

A wee guide to Trøndersk, Faroese, and some other North-Germanic languages

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Introduction

This book is intended as an introduction to some of the lesser-known North-Germanic languages, including Trøndersk, Norn and the Bøhering dialect of Bø in southeastern Norway. Additionally this book contains information about Icelandic and Faroese. The Norn sections of this book contain detailed information about how Norn may be linked to Proto-Norse as well as to Old Norse, suggesting an earlier origin than the medieval Viking culture, whilst also providing information about some of the differences throughout Shetland Norn. I hope that this book is enjoyable to read.

The Trøndersk language

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, originally some years ago. Corrections by my friend Jarle, which is much appreciated. Jarle also taught me many things I did not know about Trøndersk, and it was from him for example that I learned about the sound represented as *ë*, some of the verbs, feminine plurals and definite plural nouns with an adjective.

Trøndersk, or what is referred to here as Trondish, is a group of Norwegian dialects, or a traditional Nordic language, spoken in Nord-Trøndelag and Sør-Trøndelag in central Norway. I first learned of this language when reading about Norwegian dialects in the year 2011. After visiting the Isle of Barra, and thinking about Trøndersk whilst I was there, I eventually decided to write about it. I also learned a fair amount of my Trøndersk from Norwegian music, including bands such as Sie Gubba, who generally sing in a form of Trøndersk. Trondish doesn't have a unique spelling but is written using the Norwegian alphabet. Trondish contains many of the same phonemes found in Norwegian, but certain spelling practices are used in Trondish for unique sounds. The capital L is used to write the 'thick l' or retroflex flap, which is common in Norwegian dialects, although not usually distinguished. In some parts of Norway this sound is an allophone of the ordinary l, in Trondish it occurs as a completely separate phoneme and is written L. The consonants tj represent the IPA sound [ç], this sounds like a slight 'tj' sound, but not to be mistaken for the tj found normally in Norwegian which has a different pronunciation. In Trondish it occurs in place of kkj in many places, e.g. **itj** for *ikke/ikkje*. Another unusual l sound is written hl, which sounds a bit like the Welsh double ll, but not the same sound exactly, e.g. **lihlj/lihlje** – little. Palatalization is common in certain dialects of Western, Eastern and Northern Norway, and throughout Trondish. The degree of palatalization and where it occurs can depend on the individual dialect of Trondish. Most commonly n and l become palatal, written usually by placing an i before the consonant, han becomes hainn, land becomes lainn, alle becomes aille.

Apocope

Apocope is the loss of the final vowel in a word. In Standard Eastern Norwegian/Bokmål, and throughout the fjords region of Norway, verbs end in a vowel, or a vowel plus r. In Trondish and the Northern dialects of Norwegian this vowel is dropped. It also occurs in nouns and in other words, like itj. Examples of apocope in verbs: **å hjølp** – to help, Bokmål – *å hjelpe*, **å reis** – to travel, Bokmål – *å reise*. This also occurs often in the definite plural ending of nouns, for example **fjoLan** – the fjords, Bokmål – *fjordene*.

Differences throughout Trondish

Trondish isn't a single dialect but a dialect area of Norway, one of the four major dialect areas. Within this area is a large amount of normal variation which might be expected in Norwegian dialect areas. There are differences between the language spoken in major towns and the traditional language of the valleys, often the urban dialects are more influenced by Standard Eastern Norwegian. In some parts of Trøndelag there is a

tendency towards monophthongization, the diphthong ei can become e or æ, including in Verdal as a variant, this open e sound is written **ë** by Jarle, e.g. **bën** – bone, **hëm** – home, normally **heim**. The diphthong ei is pronounced more phonemically as [ei], rather than the [æi] pronunciation to the south.

Trondish can be classified as having inner and outer dialects, the inner dialects are more traditional and have unique verb forms, and something called vowel levelling or jamvekt. In Trondheim we find, **å komma**, **å lævva**, Bokmål *å komme*, *å leve*, whereas in inner areas we find **å kammå**, **å låvvå**. The same thing occurs with nouns, for example the Old Norse word *vika* – week, has become **vokko**, **vukku** or **vækka** in Trøndersk. As in Northern Norwegian, standard Eastern Norwegian i, y and e often change to e, ø, and æ. For example **væng** for *vinge*, **bølk** for *bulke*, **fesk** for *fisk*, **bæst** for *best*. Below are some phrases in Trøndersk:

god dag - good day!

god mårn – good morning

ka du heite? - what are you called?

