

# Pragmaticalised determiners in American Norwegian

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This paper discusses the determiners *slik* and *sånn* ‘such (a), like this/that’ in American Norwegian (AmNo), and the extent to which pragmaticalised uses of these determiners, carrying information about the speaker’s attitudes and speaker-hearer relations, can be found. It is shown that pragmaticalised determiners are used, but that their distribution differs in some respects from that in the homeland variety; notably, in AmNo, the lexical variant *slik* is more common than *sånn*. It is also shown that although pragmaticalised determiners are robustly attested (at least one subtype, described as a hedging marker), they are overall less frequent than in the homeland. However, the conditions on use of these markers are generally similar in both varieties.

Keywords: pragmaticalised determiners, American Norwegian, variation

## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In homeland Norwegian (EurNo), the determiner *sånn* ‘such (a), like this/that’ may, in addition to its basic comparative or deictic function, carry information about the speaker’s attitude and speaker-hearer relations (Johannessen 2012, Lie 2008, Opsahl 2009, Simonsen & Christensen 1980, see e.g. von Heusinger 2011 and Ekberg et al. 2015 on similar cases in other Germanic languages). The main aim of the present study is to investigate whether American Norwegian (AmNo) patterns in a similar way to EurNo in this respect.

Different uses of the determiner *sånn* in EurNo are illustrated in (1):<sup>2</sup>

- (1) a. *Jeg så en merkelig fugl i går. En sånn fugl har jeg aldri sett før.*  
I saw a strange bird yesterday a such bird have I never  
seen before  
‘I saw a strange bird yesterday. I’ve never seen a bird like that before.’  
COMP./DEICTIC

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<sup>2</sup> In addition to being a determiner, *sånn* can also have a number of other uses, for example as an adverbial (Faarlund et al. 1997:1081) and a quotative marker (Hasund et al. 2012); these uses will not be discussed here. There are also some further uses of *sånn* as a determiner that will not be discussed, e.g., as a reinforcer.

- b. ...*det* var bare en *sånn* motgreie trur jeg  
 ...it was only a SÅNN counterthing think I  
 ‘it was only sort of a rebellion thing I think’ (Johannessen 2012: 154)  
 PRAGM.
- c. *Jeg så på sånn program på TVNorge*  
 I looked on SÅNN programme on TVNorge  
 ‘I watched one of those programmes on TVNorge’ (Ekberg et al. 2015: 102) PRAGM.

Example (1a) shows a basic, comparative/deictic use. When used as a comparative or deictic marker, *sånn* has an antecedent in the preceding discourse or in the discourse situation; in (1a), the speaker refers back to a bird that has been previously mentioned and states that they have never seen a bird with similar properties.

The second type of use, henceforth referred to as *pragmaticalised*, is illustrated in (1b–c). The pragmaticalised use is distinguished from the comparative/deictic use in that there is no concrete antecedent; instead, the contribution of *sånn* is of a pragmatic nature (hence the term *pragmaticalised*, see Diewald 2011).<sup>3</sup> Following Ekberg et al. (2015) (although I use a different terminology and a somewhat different operationalisation), I distinguish between two subtypes of pragmaticalised *sånn*. One is a hedging marker, shown in (1b).<sup>4</sup> The hedging marker (or hedge) is typically used when the speaker is uncertain about the form of the modified noun or wants to signal reservation; in (1b), this is highlighted by the fact that *sånn* is followed by a pause (marked with #), a hesitation marker (*e*), and then a noun which is a spontaneously formed ad-hoc compound (*motgreie* ‘rebellion thing’) (Johannessen 2012: 154). The hedge can also be used in other cases where the speaker wants to signal reservation or distance, for example, to soften a very strong expression (see further below).

The other subtype of pragmaticalised *sånn* is what Ekberg et al. (2015: 110) refer to as a determiner with a recognitional function, illustrated in (1c). This particular use of *sånn* has primarily been discussed in the context of young, urban speakers in multilingual communities in Oslo (see also Opsahl 2009).<sup>5</sup> When used as a recognitional determiner, *sånn* invites the hearer to co-construct the referent through shared knowledge (Ekberg et al. 2015: 110); in (1c), *sånn* is used to activate

<sup>3</sup> Johannessen (2012) shows that the pragmaticalised uses exhibit partly different agreement patterns from the basic use, but I will not go into further detail about that in this study.

