Aspects of the Progressive.

A comparative analysis of the English progressive aspect and its correspondences in Norwegian.

By

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Acknowledgements

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1. Introduction

This thesis will report how the Norwegian language manages to capture the notions expressed in the progressive forms of English verbs in a selection of data. The investigation will be corpus-based, and the data from the corpus will be compared with data from an elicitation test conducted after the corpus investigation. The corpus used is the ENPC (The English-Norwegian Parallel Corpus), which is a part of the OMC (The Oslo Multilingual Corpus). The informants used in the elicitation test are students from a high school in Oslo. The English progressive is the starting point of the investigation, which will seek to describe how this aspect is rendered in the Norwegian language. The difference in level of formality will to some extent be explored, as well as the difference between English original texts and English translated text.

1.1. Aim and scope

The Norwegian language is often considered not to have a progressive/non-progressive opposition in the sense that it has no grammaticalized structures or inflectional morphemes that mark verbs for progressiveness. This investigation will to some extent examine the validity of this notion, and more specifically, an effort will be made to identify how the English progressive aspect is rendered in Norwegian. The aim is to identify what linguistic resources are used in order to compensate for this lack of formal marking.

The main discussion will circle around the effects of the progressive within traditional grammar, but Systemic Functional Grammar and other approaches to pragmatic language description will be used as a tool to analyse some expressions of aspectual meanings of the progressive.
In short, what this thesis aims to answer is the following:

(a) What linguistic resources expressing progressive meaning are available in Norwegian?
(b) To what extent are these able to capture the notions of the English progressive?
(c) How does the translation process affect the number occurrences of progressive markers?

In other words, is there a difference between English original texts and English translated texts when it comes to the number of progressive verb forms/progressive markers?

This thesis will investigate the translation from English into Norwegian as well as from Norwegian into English, to see if there is any difference in the number of occurrences of progressive forms in English translated texts in comparison to English originals. The source material will also include texts varying in geographical and temporal criteria, as well as genre, year of publication and formality.

1.2. Previous Treatments

At least four other English hovedfag theses on similar subjects have been written in Norway. The first one was submitted by Turid Sparboe in Oslo in 1971, the second by Arnfinn Ellingsen in Trondheim in 1976, the third by Kjetil Myskja in Trondheim in 1987 and the fourth one by Helle Øhren Nordset in 1996.

Sparboe’s main concern is to investigate to what extent there is a correlation between the English progressive (she calls it the “expanded tense”) and the Norwegian constructions conforming to the patterns of:

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She concludes that only to a small degree can there be said to be equivalence between these functions in English and Norwegian.

Ellingsen (1976) is concerned with the translation from English to Norwegian, and concentrates on the present tense only. His aim is to “find out how the meaning and connotations of the expanded form in English is rendered in Norwegian, and which means Norwegian makes use of in order to give a “correct” translation” (Ellingsen 1976:1).

Myskja also describes the relationship between the English progressive and the Norwegian correspondences. His treatment offers a somewhat wider approach as to what linguistic material may express progressive meaning than the two previous ones. His discussion is, on the other hand, based solely on material from British originals (4 British novels). Myskja states that “The selection has been limited on geographical and temporal criteria to reduce the probability of varying use of the progressive among authors” (Myskja 1987:62), and his material also consists exclusively of non-future progressives. Myskja furthermore states that his discussion “will rely on a detailed analysis of a limited number of examples rather than on massing of great numbers of examples and statistical treatment of these […] (Myskja 1987:62).
Nordset states that she discusses “the aspectual properties of some verbal constructions within the framework of the Vendlerian categorization” (Nordset 1996:1). Her treatment considers the translation from English to Norwegian and from Norwegian to English, and her corpus material consist of two English novels and one English play translated into Norwegian, as well as two Norwegian novels and one Norwegian play translated into English, which gives her a material consisting exclusively of fictional texts.

A book length treatment of the relationship between the English progressive and its translation into Norwegian is presented by Tonne (2001), and will be treated in section 2.1.4.
2. Theory

2.1. Aspect

*Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* states that “In grammar, aspect is the way that a verb group shows whether an activity is continuing, is repeated, or is completed. For example, in ‘They were laughing’, the verb is in the progressive aspect and shows that the action was continuing.” The *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics* defines aspect as “A general term, originally of specialist Slavic languages, for verbal categories that distinguish the status of events, etc. in relation to specific periods of time, as opposed to their simple location in the present, past or future.”

Aspect is a relatively new category of the verb, at least compared to e.g. tense and mood. Tense (Norwegian “tempus”) is often used as a contrasting category in defining aspect. Many linguists view tense as a category which locates a situation in time, whereas aspect is concerned with how the situation is presented at that point in time or during that period of time. *Escolas ordbok* defines “aspekt” as “side av en sak, synsvinkel”, and “synsvinkel” (viewing angle) agrees with the notion many linguists have of aspect as different ways of viewing the internal constituency of a situation. It is also mentioned by some linguists that while tense is deictic⁵ (dependent on factors that are external to the situation), aspect is non-deictic (situation-internal).

In Scheffer’s discussion on aspect, he is concerned with whether the term should be interpreted as a formal grammatical category or “the type, the character of the action”, and concludes that the latter is the “most reasonable” (Scheffer 1975:20). Comrie defines aspect

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⁵ See Vannebo 1979 and Comrie 1985 for further discussion of deixis.
as “particular grammatical categories in individual languages” (Comrie 1976:7). He furthermore states that he is neither concerned with any one particular language, nor with a comparison of various individual languages, but rather wants to present aspect as a part of general linguistic theory. His definition of aspect is therefore not one that is concerned with the English language in particular, but one that is language-neutral. Comrie defines aspect as a category of the verb, like mood or tense. He differentiates aspect from tense in that tense can be said to be deictic, which means that the (temporal) reference of tense is situation-external, whereas aspect is non-deictic, since its reference point lies within the situation itself; it is situation-internal. On the basis of these notions, Comrie claims that “aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation” (1976:3), a definition based on a notion presented by Holt (1943:6) that aspects are “different ways of conceiving the flow of the situation itself”. While tense relates one time to another time, Comrie states, aspect is concerned with how temporal aspects within the situation itself relate to each other, like the duration of one situation in relation to another, whether a situation takes place at the beginning or the end of another, and whether or not the extent of a situation includes the present moment in its time-span.

Leech (2004) mentions two “primary aspects”: the progressive aspect and the perfect aspect. The perfective/imperfective opposition, on the other hand, is not given much attention by Leech, despite the fact that many linguists consider the imperfective a superordinate aspect of the progressive. Bertinetto et al. state that “The progressive aspect is often identified with the imperfective aspect, rather than being treated as an aspect in its own right” (Bertinetto et al. 2000:517). According to Comrie, the perfective aspect refers to a situation as an

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6 Situation is used here as a neutral word to describe any process, state or action that can be denoted by a verb.  
7 For instance Vendler (1967) and Comrie (1976)
un analysable whole\textsuperscript{8}, not focusing on the internal structure, whereas the imperfective aspect does focus on the internal structure. The perfect/non-perfect distinction and the perfective/imperfective opposition are formally very similar, and may cause confusion, especially since they share the same historical root, but have developed in different directions over the years. Examples 1-4 show the two oppositions in present-day English.

1. He \textit{reigned} for ten years – Perfective, presenting the situation as a whole.

2. When he \textit{was reigning}, the people were happy – The progressive situation is imperfective, focusing on a part of the situation.

Comrie’s definition of the perfective aspect may seem to go somewhat against his definition of aspects as different ways of conceiving the internal temporal constituency of a situation, but on the other hand, presenting the situation as an unanalysed whole may also be conceived as a way of viewing the temporal constituency. Comrie points out that the perfective aspect “relates some state to a preceding situation. More generally”, he states, “the perfect indicates the continuing present relevance of a past situation” (Comrie 1976:52).

3. He has broken his leg – perfect; his leg still hurts, the situation has current relevance.

4. He broke his leg – non-perfect, the situation has little or no current relevance.

This notion of present/current relevance as a defining feature of the perfect aspect has been questioned by some linguists and grammarians, with varying degrees of success and persuasiveness, but there is no room for an elaborate discussion of that topic here.

\textsuperscript{8} His own words are “unanalysable whole”, but it seems more likely that he is talking of a situation which is unanalysed, since it in most cases is possible to analyse the situation, but a choice is made not to.
Faarlund et. al. (1997:644) point out that “I norsk har vi ikke en egen aspektkategori med faste grammatiske uttryksmidler. Når vi snakker om aspekt i norsk språk, dreier det seg om enkelte syntaktiske konstruksjoner som kan ha en betydning som svarer til enkelte av de betydninger som uttrykkes med aspekt i andre språk”. With this statement in mind, it is somewhat ironic that the Norwegian language seems to have so many “different ways of conceiving the flow of the situation”. Faarlund et. al. list the perfective/imperfective distribution, the perfect/non-perfect opposition, kursivt aspekt, nær-ved aspekt, kontinuativt aspekt, habituelt aspekt, ingressivt aspekt, egressivt aspekt, iterativt aspekt and resultativt aspekt (Faarlund et.al. 1997:646-647).

It is worth mentioning that although these aspects are not listed under the English section of this discussion, it does not mean that the English language does not have the means to express such aspectual meanings. The difference lies within the definition of aspect presented by the individual writer and how these definitions relate to the grammatical apparatus of the individual language. The definition of aspect has influence on how the semantic subcategories are to be handled. A choice has to be made whether or not subcategories of an aspect are to receive equal status to the superordinate aspect, or if the aspectual meaning is to be ascribed to the superordinate. In languages like English, where there are tools like periphrastic forms of the verb to indicate (progressive) aspect, such a choice is easier; the “subordinate aspect” is considered a part of the meaning of the superordinate (progressive). When no defining lexical features can be traced, like in Norwegian, the choice is not so self-evident, and aspects which are considered a part of the meaning of superordinate aspects in English may receive equal status to the (hypothetical) superordinate. So, even though English may not have a separate aspect called “close to- aspect”, the semantic meaning of this aspect may very well be expressed by other means in the English language, quite possibly in a progressive verb form.
Compare the following examples of aspects in Faarlund et al. (1997:646-647):

- **Kursivt aspekt** (*Coursive aspect*): Barna sitter og skriver – *The children are writing.*
- **”Nær ved” – aspekt** (*Close to-/about to-aspect*): Soldatene holdt på å drukne – *The soldiers were drowning.*
- **Kontinuativt aspekt** (*Continuative aspect*): Gutten fortsatte å øve – *The boy kept practicing.*
- **Habituelt aspekt** (*Habitual aspect*): De bruker å reise bort om helgene – *They usually go away during the weekends.*
- **Ingressivt aspekt** (*Ingressive aspect*): Det tok til å mørke – *It was getting dark.*
- **Egressivt aspekt** (*Egressive aspect*): Han sluttet å le – *He stopped laughing/he wasn’t laughing any more.*
- **Iterativt aspekt** (*Iterative aspect*): De hoppet og hoppet – *They were jumping.*
- **Resultativt aspekt** (*Resultative aspect*): Endelig fikk de to snakket ut med hverandre – *Eventually they got it all out in the open.*

These examples and the translations suggested by me show that the progressive aspect in English may have many different equivalents in Norwegian, and that English is not dependent on a lot of “extraordinary” linguistic tools to express these meanings. Most of the listed Norwegian “aspects” are, although some people would probably be prepared to do so, generally not counted as aspects in English, but are rather listed as meanings that can be expressed by means of the progressive (or imperfective) aspect. One point worth mentioning is that in languages where a certain aspect is uniquely defined by linguistic markers, a distinction must often be made between *aspectual meaning* and *aspectual form.* Not all progressive verb forms in English express progressiveness and not all perfect forms in French and Italian express perfect meaning. In Norwegian, a lack of progressive marking does not
necessarily signal the absence of progressive meaning. Thus, not all English progressive verb forms need to be translated into Norwegian progressive markers. A progressive form in English can be differentiated from a simple form by formal criteria, but no such distinction can be made in Norwegian. Consequently, the fact that a Norwegian verb is not formally progressive does not necessarily suggest that it does not express progressive meaning. Also, the type of meaning expressed in the particular English progressive verb form must be taken into consideration when making a choice within the Norwegian linguistic apparatus. If the English progressive expresses iterative meaning, a translation with “tok til å” or “begynte å” as a progressive marker would result in a different aspectual meaning (probably ingressive) than the one expressed in the English progressive.