æ heite - I am called

kor du kjæm ifrå? - where do you come from?

æ e frå Tronnheim (Tronnhëm) – I am from Trondheim

æ e ifrå VerdaLa – I am from Verdal (dative)

æ e frå Steintjer – I am from Steinkjer

The pronoun æ applied in some basic verbs.

æ e – I am

æ kainn – I can

æ fer – I go

æ tænke/tenkje – I think

æ hi – I have

For example:

æ e enn mainn – I am a man

æ fer te Tronnheim – I go to Trondheim

æ tænke at hu e finast – I think that she is prettiest

æ hi itj oLbotja – I do not have the dictionary

æ kainn bLi med dæ – I can come with you

Nouns in Trondish are either masculine, feminine or neuter.

For example:

en mainn – a man (masculine), **en fjoL** – a fjord (masculine), **ei veitj** – a girl (feminine), plural: **veitjån**, **ei bok** – a book (feminine), **et hus** – a house (neuter), **et boL** – a table (neuter)

Definite nouns lack any prefix for 'the', but instead add a suffix to the ending. This is –en or -n for masculine nouns, -a for feminine nouns, and -e for neuter nouns.

hæstn – the horse (masculine), **mainn'** – the man (masculine), the final -n falls into the previous palatal n, **boka/bokja/botja** – the book (feminine), **veitja** – the girl or young woman (feminine), **huse** – the house (neuter), **boLe** – the table (neuter)

When we add an adjective to the noun a separate article is added at the beginning, this is not found in all Trondish dialects but in this form from Verdal it is common.

deinn stor fjoLn – the big fjord, or **storfjoLn**

deinn stor bokja – the big book, or **storbokja**

det stor huse – the big house, or **storphuse**

In the plural forms a different article is used, and the nouns take their definite plural endings.

de stor fjoLan – the big fjords

de stor bøkån – the big books

de stor husa – the big houses

In Verdal the plural distinction of this article is that it is not palatal. The adjectives also have apocope and don't necessarily vary with gender.

Some prepositions in Trøndersk:

me – with, **attme** – beside, **te** – to, **åt** – to or towards, **i** – in, **frå** – from, **langs/langsmed** – along, **ferr** – for, **oppå** – over, upon, across, **innj** – into, **oinnj**, **poinn**, **poinni** – under (palatal n), **ferri/førri** – before, **opp** – up, **ned** – down, **gjænnom** – through, **å** – on, **på** - on

Like the other standard Nordic languages on the continent, Trondish doesn't differentiate between singular and plural in the conjunction of verbs. Below are some examples of verbs:

å vårrå – to be, **å tru** – to think, believe, **å teintj** – to think, **å ha/hå/håvvå** – to have, **å fesk** – to fish, **å bLi** – to become, **å ork** – to bear (to be able to stand), **å sjå** - to see, **å ferrtæL** – to tell, **å låvvå** – to live, **å færrå** – to go, to leave, **å bynnj** – to begin, **å våttå** – to know

Basic nouns:

ein/en mainn – a man, **ei aksel** – a shoulder, **ei oLlest** – a dictionary or wordlist, **ein/en fesk** - a fish, **fissjen** – the fish, **ein/en profæssor** – a professor, **et hus** – a house, **ein/en fjøld** - a group, flock, **ein/en vænn** – a friend, **ei veitj** – a young woman

Sample sentences in Trøndersk:

dæm e itj frå Trønnelag – They are not from Trøndelag

æ va så ainnbLæst oppå fjella – I was so breathless on the mountains

æ e sekker på at du ska kåmmå – I am certain that you will come

hainn e itj på arbe – he is not at work

hi di et hus? - do you lot have a house?

æ e heim – I am home

æ hi itj ittji fissjen – I have not eaten the fish

dæm ska itj låvvå me kvarainner - they shall not live with each other

æ hi verri i Trondheim åft - I have been in Trondheim often

det vart fint uinne soLa – it become nice/fine under the sun

Examples of conjugation:

æ ska bLi en mainn – I shall/will become a man

æ syns at daLen e vakker – I think that the valley is beautiful

æ bLi nøLin, når fissjen kjæm åt mæ – I become nervous, when the fish comes towards me

dæm vilj gjærn låvvå attme fjoLn – they would/will gladly live near the fjord

æ hadd itj drikki så my – I had not drunk so much

lufta va fresk – the air was fresh

de månnå itj – it doesn't help

ska vi fårrå elljer ha en kopp kaffe? - shall we go, or have a cup of coffee?

vatne va aillstass i hagan – the water was everywhere in the garden

kor e legst daLn? - where is the lowest valley?