<sup>4</sup> Ekberg et al. use the term *focus marker*, but they note that this element often conveys reservation (2015: 104), and this comes across as a very salient property.

<sup>5</sup> This does not necessarily mean that it is restricted to this context (see Ekberg et al. 2015: 94). Johannessen (2012: 163), who does not specifically focus on young speakers in multilingual communities, also notes that *sånn* can occur without any other pronominal determiner; moreover, there is potentially some overlap between what Ekberg et al. (2015) call a recognitional function and what Johannessen (2012), following Simonsen & Christensen (1980), describes as a means of creating intimacy between the speaker and the hearer. However, Johannessen (2012) and Simonsen & Christensen (1980) do not draw a distinction between two uses of pragmaticalised *sånn* in the way that Ekberg et al. (2015) do.

shared knowledge about TV programmes. A syntactic characteristic of the recognitional determiner is that it replaces the indefinite article *en* (Ekberg et al. 2015: 107).<sup>6</sup> Compare (1c) to (1a–b); in (1a–b), *sånn* co-occurs with an indefinite article, but in (1c), it is the only determiner present. Note that the hedging marker and the recognitional determiner are, in practice, not always easy to tell apart. In this study, I reserve the term ‘recognitional determiner’ for items that do not co-occur with an indefinite article, and that also do not clearly signal hedging.<sup>7</sup> There are some cases in which *sånn* clearly signals hedging, but does not co-occur with an indefinite article; in such cases, I classify it as a hedge, as this appears to be its primary pragmatic function.

Some Norwegian dialects use the lexical item *slik* /ʃlek/ instead of, or in addition to, *sånn*. *Slik* has the same basic meaning as *sånn* (‘such (a), like this/that’); however, the extent to which *slik* has been pragmaticalised has not been systematically explored.<sup>8</sup> A simple query in the Nordic Dialect Corpus renders relevant hits; cf. (2), in which *slik* is used as a hedge (*slik* has no antecedent; instead, its function is to soften the deliberate exaggeration in the following noun phrase ‘horror story from my childhood’):

- (2) *nei ikke noe slik # skrekkehistorie ifra barndommen akkurat*  
 no not any SLIK horror.story from childhood.DEF exactly  
 ‘No, not, like, a horror story from my childhood, exactly’ (gausdal\_05um)

As not only *sånn*, but also *slik* is found as a pragmaticalised determiner in spoken Norwegian dialects, both items are considered in this study.

The main research question of the study is the following: Does AmNo have pragmaticalised determiners? Probing into this area does not only enhance our empirical knowledge about AmNo – it can also shed new light on the history of pragmaticalised determiners in Norwegian more generally and on phenomena at the syntax-pragmatics interface in heritage languages. I show that pragmaticalised determiners are indeed found in AmNo, but that their distribution in some respects differs from that in the homeland; notably, the lexical form *slik* is more used than *sånn*. Furthermore, I show that the hedging marker is much more robustly attested than the recognitional determiner, and that the hedging marker is used under very similar circumstances to what is known from EurNo.

The paper is structured as follows: In Section 2 I present the data used in this study. Section 3 presents the empirical results. The results and their implications are discussed in more detail in Section 4, and Section 5 concludes the paper.

<sup>6</sup> *En* is the masculine form; the neuter form is *et* and the feminine *ei*.

<sup>7</sup> Ekberg et al. (2015) draw this distinction in a somewhat different way; they state (2015: 110–111) that recognitional determiners may imply an element of hedging along with the recognitional function.

<sup>8</sup> Johannessen (2012: 152, n. 3) mentions *slik*, but she excludes it from her study.

## 2. Data

AmNo is a heritage variety of Norwegian spoken in the United States and Canada. AmNo is well documented; a substantial amount of speech data is available in the Corpus of American Nordic Speech (CANS, Johannessen 2015). Most of the speakers in the corpus are 3rd or 4th generation heritage speakers who were recorded after 2010 and whose ancestors migrated in the late 19th or early 20th century. The current release of CANS, version 3.1, also includes data that were recorded earlier.