2.1.1. The progressive aspect in English

The term “progressive aspect” is one of several names for verbal constructions consisting of a form of *to be* followed by an –*ing* form. Jespersen calls this particular form of the verb “the expanded form”, focusing on the formal criteria of the verb phrase, whereas some prefer “the continuous form” (Woods and McLeod 1990), moving the focal point to the semantics of the aspect. The usual Norwegian equivalent is “samtidsform”, which puts focus on the currentness, the ongoing action. Comrie defines this aspect in relation to what he calls “continuousness” and “non-stativity”, “continuousness” in turn being definable as “imperfectivity that is not occasioned by habituality” (1976:33). Comrie’s claim is that once the habitual aspect (indeed, he maintains that English has a separate habitual aspect, which is mainly realised through the “used to”- construction) is removed from the equation, what is left of the imperfective aspect is the progressive. So, according to Comrie’s terms, the only thing that separates the progressive from the imperfective is that the imperfective may also
include habitual meaning. However, as Leech shows, habituality can indeed be combined with progressive verb forms (2004:33).

5. Whenever I pass that house the dog is barking.
6. You only seem to come alive when you’re discussing your work.

Once again, the difference between meaning and form is important in deciding how to interpret these concepts. There is no doubt that a progressive verb form can be combined with habitual meaning, and as the examples above show, habitual meaning may also be a part of progressive meaning. From Comrie’s point of view, habituality and progressiveness are two subcategories of the imperfective aspect, and in terms of semantic categorization, he makes a strong argument. Judging by formal criteria, habitual meaning can combine with progressive verb forms, and as seen in examples 5 and 6, habitual meaning expressed by progressive verb forms does not exclude other possible aspectual meanings of the progressive. The truth of the matter is that Comrie’s definition of progressiveness is somewhat impaired by the fact that the progressive verb form and the hypothetical simple verb form equivalent do not express the same in sentence 5. A simple verb form (Whenever I pass that house, the dog barks) would mean that the dog starts barking. With the progressive, the dog has already started barking when I pass the house. In other words, the progressive aspect actually removes an aspectual dimension from the situation in this example. The simple form results in a habitual and ingressive situation, whereas with the progressive, the situation is habitual and, of course, progressive: it has lost the ingressive meaning.
Comrie furthermore states that “thus, we can give the general definition of progressiveness as the combination of [progressive]9 meaning and non-stative meaning” (1976:35). He also maintains that stative verbs do not have progressive forms, and he lists verbs like see, hear, understand, and be. Although these verbs have a stative meaning, he says, they do have connotations that are dynamic, and they may appear in the progressive in some contexts.

7. I am seeing/hearing things (that are not here). – Counter-factual
8. You are being a fool. – Meaning is that of a dynamic verb – acting like a fool.

In chapter 2 of his book, Comrie touches on what could be argued to be the core of progressiveness. Chapter 2.1 is on punctuality and durativity, and describes how a situation can be either punctual (it happens at one point, once) or durative (it happens over a period; it has duration). According to Comrie’s terms, a punctual situation has no internal structure, and a progressive situation certainly has. If the progressive is indeed an aspect, then according to Comrie’s own terms, it is concerned with the internal temporal constituency of the situation. Thus, progressiveness and punctuality are mutually exclusive according to Comrie’s definitions.

9. The soldier reached the summit (punctual)
10. The soldier is reaching the summit (punctual progressive)

The soldier must reach the summit at a specific point, and only once. This does not combine with the meaning that is inherent in the progressive aspect. However, punctuality and the progressive aspect are not mutually exclusive in formal terms. In a sentence like “The soldiers

9 Progressive meaning in this context results in a circular definition, and it seems more likely that what Comrie is getting at is continuous meaning.
were reaching the summit” (Comrie 1976:43), punctuality and progressiveness are combined, but the situation is not punctual, it is iterative, which means that it is repeated several times. Thus, the combination of progressiveness and punctuality results in iterativity, in this case a punctual situation which happens more than once in a sequence of events. The only exception that comes to mind is a context where someone is giving a live commentary of the happening and just as the soldier is approaching the summit utters the sentence “The soldier is reaching the summit...!...”, but even in this case punctuality must be excluded as a part of the meaning. This utterance would rather express what Faarlund et. al. labels about-to aspect or close-to aspect; the soldier is about to reach the summit. In the terminology of Leech, this example would belong to the “Transitional event verbs”, and a statement like “The soldier is reaching the summit” would indicate the “approach to a situation, rather than the situation itself (Leech 2004:24). As shown here, there appears to be a connection between singular/plural subjects and the meaning of transitional event verbs; in many cases, a plural subject will result in a change from punctuality to duration, although this distinction cannot be said to be categorical.

Leech offers some interesting views on the progressive. Since he is concerned with the English progressive specifically, he arrives at a more formalistic definition of the progressive than Comrie does: “The term progressive has been used […] to designate those verb constructions in which the –ing form of the verb follows a form of the verb to be” (2004:18). He also gives a definition that fits well within the notion of aspect provided by Comrie, that “[…] the progressive aspect (as it is called) is said to give us an “inside view” of a happening rather than an “outside view”, seeing the happening as a whole” (2004:18). Leech claims that the progressive aspect expresses (limited) duration, which agrees largely with Comrie’s notion of non-punctuality and continuousness.
Leech’s notion of the progressive expressing limited duration (distinguishing it from the state present), does not imply short duration, but duration that is not unlimited:

11. “My watch works perfectly” (permanent state)
12. “My watch is working perfectly” (temporary state)
13. “I live in Wimbledon” (permanently)
14. “I am living in Wimbledon” (temporarily)

From these examples (Leech 2004:20) it is clear that the notion of limited duration has to do with temporariness, not short duration, as some linguists have claimed in previous treatments of the progressive. The notion of limited duration as opposed to unlimited duration might be one of the most important factors in explaining why verbs like love, like and know do not occur with their basic meaning in the progressive. In sentences like “I love flowers” or “I know that 2 + 2 is 4” it is not semantically coherent to ask “For how long will you [love/know]?”. It is assumed that the truth-value of these sentences are valid from the point that they started being true and up until the moment of the death of the subject. The same would apply for “eternal truths” with inanimate subjects, like “The chemical formula for water is H2O” or “Hot air is lighter than cold air”.

Ljung, on the other hand, claims that “limited duration” cannot be a basic meaning of the progressive, but must instead be one of its subsidiary meanings (Ljung 1980:19). He draws on examples from Dowty (1976:584) as well as others to support his argument:

15. The earth is rotating around the sun at a rate of 365 days per revolution.
16. I am living in London now.

10 See Vendler 1967:104 for further discussion.
Ljung maintains that since it is possible to utter these sentences “without necessarily implying that things will change in the near future or indeed at all” (Ljung 1980:19), temporariness cannot be a basic meaning of the progressive. Once again the distinction between form and meaning is the core of the discussion. The question that arises from Ljung’s argumentation is whether or not these progressive verb forms actually express progressive meaning or not. If they do express progressive meaning, then limited duration cannot be a part of the core meaning of progressiveness. One might argue that the extendedness of the time-span (the “unlimited duration”) stems mainly from the adverbials in 17 and 18 (forever, always), and that the progressive verb forms cannot be said to express the “near absolute truths” that their simple form equivalents do, but even if the extendedness does not stem from the verbs, the progressives in these examples cannot be said to be incompatible with the meaning that is expressed in the adverbials, and thus progressive meaning cannot be mutually exclusive with “unlimited duration” (defined as “limitation that is not limited”). If limited duration were a basic meaning of the progressive, then “unlimited duration” would not be a possible part of the progressive meaning. The examples from Ljung could perhaps best be described as denoting “a currently ongoing activity” (except perhaps example 17, which might be claimed to express habituality: “Every time I pass by, these machines are working”), and they do express a somewhat different meaning in comparison to their simple form equivalents, focusing on the “current” part of the time line.

Leech further suggests that the progressive aspect signals a lack of completion (distinguishing it from the event present), but not suggesting non-completion as a basic meaning of the
progressive. He states that this distinction is best illustrated “in the Past Tense, by event verbs which signal a transition from one state to another” (2004:20).

19. “The dog was drowning in the sea” Non-completion
20. “The dog drowned in the sea” Completion
21. “I was reading from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m.” Non-completion
22. “I read from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m.” Completion

There can be no doubt that sentence 20 expresses completion: the dog is dead, but in sentence 19 it is uncertain whether the dog actually drowned or if someone managed to save it. In sentence 22 the reading started at 10 p.m. and stopped at 11 p.m., whereas in sentence 21 it may well be that the reading took place both prior to 10 p.m. and after 11 p.m.

According to Leech, the present progressive includes the present moment in its time-span, and it stretches for some period backwards into the past and forwards into the future. In the terminology of Comrie and many others, the progressive aspect is always imperfective. The perfective aspect offers a view on a situation as represented by a “bubble” on the timeline, and the situation takes place within that bubble, beginning, middle and end. According to the theories of Palmer, “the simplest and clearest use of the progressive is when it is used to indicate activity going on at a point of time, i.e. both before and after it” (Palmer 1987:54). The present progressive may also offer a view on a situation as represented by a bubble on the time line when the verb is non-stative (the limits of the situation are represented by the beginning and end of the event that takes place), but since the progressive does not signal completion, the situation may stretch beyond the boarders of this bubble both into the future and into the past, but we are merely looking at the situation within the specific period of time that is of interest.
Another interesting notion expressed by Leech is that the progressive aspect “stretches the time-span of an event verb, but compresses the time-span of a state verb” (2004:19). From this idea it becomes evident that the progressive aspect is not a category which adds the same semantic information or temporal view regardless of the verb it modifies; the effect of the progressive aspect is dependent on what the verb expresses. Leech further states that “It should be emphasised again, though, that this is a matter of psychological rather than real time: It is possible for the same incident to be described by either the simple or the progressive present: You look tired/You are looking tired.” (Leech 2004:19).

Leech furthermore states that the progressive can be used as a temporal frame in which some other happening takes place, foregrounding the non-progressive form. This effect is evident from the following examples (Leech 2004:22):

23. “When we arrived she made some fresh coffee”
24. “When we arrived she was making some fresh coffee”

In the first example, she starts making coffee immediately following our arrival. In the second example, she had already begun the process when we arrived. The progressive here serves as a background activity to our arrival. However, for the framing-effect to occur, the other verb must be an event verb expressing punctuality. In the next example, according to Leech, the framing effect does not occur because there is no specific point to which the progressive verb relates:

25. “We were watching a football match on Saturday afternoon”
However, Jespersen (1931/1961:180) claims that “the action or state denoted by the expanded tense is thought of as a temporal frame encompassing something else which as often as not is to be understood from the whole situation.”

In Jespersen’s opinion, the framing effect is one of the most common uses of the progressive, and can occur although there is no primary verb to which the progressive verb serves as a frame; the primary situation can be understood from the context or otherwise be considered elementary. It might be argued that such a claim is difficult to prove empirically, since there would not exist any hard evidence (linguistic material) to support this line of argument. Nevertheless, in Jespersen’s defence, if someone is asked what they were doing “on Saturday afternoon”, it is quite possible that the question is asked in order to verify or falsify someone’s involvement in another situation that occurred “on Saturday afternoon”, i.e. a primary situation to which the progressive form may serve as a frame (“We were watching a football match on Saturday afternoon / when that girl was killed”). Jespersen’s temporal frame is an aspect of progressiveness which, in contrast to many other facets of the aspect, does not have a complementary distribution to other features. Although this framing effect is by no means a feature exclusive to the progressive aspect, and thus cannot be counted as uniquely defining, it does seem to occur in a large number of the cases. One facet of the progressive that the framing effect may only occasion more marginally is when the progressive limits the time-span of a state verb:

26. My watch is working perfectly – no framing effect.
27. I was living in London when he was killed (framing effect) – I was in London when he was killed (no framing effect).
   **But:**
28. I was enjoying the seaside when he suddenly jumped me. (My own examples)
In example 28, the reason why the framing effect occurs is that *enjoying* is a verb of active perception. If we look at the semantic components of the verbs in the other two situations, they fit seamlessly into both Leech’s and Comrie’s notions of a state as a situation which does not require input in order to continue. Example 28, however, contains a verb in the progressive that could be said to require input in order to continue: enjoying something takes energy or at least an active participation from the subject. In sentence 27, the framing effect occurs, but the two situations do not seem to be as intertwined as in the other examples where the framing effect occurs. I could be the killer even if I was living in London at the time he was killed. There is no framing effect with the simple form, which suggests that my being in London at the time of the killing rules me out as a suspect. It also seems that the framing effect of the progressive only occurs when there is an animate subject, but this notion will not be investigated further here. The framing effect is also evident from the following example (taken from the OMC):

29. They **were sharing** a cigarette. (imperfective)

(DL2)

De **delte** en sigarett. (perfective)

(DL2T)

In the English sentence, the reader is left with anticipation about what happened while they were sharing a cigarette. In the Norwegian translation, no such anticipation is created.