æ e itj ålein i skoja, vænn' min e med mæ – I am not alone in the forest, my friend is with me (**skoja** is the dative of **skog**)

e det en ferrskjæL millom dæm? - is there a difference between them?

æ ælske å vårrå i skoja – I love to be in the forest

kæm e katten din? - who is your cat?

The language has remnants of the older dative case in some areas, where it is used quite actively.

Singular and plural

Trondish nouns are either masculine, feminine or neuter. The way in which the plural forms are treated varies from region to region.

In the indefinite forms, masculine nouns would have typically taken an -r although the final r is not really pronounced in Trøndersk, but instead there is an –a at the end. For example:

vænn (friend) – **vænna** (friends)

fjoL (fjord) – **fjoLa** (fjords)

stein (stone) – **steina** (stones)

gut (boy) – **guta** (boys)

båt (boat) – **båta** (boats)

bil (car) – **bila** (cars)

In the definite plural forms, masculine nouns generally taken -an.

vænnan – the friends

fjoLan – the fjords

steinan – the stones

gutan – the boys

båtan – the boats

bilan – the cars

Feminine nouns have multiple ways of marking the definite plural forms, which again depends on dialect. For example in Skogn, the feminine definite plural endings are -an, -ån, -in e.g. **kjærrengan, boksån, dørin**. In some dialects of Trøndersk, the neuter definite plural ending is -an, whilst in many traditional areas it is -a. For example **husa, fjella, trållja, åra, håra**.

More example sentences:

de stor fjella e nord ferr Trønnelag – the big mountains are north of Trøndelag

de kvit båtan e itj attme strainna – the white boats are not by the beach

vænnan va hos mæ – the friends were at my place

det finns itjnå som kuinn hjølp huse – there's nothing which could help the house

dørin va langs vein – the doors were along the road

vi ska saumfårrå husa – we will look closely at the houses

dørin min e itj åpen – my doors are not open

æ vart gLa å sjå fjellan, hi tænkt før at dæm sjer so vakker ut – I became/was happy to see the mountains, I have thought before at they look so beautiful

deinn likast båten e på strainna – the best boat is on the beach

e det sainnt, at du hi ferri te Grønlainn med båt? - is it true, that you have been to Greenland with a boat?

korhænn e feskan, som æ åt? - where are those fishes, which I ate?

More information about Trøndersk by the author:

.In my book *Languages and dialects of Northwestern Europe, and their heritage*, on pages 39 – 42 there is a comparison of Norwegian dialect words and constructions, put into a table. Some of these columns show Trøndersk dialect forms, including the Leka Trøndersk dialect. Some examples of Leka Trøndersk can also be found on my *the Norwegian dialect of Leka* page, on www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk, available here:

<https://www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk/the-norwegian-dialect-of-leka> an archived version of the link is available here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20220228095118/https://www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk/the-norwegian-dialect-of-leka>

The Faroese language – basics and geography (and example sentences)

By Linden Alexander Pentecost. Photos by Miranda Metheny and included with her kind permission, Miranda is a speaker of Faroese and someone who is passionate about this language and the islands. The photo below shows a fjord at Gøta in the Faroe Islands, taken by Miranda Metheny.



Faroese language is an insular north-Germanic language, which shares an Old West Norse origin with Icelandic, and at least to some degree this connection exists with Greenlandic Norse, Norn and Western Norwegian. Unlike Icelandic, Faroese does not have the sounds represented by 'eth' and 'thorn' in Old Norse; the letter 'eth' is found in Faroese, but is not pronounced as a voiced dental fricative. The letter Thorn in Icelandic and in Old Norse is not found in Faroese, generally in Faroese it is pronounced 't'. I am not going to give a full explanation of Faroese phonology here, as it is quite a complex subject I think, and even though I can sometimes understand and read the language, I'm not good enough of a speaker to discuss it in every detail. Faroese spelling is highly etymological, and can give a false impression that the Faroese pronunciation of a word is closer to the Old Norse; in fact Faroese phonology is in many ways quite different to that of Old Norse. One of the special things about Faroese phonology is the feature known as

