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Translocated Danish in Northern Europe: The case of Faroe Danish and Dano-Norwegian

Abstract: The paper contains a descriptive analysis of the development of translocated Danish in historical Norway and the Faroes within a framework of postcolonial linguistic development, namely the ‘Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes’ (Schneider 2009), originally proposed to cover the evolution of postcolonial varieties of English. The paper compares the socio-political development of the two territories and their relationship with Denmark, the identity constructions of the speakers, the sociolinguistic setting with regard to attitudes and language contact and, finally, the linguistic characteristics of the local varieties of Danish. Despite the fact that neither the Faroes nor Norway had actual colonial status, the development from historical Dano-Norwegian to today’s Bokmål follows a postcolonial path closely in that it shows a completed advancement from a translocated Danish to an indigenous variety, Bokmål. In contrast, the comparison with Norway and the other postcolonial situations which the ‘Dynamic Model’ is based on, shows that the evolution of Faroe-Danish does not follow a postcolonial path. This local variety of Danish seems to be best characterized as a lingua franca learned as an (early) L2 that is entrenched within the Faroese society which shows but few signs of nativization.

Keywords: language contact, Faroe Danish, Dano-Norwegian, postcolonial development, Faroe Islands, Norway

1 Introduction

This paper provides a comparison of the linguistic development of Danish on the Faroes and in historical Norway. Danish in these territories is not indigenous. It is the result of language translocation due to Denmark’s political, cultural and financial dominance in situations that resemble colonial relationships and has resulted in the establishment of specific varieties of Danish in these territories, Faroe Danish and Dano-Norwegian. A comparison of these situations shows how language can be managed from above, by official language policies, but also influenced from below, by the language use of the speakers.

Today, the Faroes are a self-governing territory within the Kingdom of Denmark, but from 1380 and until 1948, they lacked any substantial internal autonomy. Norway

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came under heavy Danish influence when the country and Denmark formed a political union in 1380 under the Danish crown, and from 1536 until 1814, Norway was a mere Danish province. The ties that connect the Faroes and Norway with Denmark are obviously different, but they have had the similar consequence of Danish language being translocated into these dependent territories through political decisions to such a degree that it has become an established part of these societies.

Stable societal bilingualism was and remains essential to these situations, implying that Danish as used in the Faroes and in historical Norway was and is shaped by contact with the local spoken languages (Faroese and South Norwegian dialects, respectively). As a consequence of language contact, Faroe Danish and historical Dano-Norwegian differ(ed) lexically and structurally from (contemporary) Mainland Danish. All the varieties involved (Danish, Faroese, Norwegian dialects) belong to the Northern branch of the Germanic languages and are thus genetically closely related and typologically similar. Comparing language contact situations with similar structural preconditions makes it possible to focus on how the structural outcome depends on social factors and mechanisms, including the political setting of the region, language policy and planning, language use, speakers' attitudes towards the local language and towards Danish, and the choice of group affiliation as well as the communicative functions and linguistic domains of the local language and Danish, respectively. The interplay between these social factors and the structural outcome in Faroe Danish and Dano-Norwegian is the main topic of the paper. In order to compare these different situations, I apply the 'Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes' (Schneider 2009), a framework originally designed to provide an analytical-descriptive tool for the linguistic development of postcolonial varieties of English.

In the following section, I introduce the 'Dynamic Model' (henceforth, DM) and argue for its applicability to translocated Danish in historical Norway and in the Faroes today. In section 3 and 4, I implement the framework in detailed analyses on Faroe Danish and Dano-Norwegian. Section 5 provides the reader with a discussion of the results and concluding remarks, and section 6 gives a brief general outlook to other Northern European Danishes which for reasons of space are not included in this paper, but where a postcolonial analysis would be equally applicable.¹

¹ Many thanks to Steffen Höder for discussions of previous versions of this paper. Many thanks also to two anonymous reviewers. All remaining errors are my own.