An interesting approach is also presented by Vlach (1981). He claims that the objective of the progressive is to make a process sentence become a stative sentence, and exemplifies stative sentences as follows:
30. Max was here when I arrived.

He further states that “In order for (1) (in this thesis 30) to be true, Max must have been here for some period preceding and extending up to the time of my arrival” (Vlach 1981:273). So, a sentence is stative if and only if the truth of the past situation (Max was here) requires that the situation was true for some period leading up to the time of my arrival. In other words, for the sentence “Max was here” to be stative, its truth depends on whether or not the situation was true for some period leading up to the time “when I arrived”. In the sentence “Max ran when I arrived”, Vlach claims that it is to be assumed that the running started at the point of my arrival, whereas in “Max was running when I arrived”, the situation is stative because the running started before my arrival and continued up until the point when I arrived (and possibly after). He furthermore argues quite convincingly that this is the reason why stative verbs do not occur with their regular, basic meaning in the progressive, and “when an apparent stative occurs in the progressive, as in John is being stupid, it is said to be used in a non-stative sense” (Vlach 1981:274). If progressives are stative, then there is no reason why already stative verbs should occur in the progressive.

2.1.2. Semantic verb categories in Leech

Leech categorises verbs according to their semantic content, because the progressive aspect varies its effect according to the type of meaning conveyed. The following list of semantic categories of the verb and their descriptions are based on Leech (2004:24-30) with only a few modifications. He lists the following:
• **Momentary verbs** (*hiccough, hit, jump, kick, knock* etc.), which are difficult to think of as durative. The effect of the progressive here is that of iterativity (as mentioned previously):

A) He nodded  
   Punctual, non-durative.

B) He was nodding  
   Iterative, durative.

• **Transitional event verbs** (*arrive, die, fall, land, stop* etc.), which denote a transition from one state into another. Here, the progressive indicates the “approach to a transition, rather than the transition itself” (2004:24):

C) Mother died in the hospital  
   Perfective, the situation has occurred.  
   (example is not from Leech)

D) Mother was dying in the hospital.  
   Imperfective, she may have been saved.

• **Activity verbs** (*drink, eat, play, rain, read* etc.), which often refer to a continuing, but time-limited, activity. The progressive forms of these verbs tell us something is “going on” – a currently ongoing situation.

E) They are eating their dinner.  
   Currently, this activity is going on.

• **Process verbs** (*change, develop, grow, mature* etc.). Leech states that “As a process of change ordinarily has duration, but not indefinite duration, these verbs also tend to go with the progressive aspect” (2004:24).

Now compare the following (My own examples, not from Leech):
It is evident from the examples F) through I) that the effect of the progressive on process verbs is dependent on the temporal reference. In the Simple Present, these verbs denote a process which is likely to happen regardless of external circumstances, a prediction about the future based on previous knowledge. The Present Progressive denotes a process going on at the present time, visible to the naked eye. In sentence H) (Simple Past/Preterite), the speaker states something about the past which he or she has experienced, merely giving information about how the plant matured, whereas in sentence I) (Past Progressive), the previously mentioned *framing effect* has occurred, and one expects that more information is to come (*This plant was maturing quickly, but then...*).

- **Verbs of bodily sensation** (*ache, feel, hurt, itch* etc.). These verbs, according to Leech, only occur in the progressive when referring to a temporary state. He also maintains that “there is a choice, without any noticeable change of meaning, between *I feel great* and *I’m feeling great* [...]” (Leech 2004:25), but he makes a distinction between **internal sensation** - *I feel fine* and **external sensation** - *I can feel a stone in my shoe*.

- **Verbs of active perception** (*feel, taste, smell* etc.). The verbs in this category are used only marginally with the progressive. They are used in connection with passive perception (or rather inert perception) mainly in co-occurrence with the modal *can*.
J) I (can) smell the flowers. (Inert perception, the smell is something which *happens to* me)

Notice that without modal modification (*I smell the flowers*) these verbs seem somewhat odd for this purpose, sounding like a live commentary on one’s own activities, and not denoting inert perception. This is only the case when the definite article is used to modify the object of the verb of perception; *I smell gas* does not sound odd. If these verbs are to occur in the progressive, they need to denote active perception:

K) I am smelling the flowers (right now) – active perception, I am making an effort to smell them.

L) I am tasting the soup (as we speak).

These sentences answer to the question “What are you doing?”, whereas a sentence like “I can smell the flowers” might be an answer to “Why are you sniffing like that?” or “Why are you smiling?”

Leech also lists a number of verbal meanings which do not combine with the progressive aspect (“anti-progressives”). However, these will not be discussed in further detail here, since the focus in this investigation will be on the verbs that *do* occur in the progressive.
**2.1.3. Short historical background of the English progressive**

The progressive is said to have a dual origin. One of the antecedents of today’s progressives was constructions of the type *John is on/at/a- hunting*. “Hunting” in this context is a nominal –*ing* form (a gerund), and is an example of the nominal origin of the main verb of what is now the progressive construction. The other antecedent included verb forms like *ricsienne*, which is recognisable in present-day Norwegian in forms like “løpende”, “hoppende”, “gående” etc., and verb forms like this constituted the participle origin of the progressive. In present-day English, the gerund and the participle are not distinguishable by formal criteria, but in terms of their functions in a sentence and the semantic content they may express. In the case of the progressive the distinction may be said to be neutralised: in the sentence “John is looking for you”, it is difficult to say whether “looking” originates from a nominal – *ing* or a participle.

Some remnants of the early forms with [a-] + [nominal phrase] remain in present-day English, like *asleep, awake, afoot* etc. Incidentally, the construction with [preposition] + [nominal phrase] also occurs in Norwegian, although not typically with a gerund:

31. Han er på jakt/Hun er på vei hit.

The Norwegian parallel of the adjectival construction with a participle is found in:

32. Prisene er synkende/Markedet er stigende.

Vlach claims that “The right meaning is arrived at by reading the preposition as something like *engaged in* or *in the process of***” (Vlach 1981:287), which gives a meaning that is recognisable in many of the progressive verb forms in present-day English. In present-day English as in Old English, the present participles and the gerunds are distinguishable from the
progressives by the required form of “to be” that precedes the -ing form in progressive constructions:

33. Jimmy was reading a book when I entered – present progressive.
34. Jumping up and down, Jimmy came running towards me – present participle.
35. I would avoid stepping on the grass if I were you – verbal noun/gerund.

(My own examples)

With the vast number of meanings that are assigned to the progressive aspect in the theories above, it is likely that most grammarians would agree with the notion presented by Binnick (1991:289) that “none is adequate as a basic meaning…” It seems that for every writer assigning a meaning to the progressive, there are three others dismissing the possibility of such a meaning being basic. Perhaps Comrie is closest to the mark in his argument on how a progressive situation cannot be punctual. One thing is for certain: the progressive aspect may offer a wide variety of internal views on a situation.

It should be noted that the progressive is not considered an aspect by all linguists. Vlach defines the progressive as a tense: “[…] it is intended as a contribution to the task of providing something like a Montague grammar (Montague, 1972) for a fragment of English that contains real English tenses, including the progressive” (Vlach 1981:271). Carlson defines both tense and aspect as operations (functions) of verbs or verb phrases, and claims that the progressive, since its applicability will depend on the aspect type of the whole sentence “is an operation on sentences, not on verbs and verb phrases” (Carlson 1981:44). She also defends to some extent the notion presented by Vlach that the progressive is not purely an aspect, since its application is dependent on temporal features as well. She defines tenses as operations which are defined in terms of temporal order (before, after), whereas aspects are
subperiods of time. She states that “Finally, I want to exclude from aspect proper any morphological modifications of verbs that perform no operation at all in the temporal domain” (Carlson 1981:32. This basically means that if the aspectual (morphological) marking has no effect on the temporal interpretation of the situation, then it is not to be considered an aspect. Of course, a sentence might be formally progressive, but in some cases, Carlson claims, not semantically.

Since Carlson does not develop this definition much further, it is difficult to establish whether or not she would include effects like ingressiveness, iterativity, telicity, egressiveness and the like, but from her definition it seems plausible that she would not include these effects as aspectual. If such is the case, then it would be fair to argue that the progressive is not purely an aspect, since these are very common traits of the (English) progressive. So, the definition of the progressive as a tense (or at least not purely an aspect) works within their own sets of criteria. The question is then what is to be the core of the definition of aspect. In this thesis, aspect is treated as a category of the verb, which states something about how the situation is to be interpreted in terms of the internal temporal constituency of the situation. This means that aspect is treated as a non-deictic element which describes the inside view of the situation, not relating it to the deictic zero-point. The temporal notion is still an important factor in this definition, since aspect will state something about how the situation occurs on the timeline, whereas the tense will relate the situation to the point of origin (the deictic zero-point). Regardless of whether or not the progressive is to be defined purely as an aspect, it is not compatible with the most common definitions of tense. The progressive will thus be treated as an aspect, which in turn can be combined with a certain range of tenses and other aspects.
2.1.4. The progressive aspect in Norwegian

As could be expected, there is less about the progressive aspect in the existing literature on the Norwegian language. After all, Faarlund et. al. state that “I norsk språk har vi som nevnt ikke aspekt som en egen grammatisk kategori” (Faarlund et. al. 1997: 645). They claim that there nevertheless exist some analytical, syntactical constructions that focus on and emphasise different phases of a situation. In some of these constructions, the verb that functions as an “emphasiser” has been delexicalised and given new meaning, whereas in some cases the verb has kept its semantic meaning. In this treatment of aspect, various types of aspectual meaning are described which can be expressed by means of these “emphasisers”.

“Konstruksjoner med kursivt aspekt er slike som fokuserer på en handling eller situasjon utstrakt i tid uten tanke på noen form for avgrensing” (Faarlund et. al. 1997:646).

36. Barna sitter og skriver The children are writing (?) 
37. Studentene drev og las til eksamen The students were studying for their exams (?)

This is one of the meanings that can be expressed by the English progressive, and fits well within Leech’s notion of the progressive aspect stretching the time-span of a dynamic situation. This concept of “uten tanke på noen form for avgrensing” logically only encompasses atelic situations, since a situation that is considered achieved when the goal is reached cannot at the same time be considered to be “utstrakt i tid uten tanke på noen form for avgrensing”. Some other aspects are also mentioned by Faarlund et. al. *Ingressive aspect* (“ingressivt aspekt”) focuses on the beginning of a situation (“They were getting tired of his moaning/ de begynte å bli lei av klakingen hans”), whereas *egressive aspect* (“egressivt aspekt”) focuses on the end of a situation (“He wasn’t talking so much any more/han hadde sluttet å prate så mye”). *Iterative aspect* (“iterativt aspekt”) is concerned with the repetition of
an event in a series of actions succeeding each other with little time between each repetition (“He had been knocking at the door for a long time/han hadde drevet og banket på døra i lang tid”), whereas constructions with close-to aspect (“nær ved-aspekt”) focus on a situation that is close to happening, but which normally does not occur (“The soldiers were drowning/soldatene holdt på å drukne”). These constructions are able to express separate, individual meanings of the English progressive, but are obviously more limited in their scope and cannot be said to capture the essence of the English progressive, if such an essence could be claimed to exist.

One group of Norwegian progressive markers presented by Tonne (2001) are the pseudocoordinates. Tonne points out that “pseudocoordination in Norwegian […] refers to what looks like a coordination of two (or more) verbs in the same tense (or lack of tense), where the first verb describes a state of movement and functions in the discourse as a background for the action (or state) described by the next verb” (Tonne 2001:74). In other words, pseudocoordinates consist of two (or more) verb phrases which seem to be coordinated due to the fact that they are connected by the coordinating conjunction “og” (and), but where one verb serves as a frame for the other, focusing on a particular part of the situation expressed in the “main” verb rather than presenting the situation as a whole. A problem with pseudocoordination that Tonne does not deal with is the fact that many of the pseudocoordinates have an initial verb that has kept some of its semantic value, i.e. it has not been totally delexicalised, so it adds more to the meaning of the situation than the English progressive does.

38. Der sto kjerringa på kjøkkenet og pynta bløtkaka.

There was the woman in the kitchen decorating the cake.
In this example, the Norwegian sentence states that the woman was *standing* while decorating the cake, whereas the English version does not make clear whether she was standing, sitting or lying down. It might be argued that “sto” in this sentence in fact has lost some of its semantic content and is here a mere facet of the verbal construction, but even if some of the lexicality of the verb had been lost, there can be no doubt that this construction is ineligible to express a situation wherein the woman in the kitchen was *sitting* while decorating the cake (the equivalent of this would be “satt og pynta”). This is not to say, however, that the construction does not cover some of the progressive meaning expressed in English; the difference between “Kjerringa pynta treet” og “Kjerringa stod og pynta treet” is definitely one of perfectivity/imperfectivity and of extendedness of time-span.