In this study, a subset of CANS was used. In order to minimise influence from the homeland variety, only speakers who, according to the available corpus metadata, had been to Scandinavia three times or less were included. This amounts to 99 speakers, all recorded in 2010 or later, producing approximately 431,000 word tokens.<sup>9</sup> In addition, speakers recorded in the 1930s and 1940s were included in a separate search, in order to verify if pragmaticalised determiners can be traced back through generations of heritage speakers. The speakers in this group amount to 88, producing approximately 79,000 word tokens.

In addition to CANS, the study draws on the Norwegian part of the Nordic Dialect corpus (NDC, Johannessen et al. 2009), representing EurNo, in comparison to AmNo. The queries in NDC included the regions *Østlandet*, *Vestlandet* and *Trøndelag* (Eastern, Western and Central Norway). These are the areas from which most of the ancestors of today's AmNo speakers emigrated. The sample from NDC amounts to 395 speakers, producing approximately 1,474,000 word tokens.

## 3. Results

In this section I present results from CANS and, for comparison, NDC. In 3.1, I give a quantitative overview of the occurrences of *sånn* and *slik*; in 3.2, I take a closer look at the conditions on use of pragmaticalised determiners in AmNo.

### 3.1. Overview: *Sånn and slik in AmNo compared to EurNo*

A first question to address is how the lexical items *sånn* and *slik* are distributed relative to each other. As *sånn* and *slik* are multifunctional items (see footnote 1), the queries in CANS and NDC were designed to target only the most relevant occurrences (determiners) and exclude, for example, adverbials. The queries only include examples in which *sånn/slik* are followed by a noun, allowing for a hesitation marker and/or a pause (annotated as # in the corpora) to intervene. Note that although non-determiner uses of *sånn/slik* are in principle excluded, the quantitative overviews do not distinguish between pragmaticalised and non-pragmaticalised determiners (i.e., both examples such as (1a) and (1b–c) above are included); this distinction is not annotated in the corpora and relies on a qualitative

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<sup>9</sup> Presumably, the actual number of speakers that fulfil this criterion is higher, but the metadata are not always detailed enough to know. One speaker who, according to the metadata, had spent a whole year in Norway was excluded.

evaluation of each individual example in its surrounding context (see further in Section 3.2)

Table 1 shows the proportions of *sånn* vs. *slik*, i.e., which of the two lexical items are preferred by different groups of speakers. The group labelled as *older AmNo* consists of speakers in CANS recorded in the 1930s and 1940s (see Section 2); *present-day AmNo* is the subset of speakers in CANS recorded after 2010, with three or less visits to Scandinavia; *EurNo* is the subset of speakers from NDC (regions Østlandet, Vestlandet and Trøndelag).

Table 1: Distribution of *slik* + noun vs. *sånn* + noun in AmNo and EurNo

	<b>Older AmNo</b>	<b>Pr.-day AmNo</b>	<b>EurNo</b>
<i>Sånn</i> + noun	4 (13.3%)	16 (23.5%)	1,735 (87.4%)
<i>Slik</i> + noun	26 (86.7%)	52 (76.5%)	249 (12.6%)
Total	30 (100%)	68 (100%)	1984 (100%)

Note that the sample sizes of the groups are very different (older AmNo 79,000 tokens; present-day AmNo 431,000 tokens; EurNo 1,474,000 tokens); thus, no conclusions can be drawn about the overall frequencies of *slik* and *sånn* based on Table 1 (I return to this issue below). What is evident, however, is that AmNo stands out compared to EurNo in showing a preference for *slik* rather than *sånn*. In AmNo, *slik* is used in more than three quarters of the cases (76.5% in present-day AmNo and 86.7% in older AmNo). In EurNo, the pattern is the opposite; *sånn* is used in 87.4% of the cases, whereas *slik* only reaches a proportion of 12.6%. For further discussion of this difference, I refer to Section 4.1.

Whereas Table 1 only shows the proportions of *sånn* and *slik* relative to each other, Table 2 shows the overall frequencies of *sånn* and *slik* in the different subcorpora, measured by the total number of word tokens in each sample divided by the number of occurrences of *sånn/slik*.