skerping. This is where an extra g is sometimes added after a vowel. A similar thing takes place in the Northwest Jutlandic dialects of Danish, where this process is connected to stød and prosody. An example of skerping in Faroese is for example the word **gjógv**, which in Icelandic is *gjá*. Another example is the word **oyggj** which means 'island' in Faroese. You will notice that the name for 'island' in Faroese etymological landscape contexts is usually **oy** though, this is because like with the word **gjógv**, forms of the word which are more like the Old Norse and without skerping are found in place-names or in certain contexts. In the context of describing the Faroe Islands as named, **oy** is generally said, for example the island names of **Streymoy** - 'tidal stream island', **Sandoy** - 'sand island', **Suðuroy** - 'South Island', **Viðoy** - 'wood/timber island', **Svínoy** - 'pig island', **Eysturoy** - 'east island'. Other island names likely have a different origin, like **Mykines**, possibly related to the Old Irish *mucc inis* - pig island, although I think it more likely that muc here is in the sense of 'whale', as muc sometimes has this meaning in Goidelic languages. I hope that this was interesting to read. Below are some examples of Faroese sentences:

eg eri ikki ein ormur - I am not a dragon

eg eri - I am, **ikki** - not, **ein ormur** - a dragon

hvar er báturin? - where is the boat?

hvar - where, **er** - is, **bátur** - boat, **báturin** - the boat

eg veit at báturin er ikki stórur* - I know that the boat is not big

eg veit - I know, **at** - that, **báturin** - the boat, **er** - is, **ikki** - not, **stórur** - big (masculine form of the adjective)

ert tú frá/úr Føroyum? - are you (sing.) from the Faroe Islands?

ert tú - are you, also **tú ert** - you (singular)/thou ar(t), **frá/úr** - from, **Føroyum** - dative of **Føroyar** - the Faroe Islands

nei, eg eri frá Onglandi - no, I am from England

nei - no, **eg eri frá** - I am from, **Onglandi** - dative of **Ongland** – England

tosar tú Føroyskt? - do you speak Faroese?

tosa - speak, **tosar tú/tú tosar** - you/thou speak(eth) , **Føroyskt** - the Faroese language

Føroyskt er tjóðmálið í Føroyum - Faroese is the national language in the Faroe Islands

Føroyskt - the Faroese language, **er** - is, **tjóðmálið** - nation language, **tjóð** - nation, **mál** - language, **málið** - the language, **í** - in, **Føroyum** - dative of **Føroyar** - Faroe Islands

býrt tú í Føroyum? - do you live in the Faroe Islands?

býrt tú - live you (singular), ***tú býrt*** - you (singular) live, ***í*** - in, ***Føroyum*** - dative of ***Føroyar***

nei, eg búgvi í Íslandi - no, I live in Iceland

nei - no, ***eg búgvi*** - I live, ***í Íslandi*** - in Iceland, with the dative form of ***Ísland*** - Iceland

fjørðurin er breiður - the fjord is wide

fjørðurin - the fjord, from ***fjørður*** - fjord, masculine noun, ***er*** - is, ***breiður*** - broad, wide, masculine form of adjective

The Old Norse word *gjá* also appears in Shetland, Orkney and in other parts of Northern and Insular Scotland, normally written as geo, Orkney Nynorn *gjå*, Shetland Nynorn *gjå*. But in the Gaelic language this word appears as *geodha*. I doubt very much that this word actually is Norse in origin, rather I think it more likely it is a more ancient topographical* that exists in both Gaelic and the Insular North Germanic languages; both Gaelic and Norse are connected to the ancient peoples of the northeast Atlantic Ocean.

Photo below: dramatic cliffs of the island of **Stóra Dímun**, taken by Miranda Metheny



The Icelandic Language, written August 2022 - Íslenska

Writing and photos by Linden Alexander Pentecost



Photo above: the landscape in Western Iceland, close to **Snæfellsjökull**, which is famous in fiction for it is the place where the characters of Jules Verne's *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* begin their journey into the world beneath. Snæfell means 'Snow Mountain' or 'Snow Fell', and is etymologically identical to the name Snaefell on the Isle of Man. The word **jökull** is from Proto-Germanic *yek- (my own reconstruction), which means 'ice', and I believe it is related to the Welsh word *iâ* - 'ice'.



Photo above: **Jökulsárlón** glacial lagoon, which is fed by the **Breiðamerkurjökull** glacier. The lagoon has an eerie but beautiful cold air around it, and it is situated within the larger landscape of **Breiðamerkursandur**, a large area of flat volcanic sand, intersected by river channels from the glaciers and mountains.