A recurring theme in connection with the progressive markers in Norwegian is that they only seem to combine successfully with certain types of verbs. In a sentence like “They were standing outside the house” it would be difficult to express the progressiveness by means of any of the Norwegian progressive markers mentioned in Tonne or Faarlund et. al., which also suggests that the semantic meaning of the subordinate verb is not totally lost, otherwise it would be possible to say “stod og stod”. In the case of verbs which express a process or situation that has to do with the posture of the body (*sitting, standing, lying*), the Norwegian progressive markers do not seem to manage to keep up with the English progressive. This is also the case with verbs which have a semantic meaning that conflates with other aspectual meanings, like ingressive meaning:

39. Other effects of the debt crisis are harder to establish statistically but are beginning to make themselves felt.

*(LTL1)*

Andre følger av gjeldskrisen lar seg vanskelig måle statistisk, men de *begynner* å gjøre seg
As can be seen from this example, since "beginning" is already expressing ingressive meaning, a synonymous verb cannot be used in Norwegian to capture the meaning of the progressive form in this sentence. The typical progressive equivalent in this case would be “er i ferd med” + Infinitive, but this results in a double statement of the meaning (*er i ferd med å begynne å) and is both unnatural and unacceptable. This is only the case when the ingressive meaning stems from the semantics of the verb, not when it is rooted in the progressive verb form:

40. But the main consumers of minerals are becoming extremely reliant on imports.

Men hovedforbrukerne av mineraler begynner å bli meget sterkt avhengige av import.

In this example, the adding of the verb “begynner” adds the same ingressive dimension in Norwegian as the progressive aspect does in English.
2.2. Systemic Functional Grammar

Thompson (2004) launches an interesting approach to language analysis in his book *Introducing Functional Grammar*. The approach is “based on a view of how language functions as a system of human communication” (2004:1). In other words, the system is concerned with the interaction between participants in written or spoken dialogue, and how the lexical choices we make within certain linguistic parameters influence how hearers or readers interpret what we mean by what we say. The focus here is on what people want to achieve with language, what the communicative goal or purpose is, and what lexical choices we make in order to achieve our goals. The system introduced here will serve as a large part of the foundation for the pragmatic part of the analysis.

Thompson writes within the tradition of Halliday and Matthiessen, taking a pragmatic approach to language, whereby language is viewed as a tool with which things can be achieved. However, although their views on language can be found in large part in Thompson’s theories, the system presented by Thompson is easier to understand and employ, since there is less sub-categorisation in areas like speech roles and communicative goals. The focal point within this system is not the individual grammatical structures, but how these combine to convey a certain message within their context. Systemic Functional Grammar (hereafter referred to as *SFG*) has a three-pronged hierarchy of analytical tools for language in use (language in context). The three meta-functions of SFG are the *experiential*, the *textual* and the *interpersonal function*. The textual function focuses on how a text is structured to convey a certain message, whereas the experiential function is concerned with *processes* and *participants*, i.e. “who does what to whom”. These functions will not be given more attention here since they will not be a part of the analysis in this investigation.
The **interpersonal function** deals with the “lexico-grammatical systems which we rely on to express our messages in such a way that our hearers have a good chance of understanding why we are saying something to them” (Thompson 2004:45), and describes the intricacies of how we use words to achieve our goal in the material world.

*Speech roles* are an important part of the interpersonal function, and Thompson breaks this portion of language into an extremely crude but fairly functional two-pronged hierarchy of meaning exchange wherein the communicative purpose of a statement is either giving or demanding goods and services, or giving or demanding information (2004:47):

**Table I: Basic Speech Roles According to Thompson:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity exchanged</th>
<th>(a) goods and services</th>
<th>(b) information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role in exchange</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) giving</td>
<td>offer</td>
<td>statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’ll show you the way</td>
<td>We’re nearly there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) demanding</td>
<td>command</td>
<td>question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Give me your hand</td>
<td>Is this the place?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Thompson, everything we say (or do) can somehow be jammed into one of these four categories. The basis of human communication is to achieve a certain goal, to influence our listener into taking a certain action that we think might be beneficial to ourselves or otherwise in accordance with our goal.
There are, of course, further subcategories of speech roles, and an attempt will be made to show that the opposition progressive/non-progressive may have an influence on the basic function of a sentence; that the progressive may change the speech role.
3. The corpus investigation

3.1. The corpus

The corpus used in this investigation is called the Oslo Multilingual Corpus (the OMC), which is an extension of the English-Norwegian Parallel Corpus (the ENPC). The corpus description states that the corpus consists of text excerpts of approximately 10,000 to 15,000 words from fictional and non-fictional Norwegian and English original texts and their translations, amounting to a total of 200 texts, or 2.6 million words. The corpus is tagged (at least the English part of the corpus is tagged at the present moment – Spring 2006), which means that one is able to specify word classes in the search, and the texts are SGML-encoded and aligned at sentence level, making it very suitable for cross-linguistic comparisons.

Currently (October 2001), the English-German-Norwegian part of the corpus consists of 32 English, 31 German, and 22 Norwegian original texts with translations into the other two languages. The different sub-corpora of the OMC can be divided into two main types of multilingual corpora: parallel corpora and translation corpora. By parallel corpus is here understood a collection of texts containing both original texts and translations from two or more languages. As far as possible, the same number of original texts is found in the two (or three) languages. By translation corpus is understood a collection of texts containing original texts from one language with translations into one or more languages, i.e. only one language is represented with original texts.

(Based on the description on the corpus web-site http://www.hf.uio.no/german/sprik/english/corpus.shtml with only a few modifications and additions).
In the investigation conducted for this study, The English-Norwegian Parallel Corpus (the ENPC) has been used. It is the mother corpus of the OMC and is composed of one fictional part and one non-fictional part. The corpus contains 50 original texts from each language and their translations (English-Norwegian and Norwegian-English), 30 of which are fiction and 20 of which are non-fiction. Each text is an extract of 10,000-15,000 words, amounting to some 2.6 million words in all.

The first part of the corpus investigation was conducted to see how English progressive verb forms were translated into Norwegian, searching in both English original and English translated texts and looking for “progressive markers” in the Norwegian translations. A comparison was also made between English originals and translations to see which text collection yielded the most progressives, and the nature of these. All text categories were searched, but for the most part the distinction between fiction and non-fiction was the only parameter that was made a part of the discussion of discrepancies or obvious tendencies in the examples. The difference between spoken and written language and between British and American English were among those that were deemed “avoidable”. These parameters may be of relevance in some contexts, but the aim was to describe the English progressive as a whole, as used in any variety or genre, and compare it to the Norwegian progressive markers.

Given the nature of the ENPC, the source material used for this investigation might be criticized for not containing any examples of spoken language. The progressive in English can generally be expected to be more common in spoken than in written language, and spoken examples often produce linguistic material from less formal registers, which may influence what types of progressives will come out of the investigation. However, the corpus does not contain any spoken language, and the distinction between British and American English,
though not irrelevant, was not a part of what the investigation sought to explain. On the other hand, since the number of occurrences of progressive forms may decrease on account of the lack of informal registers, this discrepancy must be borne in mind. Furthermore, the corpus has an overweighing amount of fictional texts, which is evident in the number of occurrences in the two different sub-corpora.

The second part of the investigation was conducted to compare the results from the first part, and consisted of searches for progressive verb forms in the English translations of Norwegian texts. Some of the most common Norwegian progressive markers were singled out in a smaller investigation in Norwegian originals to see whether these were all translated into progressive verb forms in English, or if in fact some of them were not considered progressive markers by the translators. The comparison between the total number of occurrences of progressive verb forms in English originals and English translations were also investigated in some detail.
3.2. The English-Norwegian investigation

In the investigation of the English-Norwegian corpus data, searches were made for examples of English progressives, not discriminating any verb forms (or any tense of the verb, if one prefers), since the focus was not on the time reference of the verbal structures, that is, the tense was not the primary concern, rather the internal temporal constituency of the situation, and the semantic notions encompassed therein. To limit the number of occurrences, only verbal structures where the –ing form immediately followed the form of “to be” were included. This might exclude some progressive forms where an adverbial occurs between the form of “to be” and the –ing form, but it is doubtful whether this would affect the results in other aspects than the total number of occurrences. One category of progressives which actually will be left out because of this is that including examples like “She was always reading”. To encapsulate such examples, since they are likely to yield some interesting results, a search was also made that incorporated the possible inclusion of an adverbial between the form of “be” and the lexical verb. Both contracted and non-contracted forms were included in all searches in order to get a broader variety of genre in the search results. It should be noted that remarks on cross-linguistic discrepancies made about examples in this chapter refer to the translation from English to Norwegian unless otherwise noted.
The search for progressive verb forms in the English original texts yielded about 2,500 (2,533) results. A number of results had to be removed from the data, since the corpus does not single out progressive verb forms from those constructions which are formally identical (see examples below). A small portion of examples also had to be removed from the data because they were listed more than once. These, however, are not included in the numbers above.

It is evident from the data extracted from the corpus that in the vast majority of the Norwegian translations, no linguistic markers for progressiveness have been used (see Table 2). For the most part, it is both unnecessary and unnatural to use a progressive marker in Norwegian, even though the English text has a progressive verb form.
Table 2: Number of occurrences in English originals sorted by type of progressive marker in Norwegian translation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of progressive marker</th>
<th>Fiction</th>
<th>% of total</th>
<th>Non-fiction</th>
<th>% of total</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sitte og</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0,70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0,55</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la det</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holde på å</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0,65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra temporal adverbial</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0,45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,18</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra non-temporal adverbial</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0,55</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,36</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drive og</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0,35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>begynne å</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0,60</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0,90</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participle -ende</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0,55</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0,55</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fly rundt og</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gå (rundt) og</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0,25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semantics of the verb</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1,26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3,10</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stå og</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0,55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,18</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ligge og</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0,15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>være opptatt med å</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>være i ferd med å</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0,65</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3,60</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>være under + -ing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0,20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>komme til å</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change of aspect</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0,25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arbeide med å</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se å</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleie å</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,00</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total occ. of progr. markers in Norwegian</strong></td>
<td><strong>135</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,8</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,8</strong></td>
<td><strong>189</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unmarked</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>93,2</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>90,2</td>
<td>2344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tot. occ. of Engl. progressives</strong></td>
<td><strong>1984</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>549</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>2533</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.1. Discarded examples

Quite a few of the examples (251 to be exact) had to be removed manually. Even though the English part of the corpus is tagged, there were a few constructions that managed to seep through the filters. The most frequent ones were those including a form of *to be* preceding one of the adverbs ending in –*thing* (*anything, something, nothing, and everything*):

41. And you must admit there's **something** fascinating in the scheme: in one — the light breaking through, illumination, awareness; two — the idea of the echo, reflections, duality, man-and-woman, good-and-evil, life-and-death, whatever; three-

   *(ABR1)*

42. "That’s **nothing** to do with it," said Natalie.

   *(FW1)*

Another large group of discarded examples consisted of a form of *to be* preceding an adjective or a noun ending in -*ing*. This group demanded more energy to sort out from the progressive forms than the preceding group, since it consisted by and large of constructions which were formally very alike the progressives:

43. It’s **interesting**, isn't it, to observe the parents.

   *(RDA1)*

44. "It could be **embarrassing**."

   *(RDA1)*

45. It was the period he thought of as the long haul — the gulf between supper and breakfast when they were suspended over the ocean, waiting for that lightening of the sky that was supposed
to be morning although, of course, it was nowhere near morning back home.

(AT1)

Within this group of discarded examples there is, interestingly, a cline from the totally non-progressive constructions like example 43 to a group of –ing forms which actually shares some common traits with the progressives:

46. "It's cheating."

(RD1)
— Det er juks, pappa.

(RD1T)

In example 46, it could be argued that what the subject is really saying is “You are cheating” – “Det er å jukse, pappa/du jukser, pappa.” or “You would be cheating” – “Det ville være å jukse, pappa”. The context would be important in the translation here, and since both the original translation and the suggested ones are semantically possible in their respective contexts, one must of course assume that the translator has made the right choice.

The “going to” construction (named so by H.C. Wekker, 1976) also caused some extra “manual” labour. Quite a few examples with this construction had to be removed “after filters”:

47. (...) while Yvette, appalled, had listened to the clattering typewriters and wondered if she could ever pass the test that they were going to inflict on her.

(AB1)
48. No giant is going to come along and suck out all the water for you: that magic stuff is not going to help.

(ROB1)

49. "If that's the tone you’re going to take, we’ll just sit any damn place we happen to end up."