Table 2: Tokens in sample per *sånn/slik* + noun in AmNo and EurNo

	<b>Older AmNo</b>	<b>Pr.-day AmNo</b>	<b>EurNo</b>
Tokens per <i>sånn</i> + noun	19,639.5	26,934.3	718.6
Tokens per <i>slik</i> + noun	3,021.5	8,287.5	5,007.3

As can be seen in Table 2, the lowest number by far (and thus the highest frequency) is found with *sånn* in EurNo (718.6 tokens in the sample per occurrence of *sånn*). *Sånn* in AmNo, on the other hand, is very infrequent (19,639.5 tokens per *sånn* in older AmNo and 26,934.3 in present-day AmNo); this result aligns with the finding above that AmNo speakers prefer *slik* to *sånn*. *Slik* has a more even overall distribution in the samples; I will not comment further on the differences between older and present-day AmNo due to the small sample sizes.

As mentioned, the figures presented in this section do not distinguish between pragmaticalised and non-pragmaticalised uses of *sånn/slik*; however, as argued by Lie (2008) and Johannessen (2012), there are strong reasons to assume that the high frequency of *sånn* in EurNo is, at least in part, a result of a substantial increase of the pragmaticalised uses in the past decades. Lie (2008: 92–93) shows, based on corpus data, that young speakers use *sånn* more than older speakers; moreover, the young speakers in his study use *sånn* more than speakers of a similar age in a different study conducted around 7 years earlier. As Johannessen (2012: 167) points out, it is unlikely that the basic, comparative/deictic meaning would undergo such a rapid and substantial rise; a more convincing scenario is that the more recent, pragmaticalised use is spreading. A more fine-grained, quantitative study of the different uses of *sånn* in homeland Norwegian must be left for the future; for the purposes of this study, it suffices to note that no comparable development of the overall frequencies of *slik* or *sånn* has taken place in AmNo.

In the next section, I zoom in on the concrete examples of *sånn* and *slik* in AmNo. The goal is to establish whether *sånn* and *slik* are used as pragmaticalised determiners, and if the conditions on use are the same as in the homeland.

### 3.2 Conditions on the use of pragmaticalised determiners in AmNo

Looking more closely at the occurrences of *sånn* and *slik* in AmNo, there is evidence that both are used as pragmaticalised determiners. In the older AmNo sample, I interpret 14 out of the 30 examples of *sånn/slik* as pragmaticalised (the rest are either comparative/deictic determiners or irrelevant hits). In the present-day AmNo sample, I interpret 29 out of the 68 examples as pragmaticalised. It should be noted, however, that some examples are ambiguous or difficult to analyse.

Out of the two subtypes of pragmaticalised determiners described in Section 1, the hedging marker seems to dominate in both samples. The hedge can be traced back to older AmNo, as shown in (3):

- (3) a. *det var amerikansk veving eller slik e ## tøy*  
 it was American weaving or SLIK eh cloth  
 ‘It was American weaving or eh cloth’ (westby\_WI\_28gm)
- b. *så kjøpte han seg en slik en reaper kalte vi det*  
 then bought he REFL a SLIK a reaper called we it  
 ‘then he bought himself one of those reapers, as we called them’  
 (westby\_WI\_03gk)
- c. *for han var ikke sånn e teacher den tid*  
 because he was not SÅNN eh teacher that time  
 ‘because he wasn’t a teacher then’ (dorchester\_IA\_01um)

The examples in (3) are very similar to what can be observed in homeland Norwegian. The hedging marker co-occurs with pauses or hesitation markers (3a

and 3c). In (3b), the speaker does not seem uncertain or hesitant; however, she still marks a certain distance by including a meta-comment about the modified noun ('a reaper, as we called them'), perhaps in solidarity with the listener, who might not be familiar with the term *reaper* (see also Lie 2008: 83–84).