2 A Framework for the Analysis of Northern European Danishes

Danish in historical Norway and in the Faroes has come about as a result of the institutionalized connections between the territories and Denmark. These connections are characterized by an asymmetrical distribution of power with regard to administration and legislation, financial support, cultural export and also language politics, with Denmark being the dominant player. The ‘Dynamic Model of Postcolonial Englishes’ (Schneider 2009) allows a comparative analysis of the linguistic development of translocated Danish, not least because the DM seems to be applicable to non-colonial translocation of languages, too, provided that they have developed within situations of entrenched asymmetrical power relations between a motherland and a non-dominant region. This is not surprising as languages that are translocated on a large scale often are (post)colonial languages, but they need not be (it might be the result of, e.g., wars or large-scale migration). Language translocation by a colonial power is but one variant form in a spectrum of political actions that involve the export of the language of a dominant nation (as is the case of Danish in the (former) Danish dependencies Norway and the Faroes). These latter statements are the prerequisite for comparing Faroese Danish and Dano-Norwegian within a framework of postcolonial language development. Nevertheless, neither historical Norway nor the Faroes have ever had actual status as Danish colonies, and neither the author nor the application of the DM argue otherwise.

The DM seeks to describe the process that leads from the transplantation of English by settlers into a new territory and, through a period of changes, on to the stabilization of a new postcolonial variety of English (Schneider 2009: 29–70).² The model builds upon the basic assumption that the evolution of postcolonial varieties is ultimately due to a sequence of changes in group affiliations and associated linguistic changes in language contact situations. Thus, the speech community rather than the nation-state is the basic sociolinguistic unit of description in the DM (cf. *ibid.*: 313–314).

A second basic assumption of the DM is that every process of colonial language transplantation is shaped by a consistent set of sociolinguistic and language-contact conditions, and that there is a fundamentally uniform process underlying all individual instances of colonial language translocation and the emergence of a local postcolonial variant of that language (*ibid.*: 5). Schneider’s approach, however, does not

² Here, I use the term ‘(post)colonial’ and ‘English’ in order to render Schneider’s model close to the original. However, my point is that ‘(post)colonial’ might be replaced by ‘translocated’ and ‘English’ with any other language, provided that the translocation of the language has happened within an asymmetric power relationship.

seek to account for all idiosyncratic variations but rather aims to point to the common features in different sociolinguistic situations which share a colonial past (*ibid.*: 310). The DM predicts that the process of establishment and reinvention of a colonial language will happen in a sequence of five progressive stages (halted developments are possible):

1. a foundation phase,
2. a phase of exonormative stabilization where speakers adhere to the norms and standards of the colonial language,
3. a phase of structural and societal nativization of the emerging postcolonial variety,
4. a phase of endonormative stabilization of the postcolonial variety, and
5. a phase of social and linguistic differentiation of the postcolonial variety which is by now a sociolinguistically differentiated variety in its own right.

These developmental phases are each shaped by specific parameters of politics, particular identity construction of the speaker groups (settlers and indigenous people), specific sociolinguistic settings of language contact, language use and language attitudes with regard to the varieties involved, and a linguistic development particular to the specific phase.

The third basic assumption of the DM is that these parameters are connected by a unidirectional causal relationship, i.e. the political circumstances shape the identity construction of the speakers which in turn influence language use, language contact and language attitudes which again determine the linguistic changes within the colonial language. Hence, the five progressive phases in combination with the parameters yield a two-dimensional descriptive model along an x-axis (the progressive phases) and a y-axis (the parameters). The following table provides an adjusted rendition of Schneider's original overview table (*ibid.*: 56).

The DM offers a bird's-eye perspective on different linguistic situations but systemizes the analysis coherently. This makes it suitable for a comparative (albeit, of course, generalizing) analysis of the linguistic development of Danish in historical Norway and the Faroes, as outlined in the following sections.

Two factors seem to be of particular importance in the postcolonial developmental process: One is the relative proportion of settlers and local people who interact at any given point of time, the second is the colonial society's primary motivation for the use of the colonial language. The development of a postcolonial variety with affiliation to its new territory from the colonial language is most successful if the language is adopted as a means of marking community solidarity and not mainly for utilitarian motives (*ibid.*: 310–311).