(AT1)

Interestingly, this particular construction was found almost exclusively in the fictional part of the corpus. A short glance at Wekker (1976) and his classification of the verbal constructions referring to future time in English could offer a plausible explanation as to why. The “going to” construction, he argues, has two main functions, one of which is a relatively neutral way of referring to the future (I am going to visit her tomorrow) the other one expressing future time by predicting that some situation will take place on the basis of some signal or sign located in the present. In other words, “I think there is reason to believe that situation B is going to happen because of situation A.” A sentence like “It is going to rain” could express something along the lines of “I think it is going to rain because I can see the clouds gathering”. Nevertheless, in spite of signs in the present, the “going to” construction expresses less certainty about the future event than for instance the “will/shall + Infinitive” construction, and in formal documents like the ones constituting the non-fictional part of the ENPC, it is quite possible that this lack of certainty is a part of the explanation why the “going to” construction is not the most common choice within this genre. But, however interesting this discussion might be, it is not one that can be elaborated here. What needs to be kept in mind is the fact that the “going to” construction might have influenced the results of the investigation of the fictional part of the OMC if the tagging had been trusted blindly, whereas it would probably not have been a factor in the investigation of the non-fictional part.
A more marginal group of discarded examples consisted of constructions with the genitive –s preceding an –ing form:

50. Oedipus' conversations with Jocasta never did much good, nor did Hamlet’s shouting.

(ROB1)

In both the fictional and the non-fictional part of the corpus, “is” was the verb that yielded the most discarded examples. In the fictional part, “was” contributed as many as 895 of the total occurrences in the OMC, but only 74 discards, whereas “is” contributed 211 of the total occurrences and as many as 86 discards.

A possible explanation why “is” yields more discards than the other forms of “to be” might be that the 3rd person singular verbal has a broader variety of possible subjects than the other ones – he, she, it, that, this etc. The third person singular subject is generally more common than the other forms, compared individually. Also, the contracted form - ’s is normally counted as present tense, and the – ’s form constituted a large part of the discarded examples.
3.2.2. Different types of progressive markers in Norwegian

As it has been maintained in several treatments of the English progressive aspect, progressive verb forms are generally more common in fictional texts than in non-fictional. One reason often mentioned is that the progressive in some usages lowers the level of formality of an utterance, and authors of non-fictional texts often regard a high level of formality as a necessity. The corpus material in this investigation confirms the tendency for progressive verb forms to be less common in non-fictional texts, and the results must of course be regarded in the light of this. When, as it is in most cases, the number of occurrences of a particular progressive marker is higher in the fictional part of the ENPC than in the non-fictional part, this might well be due to the fact that there are more progressives in the fictional part as a general rule. Especially informal and typically “oral” markers like “sitte og”, “holde på å”, “fly rundt og”, “gå rundt og” and “stå og” rarely occur in the non-fictional part of the corpus. In addition to being somewhat informal, these markers also add more semantic meaning to the process than merely being progressive (except for perhaps “holde på å”), since they indicate the posture of the subject of the action – “sitting/standing/walking/flying around while...”

It should be noted that the categories for progressive marking in Norwegian listed in the following section is not to be considered a survey or list of the various kinds of progressive markers which exist in the Norwegian language. If such were the case, the survey would be highly deficient. The categories provided are the ones that occurred in the investigation of the corpus material, and although there are many other constructions which could be said to express progressive meaning in Norwegian, these will not be elaborated on here. For further categories and examples, see Faarlund et. al. (1997), Myskja (1987), Tonne (2001) and Nordset (1996).
The categories in Table 2: *Number of occurrences sorted by type of progressive marker in Norwegian translation* are based on what linguistic resources have been used by the translator in order to capture the meaning of the progressive verb form, and these categories serve as a starting point of the discussion of the examples.

### 3.2.1.1. Extra temporal adverbial

One of the categories which showed some interesting translations was that of “Extra temporal adverbial”. It might be hypothesised that this category of progressive markers would be equally frequent in both fiction and non-fiction, but the corpus material suggests otherwise. The following examples are all from the fictional part of the corpus:

51. I said, "Could you ask him to leave me a prescription somewhere, because I’ve fallen on my ankle and twisted it, and I'm running out of Distalgesic."

   *(DF1)*

   "Kunne De be ham legge igjen en resept til meg et sted," sa jeg, "for jeg har falt på den skadd ankelen og vrikket den, og nå slipper jeg snart opp for smertestillende."

   *(DF1T)*

52. *I'm nosing around* on my own," I said.

   *(SG1)*

   I mellomtiden snuser jeg litt for meg selv," sa jeg.

   *(SG1T)*

53. "As I’ve been saying."

   *(DL2)*

   "Det har jeg sagt hele tid."

   *(DL2T)*
The English progressive in 51 suggests an interpretation along the lines of “I’m about to run out of...”, and the Norwegian adverbial “snart” invites a similar interpretation. In examples 52 and 53 the progressive forms in English suggest a stretched time-span (of the type noted by Leech 2004). In these examples a simple form would result in a punctual situation where the action happened once in example 53 – “As I’ve said...” (At least to the degree that saying something can be punctual), whereas the progressive suggests an element of repetition at several instances during the period in question - iterativity. The adverbial “hele tida” in the Norwegian translation suggests the same interpretation. In example 52 it would be even harder to claim punctuality as a part of the meaning than in 53, since “nosing around” would have to include some element of duration, but the progressive nevertheless stretches the time-span in comparison to the simple form. A simple form in this example might also suggest another meaning: “I nose around on my own” could mean that the subject does not want any interference from the person he or she is talking to (or anyone else for that matter), expressing habituality rather than focusing on the current situation. The progressive form rules out such an interpretation, and so does the inclusion of the adverbial “i mellomtiden” in the Norwegian translation. Interestingly, the inclusion of the adverbial “litt” also makes a habitual interpretation of the Norwegian sentence impossible. The sentence “Jeg snuser litt for meg selv” effectively excludes habituality, whereas “Jeg snuser for meg selv” might include habitual meaning in certain contexts and given the right intonation. However, since we are not provided with much context, and seeing as how the intonation is not given in orthographic text, this discussion cannot be further pursued here.
3.2.1.2. “Være i ferd med å”

“Være i ferd med å” seems to be the most popular choice in the English-Norwegian non-fictional part of the ENPC. This was the only category of progressive markers that was larger in the non-fictional than in the fictional part. One aspect that examples 54 through 58 below have in common is that the progressive forms almost without exception can be seen as expressing a situation that is “in the process of happening”, which makes the translation into the Norwegian “være i ferd med å” defendable. In many cases it is difficult to assess whether the situation is ingressive or egressive, and in some cases both aspects might be argued convincingly. The focus is mainly on the particular stretch of time on the hypothetical time-line that the situation at hand occupies, and not on any particular part of the stretch. These are some of the examples found in the fictional part of the corpus:

54. My brother goes outside; I know he’s climbing up the mountain of dirt next door, or assessing the possibilities of the large hole in the ground, but I don’t have the heart to join him.

(MA1)

Min bror går ut; jeg vet han er i ferd med å bestige jordhaugen ved siden av eller vurdere anvendelsesmulighetene til det store hullet i bakken, men jeg orker ikke slå følge.

(MA1T).

55. Vanity is becoming a nuisance; I can see why women give it up, eventually.

(MA1)

Forfengeligheten er i ferd med å bli en plage; jeg kan forstå hvorfor noen kvinner til slutt gir opp.

(MA1T).
56. "Then she is dying?"

(HI1)
"Hun er altså i ferd med å do?"

(HIT).

57. He knew quite well what was happening, and hoped he would be equal to the task.

(BI1)
Han forsto utmerket godt hva som var i ferd med å skje og håpet bare at han ville være situasjonen voksen.

(BIT).

58. The Queen Mother gave Jack her famous smile, but her hands were twisting the full skirt of her periwinkle dress into a knot.

(STI)
Dronningmoren bød Jack sitt berømte smil, men hendene hennes var i ferd med å krølle hele vidden i det lange, blomstrete skjørtet sammen til en eneste stor tull.

(STIT)

In examples 55 and 57 it might be argued more strongly that an ingressive interpretation seems probable in the English originals: “Vanity is becoming a nuisance”, meaning “Vanity is beginning to be a nuisance”, and “what was happening” meaning “what was about to happen” or “what was starting to happen”. No such claims can be made about the other English examples. Of course, one has to consider the fact that at least a part of the ingressive meaning in 55 stems from the lexical verb itself (become). The Queen Mother’s hands were in the process of twisting in 58, but it is hard to say whether she was just beginning at the moment of utterance or if she was about to finish the job. The likelier interpretation is that she started twisting her hands sometime before the utterance was made and will continue until sometime
after. In other words the progressive verb form acts as a temporal frame to some other situation (the Queen Mother smiling). In 56, “she” is in the process of dying, but we cannot tell whether she has just started to get ill or if she is on the verge of death. According to the terminology of Leech, the progressives in 58 and 54 are activity verbs, whereas “is dying” in 56 is a transitional event verb, and “is becoming” in 55 is a process verb.

This difference in semantic classification is fairly clear in the English originals, but the Norwegian translations with “være i ferd med å” less clearly shows a distinction here. “Hun er i ferd med å dø” does not express to the same degree the “approach to a transition” (Leech 2004:24) as “She is dying”. Since very little context is provided, it should be noted that the translator might have lexical reasons in the surrounding text for the choices he or she has made. However, context disregarded, a sentence like “Then she is dying?” might produce a Norwegian sentence like “Så hun er altså døende?” with the Norwegian present participle. Although the present participle is not a direct equivalent of the English progressive, it would in this case express the approach to a transition, and in this case would be a “natural correspondence” to the English progressive. Tonne (2001:86) claims that “Være i ferd med å” combines almost exclusively with telic situations, which is not surprising, since the semantic of the phrase suggests a resultative interpretation. If resultativeness is considered a part of the meaning in “være i ferd med å”, then the choice between the participle and this marker would depend on whether or not resultativeness is considered a part of the meaning in the English sentence.

Whereas the examples from the fictional texts in this category were relatively homogeneous, the examples from the non-fictional part of ENPC showed somewhat more variation. One reason for this might be that the fictional texts showed more variation when it came to
different types of progressive markers in Norwegian. The examples from the material show that in the cases where “være i ferd med å” had been used in Norwegian, the corresponding English progressives to a large degree expressed the same semantic meaning in the fictional and the non-fictional part of ENPC, so the main difference lies within the choices made by the translator or within the boundaries of formality in Norwegian. A part of the explanation might be that since there was less variation in the type of Norwegian progressive marker in the non-fictional part, the “være i ferd med å” marker receives a broader scope of meaning in this part of the corpus. The following examples are gathered from the non-fictional material:

59. If serious economic, societal or environmental difficulties of a sectorial or regional nature liable to persist are arising, a Contracting Party may unilaterally take appropriate measures under the conditions and procedures laid down in Article 113.

(AEEA1)

Dersom alvorlige økonomiske, samfunnsmessige eller miljømessige vanskeligheter som kan vedvare, er i ferd med å oppstå i en sektor eller innen et distrikt, kan en avtalepart ensidig treffe egnede tiltak på de vilkår og etter den fremgangsmåte som er fastsatt i artikkel 113.

(AEEA1T).

60. Children are beginning to muscle their way into the centre of the debate on how to manage the environment.

(LTLT1)

Barna er i ferd med å trengse seg inn i sentrum for debatten om hvordan vi skal hanskes med miljøet.

(LTLT1T).
61. So we are told that we are destroying the world as we and our forebears have known it, a world for which our activities seemed so well designed, and creating a perilous and unpredictable world in which

(LTLT1)

Slik får vi høre at vi er i ferd med å ødelegge vår jord slik vi og våre forgjengere kjente den.

Det var en jord som syntes så veltillatet til vår virksomhet

(LTLT1T)

62. But, four months after his speech, the prospect of a balanced budget by 1984 was fading and proposals for heavy cuts in military spending were being debated.

(CS1)

Men fire måneder etter denne talen var utsiktene til et balansert budsjett i 1984 i ferd med å svinne hen og det ble diskutert forslag om sterke nedskjæringer i det militære forbruk.

(CS1T)

63. Shannon, at the Bell Telephone Laboratories, was developing information theory.

(JL1)

Shannon var i ferd med å utvikle informasjonsteorien ved Bell Telephone Laboratories.

(JL1T)

64. I hesitated, fearing that I was going too far, that I might be stripping a man down to some hidden, unacknowledgeable, unbearable despair.

(OS1)

Jeg nølte, var redd for at jeg var i ferd med å gå for langt, at jeg kunne være i ferd med å kle av et menneske, ned til en skjult, uerkjennbar, uutholdelig fortvilelse.