In the present-day AmNo sample, the use of *sånn/slik* as hedging markers looks very similar to older AmNo. The hedges often co-occur with hesitation markers or pauses before the noun, as shown in (4):

- (4) a. *men det er sånn # tremenninger*  
 but it is SÅNN second.cousins  
 'but there are second cousins' (flom\_MN\_02gm)
- b. *og så blir det slik # messom hustak*  
 and so becomes it SLIK like house.roof  
 'and then it becomes, like, a house roof' (coon\_valley\_WI\_04gm)
- c. *nei de bruker slik e # brønn*  
 no they use SLIK e well  
 'No, they use a well' (flom\_MN\_02gm)

A phenomenon that to some extent appears to be associated with the use of the hedge in AmNo is switching to English. There were 15 of 29 examples of pragmatized *sånn/slik* in the present-day AmNo sample involving an English noun; the same holds for 5 of the 14 examples in the older AmNo sample.<sup>10</sup> This seems to be a high proportion, especially in present-day AmNo. For comparison, Riksem (2017: 5) reports to have found 1,265 English nouns in CANS (version 1); the total number of tokens tagged as nouns in this corpus is 27,847.<sup>11</sup> Examples of pragmatized determiners occurring before English nouns are shown in (5) (cf. also (3c) above, from the older AmNo sample):

- (5) a. *jeg bruker ei slik turkey cooker*  
 I use a SLIK turkey cooker  
 'I use a turkey cooker' (westby\_WI\_01gm)
- b. *hun hadde slik ## coonskin coat på seg*  
 she had SLIK coonskin coat on her  
 'She was wearing a coonskin coat' (coon\_valley\_WI\_17gm)

<sup>10</sup> This includes some compounds with one English component. In cases of doubt about whether a noun should be counted as English or Norwegian (for example a word such as *professor*, which has identical spelling in both languages), the pronunciation was the deciding factor.

<sup>11</sup> I extracted this number by querying for all nouns in the Norwegian part of CANS version 1.

- c. *han hadde slike e # heritage tours*  
 he had SLIK.PL e heritage tours  
 ‘he had heritage tours’ (flom\_MN\_02gm)

Although the combination of *slik/sånn* and switching to English is in one sense particular to AmNo, it can also be interpreted as a subcase of hedging similar to what is found in EurNo: speakers might be switching to English when they are uncertain about the Norwegian noun. In (5), the speakers seem to express uncertainty; this is highlighted by the fact that *slik* is followed by a pause and/or a hesitation marker before switching to English takes place. It appears that the combination of hedging marker + switching can also come about when the speaker wants to signal that they are aware that they are using a “special” noun which may be surprising or unfamiliar to the listener (i.e., they are not really hesitating; instead, they are, arguably, expressing solidarity with the listener; see also Lie 2008). This intention is corroborated by meta comments about the noun form; see (6) (and also (3b) above):

- (6) *bare slike vi kaller det short stories*  
 only SLIK.PL we call it short stories  
 ‘Only what we call short stories’ (flom\_MN\_02gm)

While the use of *slik/sånn* as hedging markers in AmNo is robustly attested, it is less straightforward to verify the existence of the other subtype of pragmaticalised determiner, i.e., the recognitional determiner (see Section 1). By the definition applied in this study, the main syntactic criterion for the recognitional determiner is that it does not co-occur with the indefinite article; at the same time, it should not be signalling reservation, hesitation or distance (if so, it is considered to be a hedging marker). As Norwegian only uses the indefinite article with singular count nouns, the syntactic criterion (which is the easiest to operationalise) can only be applied to a subset of the data (plurals and mass nouns must be excluded). Additionally, there are cases in which also singular count nouns may appear without the indefinite determiner for independent reasons: both EurNo and AmNo allow bare singular count nouns if the noun in the specific context denotes a *type* of referent rather than an individuated token (e.g., Borthen 2003 and Julien 2005 on EurNo; Kinn 2020 on AmNo). Examples (4b–c) and (5b) above fall into these categories (and at the same time, they have other hallmarks of hedging markers, such as a pause between *sånn/slik* and the noun).