Photo above/on previous page: **fjöll á Íslandi** - mountains in/on Iceland. This photo gives a typical image of the treeless volcanic mountains which rise up across the island, many of which are full of lava caves, and have interesting flora and fauna. This mountain is also located close to **Þjóðgarðurinn Snæfellsjökull**, the national park of the Snæfells Glaciär. In Icelandic the word **þjóð** is a feminine word meaning a people or nation, it is related to the ancient Celtic word **toutâ* which also means a tribe or nation, e.g. Irish *tuatha*.

Introduction to Icelandic structure

Icelandic is a North-Germanic language which closely resembles its written archaic register, Old Icelandic, often referred to as 'Old West Norse'. In fact, Old Icelandic is not the exact same as 'Old West Norse' as a whole, and so often when we talk about the Old Norse language and the spiritual beliefs of the Vikings, what we are really talking about is the Old Icelandic language and the pre-Christian beliefs of certain Icelanders. This is not to say of course that a lot of the beliefs in spirits/deities found in Old Icelandic literature were not also found represented in other parts of the Nordic-speaking world.

The closest language to Icelandic today is the Faroese Language, but from this Old Norse base culture, the Faroese language took a very different direction in the way that its phonology evolved, therefore generally speaking Icelanders cannot readily understand Faroese without prior learning and exposure. From what I understand though, Faroese people can understand Icelandic sometimes, partially because Icelandic pronunciation, being closer to the Old Norse, is quite naturally intrinsic to the etymological spelling and older structures of Faroese. Icelandic has also changed in more recent times, so that many of the sounds, particularly vowels, are not pronounced as they were in Old Norse.

The Icelandic alphabet:

Aa, Áá, Bb, Dd, Ðð, Ee, Éé, Ff, Gg, Hh, Ii, Íí, Jj, Kk, Ll, Mm, Nn, Oo, Óó, Pp, Rr, Ss, Tt, Uu, Úú, Vv, Xx, Yy, Ýý, Þþ, Ææ, Öö

Basic phrases

Hvað heitirðu? - what are you called?

Ég heiti... - I am called...

Hvaðan er þú? - where are you from?

Talarðu Íslensku? - do you speak Icelandic?

Ég tala smá Íslensku - I speak a little Icelandic

Hvernig hefurðu það? - how are you (singular), (how have you it?)

Ég hef það gott takk, en þú? - I am well thank you, and you?

Hvaðan ertu? - where are you from?

Ég er frá Íslandi/Skotlandi/Danmörku - I am from
Iceland/Scotland/Denmark

Hvar ertu fæddur (m) /fædd (f) ? - where are you born?

Ég er fæddur (m)/fædd (f) í Grundarfirði - I was born in Grundarfjörður

Pronouns in Icelandic:

ég - I

þú - you singular, thou

hann - he

hún - she

það - it

við - we

þið - you plural

þeir - they (masculine)

þær - they (feminine)

þau - they (neutral)

Notes on Icelandic pronunciation

á - similar to the 'ow' in 'now', or German 'au' e.g. frá - 'from'

é - like the 'ye' in 'yet', e.g. ég - 'I'

í and **ý** are similar to the 'ee' in 'seen'

ó - similar to the 'o' in 'note' with the diphthong [ou]

æ - pronounced like the igh in 'might'

ö - similar to the German ö

au - no equivalent in English, this is a diphthong, pronounced [œy], somewhat similar to the sounds of öy in Finnish

ð - pronounced like the English 'th' in 'this'

þ - like the English 'th' in 'thing'

The photo on the following page, shows some horses close to **Grundarfjörður**. We visited the mountain **Kirkjufell** quite by accident, this is an impressive, and I feel, sacred mountain, which in more recent years has become very popular for photographers. We managed to get to Iceland in 2010 which was just before many people started to photograph it. But the magic of **Kirkjufell** and **Grundarfjörður** for me is very much connected to the ancestral and divine powers that can be felt in this landscape, and from what I understand, this area is connected to the **Huldufólk**, hidden people, which in Icelandic mythology from what I understand are magical peoples that are connected to our world but not usually observable within it. It is noteworthy that Icelanders into present times often bare a deep respect for the **Huldufólk** and for their special places, which I feel should be respected and left just as they are.



More sample sentences in Icelandic:

I wrote these sentences to help demonstrate something of Icelandic structure, I hope that these examples provide a useful way of learning something about the language. Note that I write [z], this is not present so often in Icelandic spelling today, but the spellings **Ízland** and **Ízlenska** are still acceptable.