Tab. 1

	History and politics	Identity construction	Sociolinguistics of contact/use/ attitudes	Linguistic development/structural effects
Phase 1 Foundation	STL ³ : colonial expansion: trade, military outpost, emigration/settlement IDG: occupation, loss/sharing of territory, trade	STL: part of original trading nation IDG: indigenous	STL: cross-dialectal contact, limited exposure to local languages IDG: minority bilingualism (acquisition of English)	STL: koinéization; toponymic borrowing; incipient pidginization (in trade colonies)
Phase 2 Exonormative stabilization	stable colonial status, English established as language of administration, law, (higher) education...	STL: outpost of original nation, “British-plus-local” IDG: individually “local-plus-British”	STL: acceptance of original norm; expanding contact IDG: spreading (elite) bilingualism	lexical borrowing; pidginization/creolization
Phase 3 Nativization	weakening ties; often political independence, but remaining cultural association	STL: permanent resident of British origin STL: permanent resident of indigenous origin	widespread regular contacts, accommodation IDG: common bilingualism, toward language shift, L1 speakers of local English STL: sociolinguistic cleavage between innovative speakers (adopting IDG forms) and conservative speakers (upholding external norm; “complaint tradition”)	heavy lexical borrowing; IDG: phonological innovations, structural nativization, spreading from IDG to settlers: innovations at lexis-grammar interface (verb complementation, prepositional usage, construction with certain words/word classes, lexical productivity; code-mixing as identity carrier)
Phase 4 Endonormative stabilization	post-independence, self-dependence	(member of) new nation, territory-based, increasingly pan-ethnic	acceptance of local norm (as identity carrier), positive	stabilization of new variety, emphasis on homogeneity, codification: dictionary writing,

³ STL = settlers, IDG = indigenous

	History and politics	Identity construction	Sociolinguistics of contact/use/attitudes	Linguistic development/structural effects
			attitude to it, literary creativity in new variety	grammatical description
Phase 5 Differentiation	stable young nation, internal sociopolitical differentiation	group-specific (part of new national identity)	network construction	dialect birth: group-specific (ethnic, regional, social) varieties emerge (as L1 or L2)

3 From Dano-Norwegian to Bokmål

3.1 Socio-political background

During the period of the Dano-Norwegian union from 1538 to 1814 (also called *Dansketiden*, ‘the Danish years’), when Norway was a Danish province, the Norwegian speech community became increasingly influenced and dominated by Danish.⁴ The language was translocated to Norway in various ways: Copenhagen was the center of royal power with the King’s residence and the Royal Council where the decisions concerning union matters were made. An ever-increasing group of Danes in ecclesiastical as well as secular positions were placed in the Norwegian administration, thereby establishing Danish as the language of administration, law and higher education. In 1814, Denmark was forced to cede Norway to Sweden by the treaty of Kiel before the country finally gained independence as a nation in its own right in 1905. This was not the end of translocated Danish on Norwegian territory, but today Norway is an independent state characterized by political independence and a self-dependent society-internal differentiation in which the former colonial power does not play any role. This is exactly what characterizes the final phase of the DM, the differentiation phase (cf. Schneider 2009: 53). Norway can thus be said to have accomplished the process of postcolonial detachment.

⁴ This account does not provide a comprehensive account of the details of Norwegian language history. For further reading see the references provided in the text and Torp/Vikør (2003).

