed that even though the use of dialect was decreasing dramatically from parents to children,

variation between areas within the Hirtshals community was substantial (Jørgensen 1983). The highest amount of dialect use was found in the small nearby towns of Tornby and Vidstrup. These were also the places where parents displayed the most positive attitudes to passing on dialect to their children (Hansen 1983). However, the Hirtshals project took place 30 years ago and the community has changed dramatically since then.

We focus on the Hirtshals area in order to make a feasible comparison between new results and the state of affairs described 30 years ago.

Vendelbomål differs from Standard Danish with respect to grammar, phonology, lexicon, and prosody. This includes variation such as 1) phonetic variation between dialect [w] and Danish standard [v], 2) morphological variation between three-gender system vs. Standard Danish two-gender system, 3) lexicon, e.g. 'a' and 'inte' for Standard Danish 'jeg' (*I*) and 'ikke' (*not*), and 4) prosodic variation such as 'stød' (a special type of glottalization), and 'klusilspring' (a special pronunciation of plosives in certain segments). In the analyses of linguistic practices, attention is given to the types of variation examined in the earlier Hirtshals project (Nyberg and Larsen 1983; Jørgensen 1983) as well as features deriving from new observations (see Chapter 2).

7.6 The Field Site Nexø, Bornholm

Nexø is a town on Bornholm, an island situated in the Baltic Sea, about 150 km east of mainland Denmark (see Figure 1.4). The island is closer to Sweden, Poland, and Germany than to mainland Denmark. Regarding geography and infrastructure, Bornholm is situated closer to Sweden

Figure 1.4 The field site Nexø, situated on the island of Bornholm in the Baltic Sea.

than to mainland Denmark. The only ferry line from the mainland is from Køge, south of Copenhagen, and even though there is an airport in Rønne, the common way to travel between Bornholm and the mainland is via Sweden with a fast ferry leaving Ystad three times a day in the winter season, and eight times a day in the summer season.

Bornholm's unique identity vis à vis Denmark as such is articulated in numerous ways. Local inhabitants make a distinction between 'Bornholm' and 'Denmark', thus discursively separating Bornholm from the Danish mainland (this is parallel to the construction of linguistic difference described in Section 7.7). Bornholm has a flag of its own, which is well-known and frequently used. The number of inhabitants on Bornholm is less than 40,000, and the number is steadily decreasing. It is among the areas in Denmark with the lowest income rate, the lowest education levels, and the highest unemployment rate (Danmarks Statistik 2016). It is also the area in Denmark where tourism is most important to the local economy. More than 600,000 tourists a year visit the island, the majority in the summer (visitdenmark.dk). Nexø, the site of investigation, is on the east coast of the island and has 3,600 inhabitants. It is an old town dating back to the Middle Ages. Its inhabitants have traditionally been employed in trade, production, and fishing—and, today, also tourism.

7.7 The Bornholm Dialect and Previous Studies

The Bornholm dialect is interesting for several reasons. It is the only Eastern Danish dialect spoken in Denmark (since Denmark lost the rest of the eastern areas to Sweden in the 17th century). Significantly, Bornholmians usually label their own dialect 'Bornholmian' ('bornholmsk') whereas the standard is labelled 'Danish' ('dansk'), creating a dichotomy between 'Bornholmian' and 'Danish'. The Bornholm dialect is understudied (Pedersen 2009a, 2009b), few descriptions exist (e.g. Espersen 1908; Andersen 1959; Geist and Baumann Larsen 1974), and none of them are descriptions of dialect variation.

The Bornholm dialect differs from Standard Danish at all linguistic levels; grammatically, phonetically, and with regard to lexicon and prosody. This includes variation such as 1) Bornholm phonetic variants, like [c] for standard [k] and fronting of standard [u]; 2) morphological variation like the use of a dialect three-gender system (as opposed to the Standard Danish two-gender system), double definite article (as opposed to Standard Danish single definite article); 3) the use of special Bornholm lexemes like 'pibel' or 'horra' (for Standard Danish 'pige' [*girl*] and 'dreng' [*boy*]), and finally 4) the special Bornholm prosody, probably the most important feature distinguishing Bornholm speech from speech from any other part of the country (Andersen 1959; Espersen 1908; Wimmer 1908; Pedersen