ég er búinn/búin að læra bæði Ízlensku og Færeysku - I have been learning both Icelandic and Faroese

ég er - I am, **búinn** - 'been' (masculine), **búin** - 'been' (feminine), **að læra** - to learn, or 'learning', **Ízlensku** - Icelandic, accusative/dative case, from **Íslenska/Ízlenska** - Icelandic, **Færeysku** - Faroese (accusative, dative, and genitive form), from **Færeyska** - Faroese language

við erum að tala Ízlensku í Reykjavík í dag - we are speaking Icelandic in Reykjavík today

við erum - we are, **að tala** - to speak, or 'speaking', **í** - in, **Reykjavík** - Reykjavík, **í dag** - today

ég ætla ekki að ganga á fjöll í dag - I do not want to walk on the mountains today

ég ætla - I would like, want, **ekki** - not, **að ganga** - to go, walk, **á fjöll** - on the mountains, **í dag** - today

ég var ekki í Grundarfirði í ár - I had not been in Grundarfjörður this year

ég var - I was, **ekki** - not,, **í** - in, **Grundarfirði** - **Grundarfjörður** in the dative form, **í ár** - this year

Ísland er svo fallegt - Iceland is so beautiful **Ísland er** - Iceland is, **svo fallegt** - so beautiful, **fallegt** is the singular neuter form, in feminine: **falleg**, and in masculine: **fallegur**



The photo above shows a beautiful little river mouth right close to **Kirkjufell** in midnight summer sunlight, the sun illuminates the magic and sacredness of the Icelandic nature and language. I hope the photo does justice to this.

Is Orkney Norn closer to Proto-Norse than to Old Norse?

Photo and article by Linden Alexander Pentecost



Photo above: Scapa Flow in morning sea mist, with the impressive island of Hoy, Orkney Nynorn **Houej** 'high island' behind. This photo hopefully helps to show something of the landscape in which Orkney Norn and Orkney Scots connect to spirit. In Orkney Norn a mountain would be **fell**, water is **vatn**, and the sea is **sjoen**. The table on the following page is intended to demonstrate how, at least sometimes, 'Orkney Norn' bares a closer similarity to Proto-Norse than it does to Old Norse, implying perhaps that at least some of the Germanic elements in Norn are linked to an earlier stage of Germanic than previously thought. I have discussed this previously and the article is available in one of my other ebooks, but I wanted to add a little more detail about this subject. The Orkney Norn words in this article are from are from *The Orkney Norn* by Hugh Marwick, I also read about these words from where they can be found in the Orkney Norn sections of the Nynorn website, <https://nornlanguage.x10.mx/index.php?intro> The proto-Germanic/Proto-Norse reconstructions are my own, but I learned about the necessary grammatical endings in Proto-Germanic from wiktionary originally.

<u>Proto-Germanic*</u>	<u>Orkney Norn</u>	<u>Shetland Norn</u>	<u>Old Norse</u>	<u>Danish</u>	<u>English</u>
*hertō unknown etymology? Possibly non-Indo-European	herto chaldro, chalder geyro	jarta shalder ?	hjarta tjaldr gýgr	hjerte tjeld ?	heart oystercatcher giantess
*arbiō	arvo	?	arfi	arve	heir
*durgō	darro	?	dorg	?	fishing line
*pubō	tuo	?	púfa	tue	knoll or mound
*sūraR/ *sūrō	sooro		súra		sorrel

The -ō in Proto-Germanic is connected to feminine nouns, which often appear to end with -a in Nordic languages, e.g. *kona* – woman. At least in some cases this original -ō seems largely preserved in Orkney Norn, implying that some of the Norse or Germanic language origin cultures were connected to the Northern Isles before the Vikings. Orkney Norn -o seems to be an independent sound change, on one hand. For example **sooro** is derived from an adjective. And many examples with -o may be Norse developments on Orkney. On the other hand, examples such as **arvo**, **herto** and **darro** seem to indicate that the Orkney Norn and Proto-Germanic sounds match quite closely, if not exactly in the case of **herto**. Note also that the Shetland Norn word for ‘heart’ is recorded as *ja’rta* (1) which shows an example of the vowel-breaking that is found throughout North-Germanic, except in Orkney Norn perhaps. The word **geyro** seems to be non-Indo-European in origin, but is perhaps related to the Greek word *Kirkē*, a sorceress, and *kirkos* ‘falcon;’, making me wonder further if ‘giants’ in mythology are somehow directly connected to the pre-Indo-European language roots visible here.