3.2 Identity construction

The colony-like political construction of the Dano-Norwegian union implied that the immigrant Danes and their Norwegian-born descendants in civil administration and church service were part of the upper class at that time. Together with Norwegians proper (e.g., the local-born patrician commercial class), they formed the Norwegian elite (cf. Mæhlum 2005: 1916). A continuum of cultural-geographical affiliations must have existed during the years of the Dano-Norwegian union, ranging from ‘pure Danish’ and ‘pure Norwegian’ to hybrid cultural and geographical identities, but at least since the second half of the 19th century, prompted by the rise of nationalism, the different groups merged into an increasingly pan-ethnic, territory-based new Norwegian nation (Mæhlum 2005: 1917–1920). Today, identity construction in the Norwegian society does not relate to the former colonial power Denmark, neither by identification nor by dissociation. The last traces of a sense of postcolonial inferiority might be that Bokmål, by far the default choice between the two Norwegian written standard varieties, is dismissed as ‘Danish’ by writers of Nynorsk. However, the debates on the use of either Nynorsk and Bokmål seem to reflect nation-internal sociolinguistic differentiation (cf. Hellevik 2001) rather than a reference to the Danish state or to Danes. Norwegian identity construction can also be assigned to the final stage of postcolonial development in Schneider’s DM, the phase of nation-internal differentiation into different sociolinguistically marked subgroups (Schneider 2009: 53).

3.3 Sociolinguistic setting

The linguistic landscape in Norway from the 17th century and onwards was massively influenced by Danish language and the social and cultural dominance that this language represented. Løkenstgard Hoel (1996: 33) mentions not less than four linguistic varieties that were spoken in Norway in the beginning of the 19th century of which the three most prestigious were Danish:

1. Danish, or *rikstalemål* ‘Standard spoken language’, spoken by the Danes living in Norway;
2. *høgtidsmålet* ‘formal language’ which was used in formal contexts and involved a letter-based pronunciation of Danish due to its origin in written Danish (also known as *klokkerdansk* ‘sexton-Danish’);
3. *den dannede dagligtale* ‘refined colloquial speech’ which involved mixing of Norwegian dialects and Danish, and, finally,
4. the rural and urban Norwegian dialects that were spoken by the majority of the Norwegians and had not been particularly influenced by Danish.

The difference between formal speech and refined colloquial speech is rather vague, linguistically speaking, but the two varieties were functionally different and assigned

to different domains. During the 18th century, the variety identified as refined colloquial speech became the mother tongue of the Norwegian upper class (Jahr 2003: 332, cf. also Mæhlum 2005; Sandøy 2002), and it was established as a sociolect around 1800 (cf. Haraldsrud 2012). As the speakers of the Dano-Norwegian varieties formed the social and cultural elite, their language use reflected, and at the same time reinforced, the superiority of Danish and the acceptance of Denmark as the political and cultural dominant power. The high status of Danish further relied on the fact that the Danish variant of Old Norse written language (along with Latin) had replaced the Norwegian variant of Old Norse written language since around 1500. Accordingly, written Danish was used by the Danish administration, but also in church after the reformation was established in Norway in 1537. The translation of the Bible into Danish in 1550 marked a final breakthrough for Danish, even among common people (Mæhlum 2005: 1914). Written Danish gained further dominance through the replacement of the medieval national law of Magnus Lagabøte by Christian IV's Norwegian Law written in Danish, the fact that education at the University of Copenhagen had become an obligatory requirement for certain secular and church positions since 1660 and also through the introduction of compulsory schooling in Norway in 1739 where (written) Danish was to be the medium of instruction (*ibid.*; Nes 2005: 1297).⁵ The sociolinguistic situation in Norway from the 17th and to the 19th century was thus characterized by societal diglossia, although the influence of spoken Danish/Dano-Norwegian must have varied according to place, occasion and social strata. After the dissolution of the union between Denmark and Norway, language became a prominent topic on the political agenda. This led to the creation of Nynorsk which was considered to represent the rural Norwegian dialects and genuine Norwegian identity as opposed to the culturally dominating class of civil servants who used Dano-Norwegian. However, Dano-Norwegian was not dismissed, resulting in the existence of two written standard varieties on equal legal footing since 1892. Dano-Norwegian/Bokmål had become an integrated part of the Norwegian linguistic landscape, and after various reforms, it was completely nativized and accepted as a local norm and a suitable identity carrier, at least for a considerable part of the speech community. This situation prevails today. This sociolinguistic development places the variety at least in the second-last stage of Schneider's DM, the phase of endonormative stabilization, characterized by the full acceptance of and a positive attitude towards the postcolonial variety as well as literary creativity in the by now nativized variety (Schneider 2009: 48–52). The final phase of Schneider's DM, sociolinguistic differentiation affiliated with speaker groups (*ibid.*: 52–53), does not fit well as Bokmål is (mainly) a written language and thus