The AmNo data sets contain two examples, both with the lexical item *sånn*, which are difficult to interpret as hedging markers and which might be analysed as recognitional determiners. See (7):

- (7) a. *du veit de gikk i sånn seilskute den gangen veit du*  
 you know they went in SÅNN sailing.ship that time know you  
 ‘They went in a sailing ship back then, you know’ (iola\_WI\_19gm)
- b. *ikke en ordentlig stavkirke men sånn miniatyrstavkirke hvor*  
 not a real stave.church but SÅNN mini.stave.church where  
*vi får ikke lov å gå inn*  
 we get not permission to go inside  
 ‘not a real stave church, but a miniature stave church where we’re not  
 allowed to go inside’ (minneapolis\_MN\_01uk)

Example (7a) is from older AmNo, whereas (7b) is from the present-day recordings. At face value, (7a) could be taken to suggest that recognitional determiners exist in AmNo and can be traced back to the 1940s; however, one single example is too scarce to draw any firm conclusions. Regarding (7b), it is worth noting that the speaker has an atypical background compared to most of the other speakers in the sample from present-day AmNo: She is only 37 years old and a 2nd generation heritage speaker (commonly, the present-day speakers of AmNo are of a much more mature age and at least 3rd generation). Possibly, this speaker’s use of what looks like a recognitional determiner is related to her having had input from a more modern type of homeland Norwegian.

Summing up Section 3, we have seen that *slik* and *sånn* as pragmaticalised determiners are found in AmNo, with some characteristic features: *Slik* is more common than *sånn*, and the hedge is much more robustly attested than the recognitional determiner. The conditions for using the hedge are very similar to homeland Norwegian.

#### 4. Discussion

In this section, I discuss the findings of Section 3 in further detail. I start by addressing the variation between the items *slik* and *sånn* in Section 4.1; in 4.2, I discuss the quantitative differences between AmNo and EurNo, and in 4.3 I contextualise the findings in a discussion of the diachronic development of pragmaticalised determiners in Norwegian.

##### 4.1 Lexical variation between *slik* and *sånn*

In 3.1, it was shown that the lexical item *slik* is more widely used than *sånn* in AmNo; this sets the heritage variety apart from EurNo, where *sånn* is, overall, the most common form. A likely explanation for this distribution can be found in Norwegian migration history.

*Slik* was, and to some extent still is, a productive lexeme in certain areas in Norway, particularly in the inner part of the South-East. For example, in the (former) county of Oppland, a simple search for *slik* directly followed by a noun in NDC renders more hits than *sånn* directly followed by a noun (51 hits for *slik* vs. 41 for *sånn*). The interior of South-East Norway is an area that had a high rate of

emigration; many of the ancestors of the present-day AmNo speakers represented in CANS came from these areas, and it has been shown that Eastern Norwegian dialects played a particularly influential role in shaping the AmNo language spoken in the Midwest today, at the expense of for example Western Norwegian dialects (Johannessen & Laake 2012, Hjelde 2015). In Norway, it seems that *sånn* is generally spreading at the expense of *slik*; however, this has not happened in America, at least not among the speakers that were included in this study. From a historical perspective, it is not surprising that *slik* remains the prevalent form among these speakers.

#### 4.2 Quantitative differences between AmNo and EurNo

An overall finding in Section 3.1 was that *sånn* is much more frequent in EurNo than in AmNo, see Table 2. As argued in Section 3.1, a main reason for the high numbers in EurNo is, presumably, that the pragmaticalised uses of *sånn* have gone through a rapid increase in the last decades. The most obvious interpretation of the difference between EurNo and AmNo is that this increase simply did not happen in AmNo; AmNo corresponds to the stage of EurNo before this quick rise. If we picture the S-shaped curve along which linguistic innovations often spread (e.g. Lightfoot [1999: 102] and references there), AmNo is on the left-end side of the curve, at a stage where the use of pragmaticalised determiners is still fairly scattered, although it is clearly attested.<sup>12</sup> This may correspond to the stage that homeland Norwegian was at around the time of mass emigration (the research that would be required to established this must, however, be left for the future). Present-day EurNo, on the other hand, is closer to the end point of the curve, where the innovation has become very widespread.