In my article *Cruthan-Tìre, Dualchainntean is Cànanan* (available in my free ebook: *Languages and dialects of Northwestern Europe, and their heritage* pages 91, 92, 93), I discuss the Gaelic dialect of the Isle of Barra, and its preference for an [ɔ]-like phoneme at the endings of words, where normally there would be a schwa, for example in words such as *oidhche* – night, *bàta* – boat, *eile* - other; and I also discuss that this could be somehow connected to the preference for a final -o sound in Orkney Norn. From my own research it seems that there was very little difference between the Norn of Orkney and of the Outer Hebrides. I do not feel that the Gaelic language ‘comes’ from a seafaring culture originally, which would explain why so many of the ‘navigational names’ in the Outer Hebrides are of Norse origin; furthermore, in Barra Gaelic we refer to the Atlantic Ocean as *Na Haf*, either a direct Norse borrowing or a pre-Celtic word which went into the Nordic languages. In any case, I wonder why they would adopt a non-Celtic word for something that is a huge part of the Celtic world.

(1) - An Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland by Jakob Jakobsen

Norn on Shetland

Norn is a North-Germanic language, perhaps it would be fair to say that it parallels Faroese quite closely, but Norn on Shetland and Orkney appears also to have had several different dialects. In the Shetland Norn dialects, there is distinctly a west area and an east area. In the west, the Old Norse *hv* is often represented as [kw]. For example, **kwāl** (1) is the western Shetland Norn for *hvalr* – 'whale' (1). This is also present in the Shetlandic language today. The eastern dialects of Norn on Shetland were quite different, for example eastern Shetland has **hän** (1) for *hann* – 'he' (1), showing the common palatalisation present in eastern Shetland. The Old Norse *hv* is represented as [hw] in eastern Shetland Norn.

(1): An Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland by Jakob Jakobsen.

On the island of Yell, the Old Norse [ð] is sometimes preserved as in Icelandic, for example **kø:p** (2) – 'coalfish' (this is what this word means from my own understanding), Old Norse *kóð* (2). In this area, the Old Norse *hv* is occasionally [sw] as in **swam** (2) – 'hollow place, grassy vale', Old Norse *hvammr* (2).

(2) The information on the Yell Norn dialects is from the Nynorn website, <https://nornlanguage.x10.mx/index.php?intro>, from the page titled *Dialects of Shetland Norn*. Most of the material on this page comes from the *Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland*, v.I, p. LIX, with some additions, by Jakob Jakobsen.

The words below are from the *The Language of the Ballad of Hildina* page on the Nynorn website, <https://nornlanguage.x10.mx/index.php?intro> I discuss these words in my own words.

Within the eastern and western differences of Shetland Norn, there were also more localised differences between the different islands and sea inlets. On the island of Foula, there is a sort of w-glide which means that Old Norse *á* is pronounced sometimes as [wo:]. for example Old Norse *fǫlska* is **fwelsko** on Foula, *sá* - 'saw' is **swō**, and *á* - 'on' is **wo**. This is in a sense quite similar to the w-glides in Goidelic. Another thing that Foula Norn shares with Goidelic is the occasional example of initial consonant mutation, for example **uadn**, which could also be spelled as **wadn**, for *barn* – 'child'; Old Norse *hleypir*, a word related to jumping or leaping, is **lever**, which could also be spelled as **lebher**. Internal lenition of t also takes place, e.g. *lætr* - 'lets' is **lothir**. The lenition of intervocalic t in Foula Norn is quite similar to that which took place in Goidelic., e.g. Old Irish *athair*, Primitive Irish **atiras*. There is also a preference in this dialect for -o as an ending e.g. **eso** for *þessi*.

The Bøhering dialect

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, written 2018

I thank the lady who helped me with these examples, who is from Bø i Telemark.

Bøhering, Bøhæring or Bødialekt is a traditional Norwegian dialect from Bø in Telemark, Southern Norway. In the more coastal parts of Telemark a completely different dialect is spoken, many of these forms come under the Vikværsk dialect group, which is typical of South East Norwegian and has some Eastern Scandinavian features such as few diphthongs and the pronoun jæ for 'I'.

Bøhæring is spoken inland in a regional traditional for its farming, with many valleys, forests and small to medium sized mountains. Bøhæring is not like Vikværsk as Bøhæring is a very West Norse dialect, one such dialect in Southern Norway where the Old West Norse features are more noticeable, dialects like this in Southern Norway became the basis of the Nynorsk written language, even if Nynorsk follows Western Norwegian in other ways. This dialect is distinctive with a long history and a high number of unique words, but when talking about non rural contexts the dialect isn't so difficult for other Norwegians to understand.