⁵ This development was reinforced by the first codification of Danish orthography in 1775, by governmental decree following the textbook produced by Malling (cf. Nes 2005: 1297; Kristiansen 2003: 77).

resistant to large-scale change.⁶ We conclude, though, that Bokmål as a postcolonial variety has developed as far as possible for a written variety.

3.4 Structural effects

The Dano-Norwegian varieties mentioned above differed from their sources, i.e. contemporary Danish and the Norwegian dialects: Formal language and refined colloquial speech was characterized by a letter-based pronunciation, reflecting the fact that language contact primarily involved written Danish.⁷ Further, Dano-Norwegian was characterized by pronunciation features of Norwegian dialectal origin as well as contemporary spoken Danish (cf. Nes 2005: 1297–1298; Haraldsrud 2012: 134–135), by the occurrence of Norwegian/dialectal lexical items and a simplified grammar compared to contemporary written Danish and Norwegian dialects (Jahr 2003: 332).⁸ However, as the genetic and structural proximity between Norwegian dialects and Danish facilitated almost infinite possibilities of mixing, it is often difficult to assign structural features unambiguously to either Norwegian dialectal or Danish origin. Further, the amount of Norwegian influence varied according to social class, region, occasion and topic (Mæhlum 2005: 1915).

During the 19th and early 20th century, Dano-Norwegian was codified and standardized, thus completing the phase of endonormative stabilization within the DM. This phase is characterized by emphasis on homogeneity, dictionary writing and grammatical description of the ‘new’ variety (Schneider 2009: 48–52). The codification was implemented by a number of reforms aimed at the Norwegianization of Dano-Norwegian. By the reforms of 1907 and 1917, written Danish was aligned to the spoken Dano-Norwegian standard that reflected the speech of the educated upper middle class of Oslo. The language planning modifying Dano-Norwegian/Bokmål has continued ever since (for details on the process see, e.g., Jahr 2003), but from the 1917-reform on, Bokmål was divided into two sociolinguistically quite different varieties (radical Bokmål and conservative Bokmål, cf. Jahr 2003: 340–341). Within the DM, this would represent the next and final step in postcolonial language development, i.e. (social, ethnic, local) dialect birth (Schneider 2009: 52–55). Despite the fact that written Bokmål is not likely to undergo further dialectal differentiation, it is clearly the result of a completed structural development of a postcolonial variety following the predictions of the DM quite closely.

⁶ Røynealand (2009), Mæhlum (2009) and Papazian (2012) point to the existence of spoken varieties of Bokmål in the Oslo region. This would be an instance of dialectal differentiation within Bokmål.

⁷ However, Haraldsrud (2012: 119–121, 135) rightly points to influence from spoken Danish.

⁸ For more detailed accounts on the structural features of the Dano-Norwegian varieties see Haraldsrud 2012 and Nes 2005.