Although pragmaticalised determiners are less frequent in AmNo than in EurNo, there is a sense in which one can interpret their presence (at least the presence of hedging markers) as very resilient. Pragmaticalised determiners can be described as a phenomenon at the syntax-pragmatics interface; using them requires knowledge of fine-grained pragmatic distinctions in addition to general syntactic rules. Interface phenomena have been argued to be vulnerable in bilinguals, including heritage speakers; this is commonly referred to as the Interface Hypothesis (IH, see Sorace 2011 for an overview and e.g. Benmamoun et al. 2013 on the IH in heritage language situations). In the context of the IH, one might ask why pragmaticalised determiners have been retained in AmNo for several generations. I propose that a contributing factor is the specific function of the hedge. The hedge is used to mark reservation or uncertainty, which is highly relevant to heritage speakers, who often experience problems with lexical retrieval due to reduced input of use of their heritage language (e.g., Montrul 2008: 65). The concrete examples of how the hedge is used in AmNo (see Section 3.2) corroborate this: recall that *slik/sånn* is often followed by a pause, a hesitation marker and/or

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<sup>12</sup> By referring to the S-curve, I am not implying that AmNo will necessarily go through the same development as EurNo; as AmNo is a moribund language, we will probably never know.

switching to English. This may have helped to keep the frequency of the hedge high enough to be passed on across generations and to be retained throughout the life of the present-day speakers.

#### *4.3 Heritage language data and the diachronic development of pragmaticalised determiners*

The first description (to my knowledge) of pragmaticalised uses of *sånn* in Norwegian was that of Simonsen & Christensen (1980). It is not clear when the pragmaticalised uses arose, more exactly, although it has been argued that they are a relatively recent phenomenon (see Section 3.1). Pragmaticalised determiners are primarily used in the spoken language, and this limits the possibilities for doing diachronic research. In general, one can only go as far back as the oldest available recordings, and these are not necessarily very old.

The finding that *sånn* and *slik* are robustly attested as pragmaticalised determiners (at least as hedging markers) in AmNo can be taken to indicate that they were present in the language of at least some of the emigrants who left Norway in the late 19th and early 20th century (although in principle, the possibility of an independent AmNo innovation remains).<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the asymmetry between the attestations of the hedging marker vs. the recognitional determiner might suggest that the recognitional determiner is more recent; this would tie in with recent literature, in which the recognitional determiner is explicitly discussed primarily in the context of young speakers in urban settings, see Section 1. Both homeland and American Norwegian are well documented; the fact that we can now consult tagged recordings of AmNo speakers from the 1930s/40s is very fortunate, and the situation for spoken EurNo has also improved dramatically in the recent years (for example, the LIA corpus [2019] contains tagged dialect recordings of speakers born as early as the 1860s).<sup>14</sup> This means that there are several ways of getting a more complete picture of the history of pragmaticalised determiners in Norwegian (although I must leave this for future research). For other speech communities, however, the records of the spoken language may be much scarcer, and in those situations, evidence from present-day heritage varieties can provide missing pieces of the puzzle (see also Rothman 2007).

## **5. Conclusion**

This paper has discussed the determiners *slik* and *sånn* ‘such (a), like this/that’ in AmNo, and the extent to which pragmaticalised uses, carrying information about the speaker’s attitude and speaker-hearer relations, are found in this heritage language. It was shown, based on data from CANS (Johannessen 2015) that pragmaticalised determiners (most notably hedging markers) are indeed found in AmNo, and that they have been present at least since the 1940s, but that their

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<sup>13</sup> An anonymous reviewer comments that the phonotactic similarity with English *such (a)* could potentially reinforce a language-internal development of the use of *sånn*; the presence of hedges in English might also conceivably contribute. This would have to be a topic for future research.

<sup>14</sup> [https://tekstlab.uio.no/glossa2/lia\\_norsk](https://tekstlab.uio.no/glossa2/lia_norsk).

distribution differs in some respects from that in the homeland variety EurNo. In EurNo, the lexical variant *sånn* is more common than *slik*, whereas the opposite pattern applies in AmNo. This was attributed to migration history: many of the ancestors of today's AmNo speakers came from the interior of Eastern Norway, where *slik* is productive even today. In terms of overall frequencies, EurNo has seen a rapid increase of the use of *sånn* in recent years (Lie 2008; Johannessen 2012); this has not happened in AmNo. However, although pragmaticalised determiners in AmNo are less frequent than in EurNo, their presence seems to be stable, and their conditions on use (at least for the hedge) are generally similar to the homeland.

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