Pronunciation Guide

Most of the sounds are pronounced similarly to the sounds in Standard Eastern Norwegian. Because Bøhæring is normally written in an Old Norse based spelling, the "thick L" sound is not indicated, but occurs commonly from an ordinary l in words containing a cluster of a consonant plus l, for example bli - become, and blei - became have the thick l sound. The thick l sound also

occurs intervocalically and word finally. Examples of words with a thick l:

bli - become

flaug - flew

dæl - valley

allikavæl - likewise, in the final l

følk - people

ælv - the river

gamle - old (plural)

The letters kj, and the soft k sound are pronounced /ç/ in initial position and between vowels, like ikkje - not.

The digraph ei is pronounced /æi/ and not /ei/, the /æi/ pronunciation is common in Southern Norway, the mountainous regions and over to Western Norway, in places where monophthongisation has not occurred. In the spelling of Bøhering ei is used because it is a unoformal pronunciation of an Old Norse diphthong, whereas in other southern and eastern Norwegian dialects æi may be used in spelling.

Bøhering compared to Standard Eastern Norwegian

Here is a table of examples to demonstrate how the Bøhering dialect differs from Standard Eastern Norwegian

hva heter du? - kva heiter du? - **hått heiter du?** - what are you called?

natten - natta - **nåtta** - the night

vi tar flasken - me tar flaska - **me tek flaska** - we take the flask

jeg går - eg går - **eg gjeng** - I go

jeg vet ikke alt om det - eg veit ikkje alt om det - **eg veit ikkje elt om det** - I don't know everything about it

Below are some more phrases and example sentences:

håkken e han? - who is he?

håkken e du? - who are you?

hått heiter du? - what are you called?

eg heiter... - I am called...

håssen har du det? - how are you?

eg har det gott takk, og med deg? - I am well thank you, and with you?

kan du hjelpe meg me arbeidet? - can you help me with the work?

eg veit om ein finare plass i dæl'n - I know about a better place in the valley

me ska ut i dæl'n å det e sno over elt - we shall go out into the valley and there is snow everywhere/over everything

dæl'ns folk gjekk heimatt - the people of the valley went home

eg snakkar Bøhæringmåle å standard østnorsk - I speak the Bøhering dialect and Standard Eastern Norwegian

i nått la eg vekk arbeidet når dei kom - tonight I put down the work when they came

turen e ikkje over å eg e veldig glad - the trip is not over and I am very happy

han va ikkje heilt sikker på huset - he was not completely sure about the house

hårre e vegen frå Bø? - where is the road from Bø?

han trang hjelp med kursen sin - he needs help with his course

håffer ska dei ikkje snakke dialekta? - why will they not speak the dialect?

me vi' leite etter ein ana plass å fiske heile dagen - we will search for another place to fish all day

hårre kan me kjøpe gvittøl her?- where can we buy beer (white ale) here?

dei va så sår på hått du sa - they were so certain about what you said

eg fær ikkje vatt'ne mitt frå ælva - I don't get my water from the river

det fins mykje å lesa på biblioteket - there is a lot to read at the library

eg huksar elle de andre dyra i skogen au - I remember all the other animals in the forest too

eg kjenner dei inntresange orda og språket som dei snakkar - I know the interesting words and the language which they speak

me kjem te Bø etter dei kjem - we come to Bø after they come

i dag ska eg søkje på ein foss som ligger gjønnum steinblokkane - today I shall search for a waterfall which is situated between the boulders

eg tror at den e boka færr deg - I believe that this is the book for you

han var på vegen te dæl'n med kjærasten sin, då kom me elle te ælva og såg på fisk'n- he was on the road to the valley with his girlfriend when we all came to the river and looked at the fish

spurde dei deg om fisken? - did they ask you about the fish?

håkka bok ska du selge? - which book will you sell?

håkket hus snakkar du om? - which house are you speaking about?

veit dekkán om ein plass der me kunne sømja? - do you (plural) know of a place where we could swim?

eg fær blåbær frå skogen kvar sommar - I get blueberries from the forest every summer

me vi' gjønne fara te fjells i kveld - we wish to go to the mountains this evening

i draumen sin såg han ein bekk, bak huset som han draumde om den siste gonga - in his dream he saw a stream/beck, behind the house which he dreamed of the last time

Pronouns:

eg - I

du – you singular

han - he

ho - she

det/den - it

me – we

dekkán – you plural

dei - they