4 Faroe Danish

4.1 Socio-political background

Translocated Danish in the Faroes has its roots in the Faroes' political affiliation with the Kingdom of Denmark and to the Danish Unity of the Realm (*rigsfællesskabet*). The Faroes have belonged to Denmark since 1380, governed not least by the Danish trade monopoly abandoned only in 1856. In 1816, after the abolition of *Løgtinget* (the local council), the Faroes were turned into a Danish municipality (*amt*) ruled by an appointed resident governor (*amtmand*) (Wylie 1987: 90). However, Faroese people kept positions within the local administration, too (Debes 1993: 20). Denmark's new constitution in 1849 provided the Faroese people with two seats in the Danish parliament, closely followed by the reestablishment of *Løgtinget* in 1852. In 1948, after being isolated from Denmark during World War II, the islands finally became a self-governing territory with a far-reaching home rule agreement. In 2005, a new autonomy arrangement, the Takeover Act, turned over even more areas of responsibility to the Faroese authorities. However, important political issues still remain within the responsibility of the Danish government, i.e. all constitutional issues, citizenship law, supreme court issues, currency and economic politics, foreign affairs to a certain degree, national security policy and defense policy.⁹ The Danish government supports the Faroes by an annual grant (approximately 640 million Danish Crowns in 2016). Hence, there is a clear movement towards more equality within the Danish-Faroese relationship, but the Faroes are still clearly a non-independent territory and the non-dominant party in the Danish-Faroese relationship. Despite an endeavor in particular by the Faroese Republican party, *Tjóðveldi*, to promote independence from Denmark, the Faroes are (at least for now) politically and financially firmly tied to Denmark, and the maintenance of this union is in fact supported by parts of the Faroese population which are represented by *Sambandsflokkurin* (cf. Hoff 2012: 96–97, 109–115). This socio-political setting between a stable colonial status and weakening political ties places the Faroes in between the phases of exonormative stabilization (phase 2) and nativization (phase 3).

4.2 Identity construction

Despite the fact that the Faroes were under strict Danish rule, historical everyday life on the Faroes does not seem to have been influenced much by the few Danes in the local administration. We may assume that most of the Faroese people never had the opportunity of associating themselves with Danes simply because since the contact

⁹ http://www.stm.dk/_a_1602.html, last access 24.01.2017

was sparse: The local administration was restricted to the capital Tórshavn, the Faroes were geographically isolated and also isolated by the Danish trade monopoly. Hence, the chance of launching a process of identity merging and accommodation to the Danes was minimal. Only the small group of Faroese people who travelled to Mainland Denmark and returned to the Faroes as, e.g., priests might have had the chance to change their group affiliation. Also today, judging by Faroese press and social media, Faroese seem to identify primarily as Faroese (cf. also Mitchinson 2012: 200). Faroese identity construction is only remotely related to Denmark, apart from the numerous personal ties between individuals from the two countries (due to intermarriage and temporary migration to Denmark for education or jobs) which of course lead to the emergence of hyphenated Faroese-Danish identity construction. In her analyses of how Faroese and Danish politicians present the historical bond between the Faroes and Denmark, Hoff (2012: 98–103) points out that the Faroese speakers do not refer to shared history and shared culture as do the Danish politicians, indicating a diverging understanding of the Faroese-Danish relationship.

The Faroese identity construction is based on affiliations with Faroese groups and subgroups (grouped by e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, area, social stratum etc.), and these affiliations do not relate to the ‘colonial’ power. This self-related group-internal differentiation assigns the Faroese people to the final stage in Schneider’s DM (Schneider 2009: 53). This means that the Faroese identity construction either have completed their postcolonial development, despite the lasting political and financial union with Denmark, or that they actually never even started that process.

4.3 Sociolinguistics of language use, contact and attitudes

Danish has had a strong position in the Faroes for centuries. Like in Norway, written Danish was the only written language in the Faroes since the loss of written Old Norse, and at least since the Reformation, one can expect passive knowledge of Danish to have spread through the Faroese population due to the use of Danish in church as well as its use in the administration (Debes 1993: 20). Between 1846 and 1872, obligatory Danish schooling was introduced in the Faroes, and from then on, some active knowledge of Danish might be assumed for the whole population. However, around the same time the Faroese written language was (re)constructed by V.U. Hammershaimb, and the *Jólafundur*, the famous Christmas Meeting in 1888, led to arguments that Faroese should be used in church, used and taught in school and used in the interaction between islanders and the authorities (cf. Petersen 2010: 31–32). Since then, written Faroese has continuously gained ground: The Faroese Home Rule Act from 1948 states that Faroese is recognized as the principal language (but Danish is to be taught well and carefully, and Danish may be used as well as Faroese in public