(OS1T)
In the fictional material it was hard to find examples that clearly supported an ingressive interpretation, but examples 59 and 60 from the non-fictional part would probably be conceived as expressing ingressive meaning (“are arising” and “are beginning to muscle”). Once again the Norwegian marker is less apt to capture the same notion. “Barna er i ferd med å trenge seg inn i sentrum for debatten” certainly might be an ingressive situation, but the Norwegian progressive marker does not immediately encourage such an interpretation. Rather, as was seen with the examples from the fictional part, the Norwegian sentence supports an interpretation along the lines of “being in the process of”, and a back-translation might not even result in a progressive at all.

In example 62, both ingressive and egressive aspect might be argued in the English sentence: The process of having a balanced budget was *coming to an end*, or the prospect was *beginning to fade*, but it is uncertain whether or not an ingressive aspect is a possible part of the interpretation of the Norwegian equivalent. Once more it must be borne in mind that the egressive interpretation may stem from the semantics of the lexical verb “fade”, and not necessarily from the progressive form alone. “Fade” is not aspect-neutral. In any case, “være i ferd med å” seems to be less apt to express ingressive meaning, and if ingressive aspect was intended in the Norwegian translation, the progressive marker “begynte å” (started to) seems the likelier choice. However, since the English sentence might be conceived as expressing both ingressive and egressive meaning (either one or the other), “være i ferd med å” actually is the safest road, since it does not make any binding commitment to either of the two aspects. This distance to the level of commitment might be a part of the overall explanation as to why “være i ferd med å” is so popular in the non-fictional part of the corpus. In fiction, it is not as essential that the target text is 100% true to the original, but in non-fiction, the target text must be close to identical to the source text. There can be no loop-holes in the target text that
are not present in the source text, and the possible ambiguities of the source text should also be kept in the target text. Thus, as a translator, it is easier and safer in ambiguous examples to choose an alternative which leaves both interpretations open, and not one that favours one or the other.

It is also possible that “være i ferd med å” has been chosen in more cases because it is regarded as being more formal than many of the other Norwegian progressive markers. “Vi begynner å nærme oss slutten på forhandlingene” certainly sounds less formal than “Vi er i ferd med å sluttføre forhandlingene”. It is at least conceivable that the fictional part of the corpus has a broader variety of progressive markers because it contains material that has a more widespread level of formality than the non-fictional part, and that level of formality is a part of the reason why “være i ferd med å” is so popular in the non-fictional corpus.

### 3.2.1.3. Extra non-temporal adverbial

In the analysis of the corpus material it became evident that the number of ways in which progressive meaning, or at least a part of the progressive meaning, can be expressed is very large. A rather special category which was not found in the existing literature was that of extra non-temporal adverbial:

65. Cordelia must **be living** somewhere.

   (MA1)

   Cordelia **må bo** et sted.

   (MA1T)

66. You’ve **been living** there over a month."

   (AT1)
"Hvordan det, du har jo bodt der i over en måned.

(AT1T)

67. She said, "So you will be scratching around looking for a new figurehead, a president of some kind, will you?"

(ST1)

"Og nu vil dere altså lete med lys og lykte etter en ny gallionsfigur," sa hun.

"En slags president, kan jeg tenke meg?"

(ST1T)

68. "Yes, very clever, darling, but I rather think I may be bleeding to death.

(ST1)

"Helt riktig, så flink du er," sa dronningen.

"Men jeg tror kanske jeg er i ferd med å forblø i forlø i forblø i forlø i forlø her jeg står.

(ST1T)

69. Within moments they’d be arguing about Mama.

(TH1)

Så varte det ikke lenge før de kranglet i vei om mamma.

(TH1T)

Examples 65 and 66 could lead to the false assumption that this category was irrelevant, but constructions with Norwegian “jo” constitute a minority of the examples. The word “jo” in the Norwegian translation of these sentences is there to create a pragmatic effect, but it is not a product of the progressive verb form. It seems plausible that these adverbials have been added because of other linguistic material in the context of the source text. However, in examples 67, 68 and 69, an extra adverbial is present in the Norwegian translation, the effect
of which is similar to that of the progressive in the English version. In example 67, the progressive has been translated with “lete med lys og lykte” (*searching with light and flashlights*). In reference to Leech, the progressive is said to stretch the time-span of a dynamic situation, and the adverbial “med lys og lykte” could also suggest a stretched time-span in comparison to the simple form. If someone is searching “med lys og lykte”, it is safe to assume that some effort and time will have to be put into it. In example 68 it might be argued that the progressive meaning in the Norwegian text stems from the progressive marker “er i ferd med å”. However, the adverbial “her jeg står” (*where I stand*) could also be argued to be a part of the progressive meaning. The adverbial would in this case underline the progressive meaning expressed by the other progressive marker, which by no means would be unprecedented in the English language. Another interesting feature of this construction is that it strongly resembles another Norwegian progressive marker: “stod og -”. The sentence could be translated with “Jeg tror sannelig jeg står her og forblør”.

In example 69 the translator has changed the structure of the verb phrase. The modal dimension is not present in the Norwegian translation, the effect of which is to predict something in the past: at that moment in time, someone predicted that it would not be long before they would be arguing about “Mama”. The Norwegian preterite has a different deixis, merely pointing to a situation located in the past, not pointing forwards at all. The difference between “Within moments they’d be arguing about Mama” and “Within moments they’d argue about Mama” might be considered to be twofold. Firstly, the progressive aspect will stretch the time-span of the situation. This, however, is not a defining feature in this sentence, since the verb “argue” inherently has to have some duration, and cannot be punctual, although according to Leech (2004:19), since the situation is dynamic (expressed by what he calls an
“event verb”), it is safe to assume that the progressive verb form would refer to a situation which had longer duration than the one referred to by the simple form.

Secondly, the simple form would give a perfective view of the situation, presenting it as an unanalysed whole with beginning, middle and end all baked into one. The effect of the progressive is to make the situation imperfective, focusing on a specific period of the timeline. The meaning expressed by the progressive in this situation would be something along the lines of “being in the process of” or “engaged in”, and it stretches the time-span in comparison with the simple form. Ingressive meaning could also be argued convincingly. In the Norwegian translation, the adverbial “i vei” rules out the possibility of a punctual interpretation, and as in several of the preceding examples, it stretches the time-span of the situation. However, as it has already been argued, the verb *argue* (“krangle”) will inherently be semantically incompatible with punctual meaning, so the adverbial cannot be said to encapsulate the same semantic notions as the English progressive correspondence in this case. It is difficult to say and there is little reason to speculate why the translator has chosen to leave out the modal auxiliary and the more defined future deixis in the Norwegian translation, but a translation along the lines of “Så ville det ikke vare lenge før de ville begynne å krangle om mamma” seems to capture the notions of the English original more closely. Still, it might be argued that this Norwegian translation puts too much focus on the ingressive element, and that the progressive English sentence expresses a situation already in progress. In any case, the corpus translator might have reasons in the context for his or her selected translation.
3.2.1.4. Semantics of the verb

Another category of “progressive marking” that yielded some interesting results was that of “semantics of the verb”. Instead of using the more direct equivalent in the target language (in this case Norwegian), the translators in some cases chose to use a verb of similar connotation, but which also added an extra layer of meaning.

70. I'm leaning against the doorframe of the motel cabin.

(MA1)
Jeg står lent mot dørkarmen i motellhytta.

(MA1T)

71. Does your mother know that you're out, what you're doing?

(PDJ3)
Vet din mor at du er ute og hva du driver med?

(PDJ3T)

72. Alex had a friend who worked for IPC who had a friend who might be looking for a secretary.

(MD1)
Alex hadde en venn som arbeidet i forlagsbransjen, som igjen hadde en venn som kanskje trengte en sekretær.

(MD1T)

73. They did so because it seemed good business; the prices of commodities were enjoying an uncharacteristic, short-lived boom, higher than ever before in real terms.

(LTLT1)
De gjorde dette fordi det virket som god business, prisene på råvarer sto midt oppe i en uvanlig og kortvarig kursoppgang, kursen var høyere enn noen gang, beregnet etter faste
verdier.

(LTLT1T)

74. The Queen's residence; she is at home when the Royal Standard is flying.

(SUG1)

Dronningens residens; hun er hjemme når den kongelige standard vaier i vinden.

(SUG1T)

As can be expected, there is some variation within this category. The Norwegian verbs carry different semantic components, all depending on what the English progressive verb forms mean. In example 70, it can perhaps be discussed whether or not the verb is a different one in Norwegian. “Står lent” strongly resembles the construction “står og lener”. The reason why this example has been analysed separately in this regard is that it does contribute some meaning which “står og lener” does not. Comrie (1976:51) claims that “process refers to the internal structure of a dynamic situation (there are thus no punctual processes)”. He furthermore states that “With a state, unless something happens to change that state, then the state will continue […]. With a dynamic situation, on the other hand, the situation will only continue if it is continually subject to a new input of energy” (1976:49). The difference between “Jeg står lent mot døra” and “Jeg står og lener meg mot døra” is that the latter is a process and the first is closer to a state. “Står og lener” is a situation which requires input; it demands an active effort from the subject of the verb. This construction requires an animate subject, someone to make the effort. “Står lent”, on the other hand, does not require an animate subject, and thus does not demand an active participation from the subject: “Planken står lent mot døra” (the board is leaned against the door). Notice that this sentence may not be translated with a progressive verb form in English. This might be a part of the explanation why the progressive only marginally combines with inanimate subjects. In examples 15, 17
and 18 above ("The earth is rotating around the sun at a rate of 365 days per revolution.",
"These machines are always running" and "The universe is forever expanding."), the
progressive combines with inanimate subjects, but the situations still require input of energy;
the earth needs energy to rotate, the machines to run, and the universe to expand. The effects
of the progressive in these three examples are quite different. In the first example, “The earth”
can be seen as an active agent rotating around the sun, or the sentence can be said to describe
the situation as it is at the moment of the utterance (an ongoing situation). In the second
element, it expresses habituality, and in the last one it expresses a process. Without trying to
damage Ljung’s discussion about progressiveness and limited duration (previously treated in
section 2.1.1.), these progressives cannot be said to express the same as their simple form
equivalents.

Example 71 also contains a Norwegian verb form which resembles another Norwegian
progressive marker: “driver og –”. The closest correspondence to “are doing” would be
“gjør”, but “driver med” has the same connotations as “gjør”, and in addition suggests a
stretched time-span. Example 72 is somewhat different. The Norwegian verb “trengte” does
not suggest a stretched time-span, and is not closer to a progressive meaning. A translation
like “som er på utkikk etter” would seem more likely judging by the context provided, but it is
likely that the translator has made a conscious choice. By choosing a verb with fairly different
connotations than the one in the source text, the translator shows that he or she will not
commit himself/herself as strongly to the source text, or to the progressive verb form. By
distancing him- or herself from the source text, the translator can choose whichever aspect he
or she prefers.
In example 73, “were enjoying” has been translated with “sto midt oppe i” (were standing in the middle of / were in the middle of). The closest Norwegian equivalents would be “nøt”, but this would be difficult to combine with a progressive marker expressing the same meaning as the English progressive. “Were enjoying” in example 73 expresses a situation “occurring during some time in the past”. The progressive adds an inside view of the situation: the prices “were enjoying” a boom at the given point in time, they had already been enjoying it for some time, and would in all likelihood continue enjoying it for some time into the future. The focus is on the existence of the same process (of enjoying) before and after the deictic zero-point, and that is why “sto midt oppe i” is a good alternative in Norwegian. This verb phrase suggests the same as the English progressive: that the situation is to be interpreted as a bubble on the time line, within which the situation occurred, and in the middle of which the centre of attention is located.

In example 74, the effect of the progressive is to underline the durative element of the situation. A simple form “The Queen is at home when the Royal Standard flies” could possibly suggest that at the moment of the Queen’s arrival, the Royal Standard is released, and flies into the air. This is not a possible interpretation of the progressive. The effect of the Norwegian “vaier i vinden” is the same; the semantics of the verb does not permit a punctual interpretation, and the added adverbial stretches the time-span even further.
Example 75 below fell outside the regular categories, but it was interesting enough to be included as a separate candidate:

75. "Sorry," he said, "I'm taking Bev out for a drink.

(ST1)

"Beklager," sa han, "jeg har bedt Bev ut på en drink.