affairs)¹⁰, and Faroese has since continuously expanded its written linguistic domains, accompanied by active linguistic purism (Sandøy 2005: 1929). Faroese is the in-group language of Faroese people. However, life in the Faroes is still at least uncomfortable without some command of Danish, as Danish continues to hold important domains in Faroese society: The population of approximately 50,000 does not support a text and media production to satisfy all needs, implying that Danish (and English) bridge the gulf. Danish is introduced in 3rd grade with 2 hours/week, but acquisition is supported by imported material and cultural goods from Denmark that are accompanied by Danish oral and written text, in, e.g., advertisements, children's TV, etc. (cf. Petersen 2010: 40–42; Mitchinson 2012: 205–207). Mitchinson (2012) shows that Faroese people of all ages in general consider themselves to be fluent in Danish, also in writing and reading, although their main language is Faroese. The younger people consider Danish useful for work and study (ibid.: 148, 157) as Danish in this respect functions as a lingua franca for Mainland Scandinavia (Poulsen 1993, Kühl 2015a).

The sociolinguistic situation in the Faroes is thus characterized by common bilingualism, although to varying degrees according to people's needs. Danish occupies a solid position in the Faroese society. Due to its historical roots on the islands and the intertwining of Faroese and Danish/Mainland Scandinavian culture, it cannot be considered a foreign language, but neither has it been adopted into Faroese society as a group-internal language and as an identity carrier. As such, it does not really fit with the DM as the framework presupposes that common bilingualism goes hand in hand with accommodation towards the speakers of the colonial language and a language shift as a sign of nativization. This is not likely to happen in the Faroes. Hence, the Faroes are not postcolonial, at least not with respect to language use and language attitudes: The 'colonial language' Danish definitely plays an important role in Faroese society, but it is kept mainly for utilitarian motives. It seems adequate to define Faroe Danish as an indigenous lingua franca (cf. Mitchinson 2012: 234 for a similar observation) which is acquired early and easily and provides easy access to travelling, working and studying in Mainland Scandinavia.

4.4 Structural and linguistic development

Faroe Danish is characterized by a number of recurring non-standard morphosyntactic and syntactic features, but few lexical features (apart from cultural loans). I have argued (Kühl 2015a) that although Faroe Danish displays various systematically-occurring features that separate it from Mainland Danish, none of these impede intelli-

¹⁰ http://www.stm.dk/_a_1602.html, last access 24.01.2017

gibility for the recipient Mainland Danish/Scandinavian part. A high degree of Faroese lexical influence would interfere with the communicative function of a *lingua franca*.

The salient Faroese letter-based ‘reading pronunciation’ of Danish known as *Gøtudansk(t)*¹¹ (Poulsen 1993: 112) by now seems to be either a feature of the older generations or restricted to a very specific domain, namely for reading Danish out for Faroese listeners (Saxov 2016; Mitchinson 2012: 230). The *Gøtudansk* pronunciation is recognized as a consistent feature of the Faroese variant of Danish (Saxov 2016; Debess et al. 2014; Mitchinson 2012 and references therein), but the lexical, syntactic and morphosyntactic features that also occur quite consistently in the Danish speech of Faroese people seem either not to be noticed or to be considered individual interference phenomena (learner faults). The lack of recognition indicates that Faroese Danish as a whole is not socially focused, meaning that these linguistic features carry no social meaning (apart, maybe, from Faroese Danish with the *Gøtudansk* pronunciation). The non-focusing might be due to Faroese Danish function as a *lingua franca*, but anyhow, it is unlikely that Faroese Danish should complete the process of linguistic nativization, let alone endonormative stabilization with its development towards homogeneity and codification (Schneider 2009: 48–52).

5 Discussion and conclusion

The descriptive analyses of the development of translocated Danish in historical Norway and in the Faroes show two quite different developmental processes with different outcomes. The development of translocated Danish in Norway from the 16th century onwards follows the predictions of the DM model quite closely: The once colonial language Danish was adopted as a local variety following the merging of the settler group with local people through processes of sociolinguistic accommodation and language change. Dano-Norwegian was structurally nativized, first from below by its locally born speakers and later on from above by language planning, thereby changing its national and linguistic affiliation. For today’s Bokmål, its Danish ancestry plays but a marginal role.