(ST1T)

The English progressive here is what Wekker (1976) refers to as “the progressive future present”. According to Wekker, such an activity is prearranged or intended, but the actual happening is still to come. Wekker states that, as a rule of thumb, the progressive future does not express duration, but this example must be said to express duration. The Norwegian translation, on the other hand, does not express duration. The translator has changed the lexical verb, the tense and the aspect. Although both sentences suggest that “Beth and I have made plans to have a drink together” they offer two different views on the situation. The English version puts focus on what is to come: that “he is taking Bev out”. Although this can also be inferred from the Norwegian translation, the focus here is on what has happened: that he has asked her out. There is also a difference in the level of certainty about the future event. In the English sentence, it seems fairly safe to assume that the two of them are in fact going out to have a drink, whereas in the Norwegian translation it cannot be said with much certainty that Bev has even accepted the invitation. However, what the Norwegian translation does capture is the notion expressed by the progressive future present: that this event has already been planned at the time of the utterance.

This example brings another factor into play. At this point it is appropriate to introduce another part of the theoretical backdrop of the investigation. Thomas (1995) introduces an
approach to pragmatics which focuses on meaning in interaction, which is also the title of her book. Her theories are derived from earlier works on pragmatics which focus on meaning in context or meaning in use, but she argues for broader contextualisation than many of her predecessors, and claims that the meaning of an utterance is negotiated through linguistic interaction between two or more parties, that the sense of a word or the meaning of the utterance is not fixed, and can be altered according to the response of the “interactor”. Unlike many sociolinguists, who maintain that context is a linguistic parameter within which communicators have a certain number of linguistic variables between which they can choose, Thomas claims that there is an interaction between context and the individual word of a sentence; the context is what assigns meaning to the individual word.

The part of her theory which is perhaps most integral to this investigation is concerned with what Thomas calls the force of an utterance (Thomas 1995:19). In pragmatics there are several layers of meaning. Utterance meaning is the meaning of the sum of the words, and understanding the utterance meaning basically means understanding what all the words in a sentence mean. Understanding the force of an utterance means understanding what the speaker wants to achieve by uttering the words, in other words what action he wants to promote. Jenny Thomas, like Geoff Thompson, maintains that we use language to achieve certain goals, that language can be a tool to perform speech acts, and that we have other intentions with our communication than merely amusing ourselves by throwing words at each other. She refers to a three-pronged model of the different layers of meaning that an utterance may have, based on John Austin’s model from How to do things with words (1962):

**Locution** – The actual words uttered.

**Illocution** – The force or intention behind the words.
**Perlocution** – The effect of the illocution on the hearer.

(From Thomas 1995:49)

To explain the three-fold distinction, Thomas gives the following example of a possible interpretation of an utterance:

Utterance: “It’s hot in here!” – **Locution**
Meaning: “I need some fresh air!” – **Illocution**
Resulting in: Someone opening the window. – **Perlocution**

The exact lexical words we choose and the context in which they appear are important factors when deciding how an utterance is to be interpreted. Small lexical alterations in the locution might have relatively strong repercussions for the illocution and the perlocution.

Woods and McLeod state that “Sometimes we use will + be + continuous infinitive as a roundabout way of asking someone for something or asking someone to do something for us” and list examples like “Will you be using your lawn mower tomorrow?” and “Will you be using the word processor this afternoon?” (Woods and McLeod 1990:51).

In example 75 above, the progressive future present has been used. If the “will/shall + continuous infinitive” is used, the difference between the progressive/non-progressive form can be shown more clearly:

Carl: “Do you have any plans for tomorrow?”
John: “Yes, I’ll be taking Bev out for a drink.”
or: “Yes, I’ll take Bev out for a drink.”
In this exchange, the progressive form suggests that John and Bev have already made plans to go out, whereas the simple “will/shall + infinitive” suggests that John thought of the idea as a response to the question whether or not he had plans. He did not actually have any plans for the next day, but he made some on the spur of the moment. The only alteration made in the locution of John’s statement is the change of aspect, but it has severe consequences for the illocution and probably for the perlocution as well. Carl has no reason to believe that John’s reply has anything to do with the fact that he does not want to meet Carl, whereas with the simple form, Carl might get the idea that John is merely making up an excuse not to make plans with him. Likewise, the difference between

76. “I’ll show you around”

and

77. “I’ll be showing you around”

is one of pragmatic effect and of “commodity exchanged” (Thompson 2004:47). If we put the sentences into the model presented by Thompson it becomes evident that “I’ll show you the way” would in all likelihood be interpreted as an offer (giving goods and services), whereas “I’ll be showing you the way” is a statement (giving information), since the action can be assumed to already be planned. The Norwegian progressive markers do not combine with this kind of meaning. The pragmatic effect that the progressive has on these kinds of situations cannot be expressed by means of the Norwegian progressives. A probable translation of the two sentences above would be “Jeg kan vise deg rundt” (I’ll show you around) and “Det er jeg som skal vise deg rundt” (I’ll be showing you around). As can be seen from these translations, the change from offer to statement has nothing to do with progressive marking in the Norwegian sentences, but everything in the English. Incidentally, this difference would in

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11 See Wekker 1976 for further discussion of semantic notions of verbs with future reference in English
all likelihood not be categorised as a progressive/non-progressive opposition by Carlson, 
since the progressive verb forms do not result in a change in the temporal interpretation of the 
situation.

Another part of Thomas’ theory important to this thesis is the politeness theory. She describes 
different types of politeness, but the kind that is of interest here is *politeness as an utterance 
level phenomenon* (Thomas 1995:155). This is not politeness as it is regarded my most people 
– it is not about being nice to someone in order for them to feel good. This is about using 
politeness as a linguistic strategy to increase the chances of achieving one’s communicative 
goals. When we perform “face-threatening acts”, which basically means asking for or 
demanding something that requires someone to do something extra for you, politeness is one 
of the possible strategies to soften the request. A “face-threatening act” can be potentially 
embarrassing; it may cause someone to “lose face”, and thus we often feel the need to apply 
mitigating strategies. Asking someone to do something for you is an imposition, and being 
polite reduces the *size of the imposition* (Thomas 1997). After all, it is harder to say “no” if 
someone asks nicely. The progressive aspect can be one of those “mitigating devices”. 
Because of the inherent notion of pre-planning, the first of the two sentences below will be 
considered a more polite way of asking:

Carl:

78. Will you be taking Bev home tonight?

79. Will you take Bev home tonight?

Again, the difference lies in what commodity is being exchanged. In 79, Carl is asking for a 
favour. If one assumes that Carl is the one that should have been taking Bev home, but for 
some reason he is unable to, the size of the imposition is even bigger. In any case, Carl is
asking someone to do something extra, something which they had not intended to do, and which is beneficial to Carl and not to them. In 78, he is merely asking for information – did they in deed have plans to take Bev home tonight? His communicative goal is the same – what he wants to achieve, but the locution and illocution are slightly different, and the perlocution is (hopefully for Carl) very different. The progressive reduces the size of the imposition, if only formally. Once again, the effect of the progressive is impossible to maintain by means of the Norwegian progressives. 78 could be translated with “Hadde du tenkt å ta med deg Bev hjem i kveld, eller?”, whereas 79 would be closer to ”Gidder du å ta med deg Bev hjem i kveld, eller?”. 
3.3. The Norwegian-English investigation

A somewhat more limited investigation was also conducted in the ENPC focusing on the use of progressive verb forms in English translated texts. The same search criteria were used as in the English-Norwegian investigation; forms of “to be” followed by an –ing form were singled out, and were investigated together with their Norwegian correspondences. Since it was the English texts that were searched, the results yielded the same kinds of discards, and about the same percentage of the total occurrences was discarded. The results are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Number of occurrences in English translated texts sorted by progressive marker in Norwegian text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of progressive marker</th>
<th>Fiction</th>
<th>% of total</th>
<th>Occ. in Eng. originals</th>
<th>Non-fiction</th>
<th>% of total</th>
<th>Occ. in Engl. originals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sitte og</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change of aspect</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5,8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>begynne å</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>er inne i en periode med</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semantics of the verb</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4,6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stå og</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-s infinitive/present</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4,6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>er i arbeid</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ligge og</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>være under + -ing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total occ. of progr. Markers in Norw.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24,5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unmarked</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>75,5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tot. occ. of Engl. Progressives</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the results indicate, progressive marking in both languages is far less common when the source text is Norwegian. Firstly, the total number of occurrences of progressive markers in Norwegian is much lower in this material, and secondly, the kind of progressive marker in Norwegian is much less varied. These results emphasize what has already been indicated previously by me and by linguists on the reference list: that progressive marking is a common feature of the English language, one which the Norwegian language utilizes only marginally. The results underline the notion that although there are in fact progressive markers in Norwegian, it is only in the more rare cases that they express meanings which cannot be expressed by simple forms of the verb. It is perhaps of some importance to note that most linguists still categorise the progressive verb forms as marked verb forms, and the simple forms as unmarked.

Christian Mair and Marianne Hundt (1995) point out that the progressive aspect in English has expanded in use over the last 30-40 years. Their investigation is based mainly on corpus material from 4 corpora, LOB and Brown from the 1960s and FLOB and Frown (Freiburg versions of LOB and Brown) from the 1990s. Their material indicated that the progressive had not expanded its scope, that is to say, it was used for the same purposes in the 60s and in the 90s, but in the cases where one could choose between the simple and the progressive form, the progressive was now (1995) becoming more common. Although the investigation in this thesis is not a diachronic one, the low number of occurrences of progressive markers in the Norwegian source texts indicates at least tentatively that such an expansion has not taken place in the Norwegian language. Since the Norwegian language does not have any grammaticalized structure or periphrastic for of the verb, this kind of development is not to be expected either. Progressive marking occurs in the Norwegian translated texts more often because one feels the need to translate in such a way as to preserve the effect that is achieved.
by means of progressive verb forms in English. In Norwegian, the unmarked form of the verb is still the default choice.

One of the reasons why the English progressive has expanded is the fact that the progressive verb forms add some new layer of meaning to the situation. This is usually an essential part of the process of language change; if a new form is to be grammaticalized or lexicalized, the new form needs to add something which the current form does not express\textsuperscript{12}. This might be a hindrance for the development of a grammaticalized progressive structure in the Norwegian language: If the simple form already has the potential to express the same semantic value as the one with progressive marking, then why not just use the simple form?

If one takes a closer look into the examples from the Norwegian-English investigation, another aspect occurs which underlines the same notion as mentioned above. Some of the categories used in the English-Norwegian investigation (like “change of aspect”, “extra non-temporal adverbial” or “semantics of the verb”) cannot be said to definitely express progressive marking. The reason why they were included in the English-Norwegian investigation was that they were the logical correspondences to English progressive forms, but that is not to say that each time there is a discrepancy between the voice, aspect or semantics of the verb in a Norwegian and an English sentence, that this is always due to the effects of the progressive. When the source text is Norwegian, the choice of a verb that expresses non-punctuality or ingressive meaning need not stem from the desire to express progressive meaning. In examples 80 and 81 below, for instance, it would be difficult to claim that the verb phrases “vil bli redusert” and “skal bruke” have been chosen because they express progressive meaning:

\textsuperscript{12} See Smith (2002) for a more elaborate treatment of the progressive in recent British English.
80. The establishment of one Research Council is expected to reduce cost because shared systems and routines demand fewer administrative resources, the number of supervisory and advisory organs are being reduced, and management functions will be transferred to the research institutions.

(NFRA1T)
Etableringen av ett forskningsråd er forutsatt å gi innsparing ved at felles systemer og rutiner vil kreve færre administrative ressurser, ved at antallet styrings- og rådgivningsorganer vil bli redusert og ved at forvaltningsoppgaver vil bli overført til forskningsinstitusjonene.

(NFRA1)

81. The contract with the yard includes the work for which we are using our own crew, to save money.

(KT1T)
I kontrakten med verftet inngår de arbeider vi skal bruke egen besetning til for å spare penger.

(KT1)

The results do indicate that there is a relatively close connection between the Norwegian “-s present”, also called the “passive present”, (“åpnes”, “lukkes”, “skytes”, “drepes” etc.) and the English present passive progressive. This form is in close relation to one of the antecedents of the English progressive (be + [on/at/a-] + -ing), as mentioned in section 2.1.3., expressing something along the lines of “is in the process of” or “is engaged in”.

70
82. It is both St. Lawrence's Day and the day of Utstein Cloister — not just that the institution now observes its 700th anniversary — but also that its gates are being opened to the King and the people.

(TG1T)

Det er Larsøk og dette er Utstein Klosters dag, ikke bare at institusjonen i dag feirer sine 700 år, men også at portene åpnes for konge og folk.

(TG1)

83. Oil and gas are being found further north and new technology is going to enable it to be recovered without building elaborate rigs.

(ABJH1T)

Olje og gass oppdages stadig lenger nord, og ny teknologi kommer til å gjøre det mulig å utvinne denne uten å måtte bygge stadig mer gigantiske rigger.