Although the sociopolitical background of translocated Danish in the Faroes is similar to the Norwegian situation, Faroese Danish has not developed into a sociolinguistically differentiated postcolonial variety in its own right. Although Danish today in many ways is indispensable in Faroese society, this is mainly justified by its use-

11 A reviewer pointed out to me that the Faroese variant of Danish is called *Gøtudanskt*, i.e. with the neuter suffix *-t*. However, both forms can be found both in actual speech, in writing on the Internet and in scientific discourse.

fulness for the Faroese people for economic and social reasons (historically trade, today mainly the consumption of cultural import from and linguistic access to the Mainland Scandinavian countries). Mitchinson (2012: 234) proposes the concept ‘linguistic autonomy’ for the Faroese situation where the colonial situation has not been compelled, but its use is sufficiently limited and uncontentious that it does not represent the (former) colonial status.

Schneider’s prediction that a postcolonial variety will endure if it is adopted as a means of community solidarity and not mainly for utilitarian motives (Schneider 2009: 310–311) seems to fit the Norwegian and Faroese situations well: The countries are at opposite ends of this spectrum. Also the prediction as to the importance of the relative proportion of settlers and local people, and the interaction between these groups (ibid.) seems to hold: The differences between Faroese and Norwegian developments can be attributed to the sparse presence of Danes and spoken Danish in everyday Faroese life in the time before the nationalistic rising in the 19th century. The contact areas between ‘colonizers’ and local people on the islands seem to have been minimal, and, accordingly, no shared Faroe-Danish identity (however hybrid) did develop and accordingly, no Faroe Danish in-group variety. The nationalistic rising addressed a (mainly) Faroese culture and ‘folk identity’ and not a Faroe-Danish culture and ‘folk identity’.¹² This set the stage for the following linguistic development that concerned Faroese, not Faroe-Danish, as the language bond to Faroese people and the Faroese territory.

The application of the DM has proven useful in that it has provided a coherent framework for a comparative analysis of two different situations of a translocated language, connecting the structural outcome with social factors. Only a comparison with other postcolonial societies and varieties can point to the fact that the Faroes actually cannot be considered postcolonial with regard to the place that Danish language occupies in the Faroese society, while the development from Dano-Norwegian to Bokmål shows a completed process of postcolonial development.

6 Other Northern European Danishes

There are also various other instances of translocated Danish, both historical and current, in Northern Europe which for reasons of space are not included here. Greenland has been a Danish colony in the true sense of the word and still is part of the Danish Unity of the Realm (*rigsfællesskabet*). Despite rapidly growing autonomy, Danish still is indispensable in Greenlandic society, although recent political developments

¹² The initial rejection of written Faroese by Faroese people cannot be assigned to any wish for a Faroe-Danish identity. It was rather due to skepticism how the low, spoken, everyday language (Faroese) would be an adequate substitute for Danish as a high language used in church (Wylie 1987: 97).

might lead to the abandonment of Danish in favor of English as a language of, e.g., education. Research on the topic of Danish language in Greenland is sparse (but cf. Jacobsen 2003). Iceland also belonged to the Kingdom of Denmark for many centuries until 1918, partly as a colony, but the island was granted a constitution and limited home rule already in 1874 and gained its total political independence in 1944. Moreover, due to the long and strong Icelandic literary tradition and the general linguistic self-consciousness, Danish did not gain ground outside the main cities and was never adopted by the Icelandic people (cf. Auður Hauksdóttir 2015). Another instance which resembles a (post)colonial situation is the Danish minority in Northern Germany. The minority relies heavily on its ‘motherland’ for financial and political support as well as cultural and linguistic import. Cutting the bonds would threaten the existence of the minority (or at least its privileges) and thus, a further (postcolonial) endonormative stabilization of the local variety of Danish is unlikely (cf. Kühl 2014; Kühl 2015b).

7 References

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