(ABJH1)

It is debatable whether or not examples 82 and 83 express this notion of “being in the process of”. Example 82 is perhaps the strongest candidate. Ingressive meaning could also be argued as a part of the meaning expressed, but the two meanings cannot be said to be mutually exclusive. “Being in the process of” can be true both in the beginning and at the end of that situation.

One noticeable element in the results from the Norwegian-English investigation was that the verbs that occurred in the progressive were more homogeneous. The vast majority of the verbs were what is categorised by Leech as “activity verbs”, or as verbs denoting “dynamic situations” by Comrie – situations which require input to maintain, an active effort from the subject of the verb. Occurrences included talking, eating, laughing, looking, riding, drinking,
carrying, squeezing etc. These results emphasise the notion that the Norwegian progressive markers are more limited in their scope, at least if they are to be used within their “natural habitats”. Sometimes in the translation from English to Norwegian, the progressive markers are used as a means to translate a linguistic effect, with the result that the sentence might sound somewhat odd in Norwegian. The majority of the verbs found in the progressive in the Norwegian-English part are of the same type as the ones to which the progressive aspect (although we do not speak of progressive verb forms at this stage) was initially applied in the English language – hunting, riding etc., which were also activity verbs. There are still verbs which seem odd with progressive marking in Norwegian, but which are perfectly ordinary progressives in present-day English. This is typically true for the “passive verbs”, those that do not require any input to maintain the status quo; what Comrie names a state: “unless something happens to change that state, then the state will continue” (1976:49), and verbs denoting bodily posture.

84. I am living in London – Jeg bor i London

85. I was sitting in that chair – Jeg satt / det var jeg som satt i den stolen.

(Examples are fictitious)

One example contradicting this was found by chance when watching “God morgen, Norge”, a breakfast-show on Norwegian television. A Norwegian actor uttered the following sentence:

86. “Jeg driver og bor i Florida for tiden”

One cannot draw conclusions based on one utterance, but it is at least possible that the Norwegian progressive markers are starting to expand their scope of application, beginning in the more informal registers. The form with “driver og” + “bor” would seem odd for most
native speakers of Norwegian, since the marker suggests that an active effort is made by the subject of the verb, and the verb “bor” has a meaning which does not suggest that this effort is necessary. Since the speaker is in fact living in Florida, it is feasible that he feels the need to express progressive meaning in Norwegian, since this is the natural choice in English. Safe to say, the form in 86 is not one which would be found in formal registers. Still, with the increasing English influence on the Norwegian language, such forms might feasibly become “normal” in the future. This, however, is a point which deserves to be investigated properly, not merely speculated on, and will not be developed further here.
4. The elicitation test

4.1. Introduction

In order to test the results from the corpus material, an elicitation test was conducted after the corpus investigation. Since some experience with English was required to get reliable results, the informants used were Norwegian students with English as one of their majors (“Engelsk som studieretningsfag”), all from the same high school in Oslo (Berg videregående skole). The informants were 17 and 18 years old. The test was conducted in a classroom at their school, and the informants were informed both orally and on paper about the nature and aim of the test. They were instructed to focus primarily on the translation of the verb phrases in each sentence, and they were made aware that the grammatical phenomenon which was being investigated had to do with verbal aspect. In order to make the informant group somewhat more homogeneous, the responses from those who had gone to school in any other country than Norway for more than 3 years were excluded, in order to guarantee that those who participated had been supplied with the same quantity and quality of English education. After discards, the responses of 69 informants were included in the investigation.

The elicitation test consisted of 3 parts: Translation from Norwegian into English, translation from English into Norwegian, and a multiple choice assignment. In the multiple choice assignment, the informants were asked to indicate which of four Norwegian translations, 3 of which had a progressive marker, they found to be closest to the English original.

In the two translatory parts of the elicitation test, some informants did not translate all of the sentences provided, so the total number of answers does not always add up to 69, even though 69 informants were included in the test. In the multiple choice test, there were a few instances
in which some of the informants did not mark any of the given translations as the closest correspondence to the English original, and a few in which some informants had indicated more than one alternative. A choice had to be made whether or not to include these tests in the final count. Since the number of sentences which had not been translated in each test was so low, these tests were also admitted and investigated in the same way as those tests in which the informant had translated all the sentences.
4.2. The Norwegian-English translation

In this part of the elicitation, the informants were provided with 5 Norwegian sentences to translate into English. The sentences were collected from the corpus material, all from English originals, and they all had progressive verb forms in the English originals. The informants were asked to produce whole sentences, but were informed that the verbs or verb phrases were to be the focal point of their translation. In this part of the elicitation, all of the informants had translated every one of the sentences they were presented with. The table provided below (Table 3: Norwegian-English informant translation) is my own categorisation of the answers provided by the informants. The Norwegian sentences are the ones provided by the translators in the ENPC, all with progressive markers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>Progressive</th>
<th>Simple form</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87. Kanskje han holder på å bryte seg inn for å hente skoene og sjokoladen.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88. Kanskje han er i ferd med å bli et tre, uten å vite det.</td>
<td>bli</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vite</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89. Paul lå og sov inntil henne.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90. Aila nikket hele tiden mens de pratet.</td>
<td>nikket</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pratet</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91. John driver og hoster.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses with the simple form and the progressive are pretty straightforward, but the category “other” perhaps needs some attention. In order to make the results fit within a system of categorization, other kinds of translations than progressives or simple forms were gathered in the “other” category. These translations include “Maybe he’s about to break in to get the
shoes and the chocolate” (87), “Maybe he’s going to turn into a tree without knowing it” (88),
“Paul was lying asleep next to her” (89) and “John keeps coughing” (91).

Quite a few of the informants chose not to use progressive verb forms in their translations into
English. There could be numerous explanations as to why. In some cases, it might just be that
the informant is unaware that there is in fact a progressive marker present in the Norwegian
sentence. After all, in some of the sentences the progressive meaning is harder to spot. In
sentence 90, “Aila nikket hele tiden mens de pratet” (Aila was nodding the whole time while
they were talking), the progressive meaning in the Norwegian sentence stems mainly from the
adverbial “hele tiden” (the whole time) and the conjunction “mens” (while), and might be
harder to pick up on than for instance in sentences 87 and 91, where the progressive marker is
harder to ignore.

An important difference to notice in 90 is the one between “nikket” (nodded) and “pratet”
talked). Although quite a few chose the simple form when translating “nikket”, the vast
majority chose the progressive form with “pratet”. This might have something to do with the
fact that “pratet” comes after the adverbial, and is seen as more likely to be connected to it. A
perhaps likelier explanation is that the extended time-span stems from the conjunction “mens”
(while). This conjunction suggests that the situation has at least some duration. In Norwegian,
it also indisputably suggests an interpretation where one situation is the frame of the other,
which Jespersen (1931/1961:180) has pointed out as one of the features of the progressive
aspect in English. “Hele tiden” modifies the situation “nikket”, which suggests an iterative
interpretation of the Norwegian sentence, and the English original has a progressive verb
form, potentially expressing iterativity as well. However, the lexicality of the verb used in the
English original rules out the possibility of an iterative interpretation: “Aila was inclining her
head […]”. The lexicality of “incline” is not compatible with iterativity; this situation is more likely to be in the vicinity of Comrie’s state. A progressive “was nodding”, on the other hand, would suggest an iterative situation. In this case, a simple form “nodded”, would not suggest otherwise, but the progressive would rule out any doubt whether or not the situation was to be interpreted iteratively.

Another explanation might be that the informants do not regard the marker as expressing progressive meaning. The difference between “Paul lå og sov inntil henne” (Paul was sleeping next to her) and “Paul sov inntil henne” (Paul slept next to her) need not be as significant as the difference between for instance “John driver og hoster” (John is coughing) and “John hoster” (John coughs). In the past tense, this difference would be even more apparent in the latter example, where the debate would circle around the possibility of a punctual cough. Leech would classify “cough” as a momentary verb, which basically means that he regards this verb as being “so momentary that it is hard to think of it as having duration” (Leech 2004: 24). Thus, the effect of the progressive on this situation will be to make it iterative.

Other linguists claim that even a situation like “to cough” can be considered durative, it is only a matter of how narrow the scope on the time-line is. Comrie (1976: 42-43) claims that if one looks separately at each cough, each one must also consist of phases, and need not be perceived as punctual. Even so, the effect of the progressive cannot be to stretch the time-span of each consecutive cough, rather to suggest that the situation occurred more than once. Theoretically, the sentence “John coughed” could describe a situation in which John coughed once and only once. “John is/was coughing”, on the other hand, could not be used to describe a situation which occurs or occurred only once. “John is coughing”, given the right intonation,
could theoretically describe a situation in progress, something which is about to happen ("nær ved-aspekt" as described in Faarlund et. al. 1997), and when John coughs, it only happens once, but the sentence cannot describe the situation when it happens if John only coughs once (partly because making the utterance takes longer time than coughing once). The same is true for the Norwegian correspondence "driver og hoster/drev og hostet", although the simple present form "hoster" is ambiguous when it comes to progressive meaning. In this case, the simple past form "hostet" might actually be argued to be more likely to express punctuality than iterativity, but as Norwegian verbs do not always show progressive marking, no such claim can be made with a very high degree of certainty.

In some cases, the progressive meaning was expressed by other means than a progressive verb form in the English originals as well. When it comes to the responses made by the informants, this is most frequently done in sentence 88 ("Kanskje han er i ferd med å bli et tre, uten å vite det."), where the progressive marker "er i ferd med å" expresses "nær ved-aspekt" (about to-aspect) (Faarlund et. al). In this example the original English sentence did not contain a progressive verb form, but "is about to", which was also the most common choice among the informants in the "other" category.

There is no question that the most common way of expressing progressive meaning in English is by means of a progressive verb form, but the responses from the informants indicate that when the Norwegian progressive markers are the source of translation, the translation into English does not always result in a progressive verb form. This leads to the assumption that what can be questioned in the expression of progressive meaning is the legitimacy of the Norwegian progressive markers. Even in the cases with relatively clear-cut progressive marking, there cannot be said to be a one-to-one relationship between the progressive marker
in Norwegian and the progressive verb form in English. Thus, based on the results from the elicitation test, it is difficult to convincingly argue that the Norwegian progressive markers express the same as the English progressive verb forms in all the cases. However, in many cases, the semantic content of the verb phrases in both languages may be highly similar. The progressive markers at least bring the meaning closer to the mark in most cases, even if they do not make it totally identical to the English correspondence.
4.3. The English-Norwegian translation

In this part of the elicitation, the informants were asked to translate 10 sentences from English to Norwegian, all of which contained progressive verb forms. The results from this translation were not conclusive in all the cases, but there were some obvious discrepancies between the elicitation test results and the results from the corpus material.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English original</th>
<th>Simple form</th>
<th>Corpus translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92. Her mother had been travelling from Paris to Bordeaux to visit her sister.</td>
<td>69/69</td>
<td>Simple form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93. His sense of foolishness was changing from embarrassment to irritation.</td>
<td>59/69</td>
<td>Simple form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94. If a wind had been blowing there was nothing here for it to move.</td>
<td>68/69</td>
<td>Pluperfect + present participle &quot;hadde kommet farende&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95. Meanwhile the other one is waiting.</td>
<td>69/69</td>
<td>Progressive marker: &quot;sitter og&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96. She was nodding away and smiling at me.</td>
<td>67/69</td>
<td>Progressive marker: &quot;drev og&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97. They were wondering why it was that people always criticised them.</td>
<td>67/69</td>
<td>Semantics of the verb: &quot;skjønte ikke hvorfor&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98. Your wife is dying, John.</td>
<td>16/69</td>
<td>Future: &quot;kommer til å&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99. From the knee down my left leg was hurting.</td>
<td>58/68</td>
<td>Simple form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100. David and Harriet were listening to the radio.</td>
<td>67/69</td>
<td>Simple form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101. I'm leaning against the door of the motel.</td>
<td>69/69</td>
<td>Progressive marker: &quot;står lent&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the overwhelming majority of the examples, more than 85 percent of the informants had not used any progressive marker in their translation into Norwegian. In some of the cases neither had the corpus translator. Although some of the sentences from the corpus had also been translated with a simple form, the number of English progressives which were translated with Norwegian simple forms was clearly higher in the results from elicitation test. Only in
example 98 did the majority of the informants use a progressive marker in the Norwegian translation. The progressive in this particular sentence is somewhat special, because it represents a type of progressives which denote a meaning that is perhaps less characteristically progressive. Although it is clearly progressive judging by formal criteria, it also has obvious ties to the present participle. It might be argued that this connection to the present participle is apparent because of the Norwegian translation with a participle, but if the historical background of the progressive and the common traits with the present participle are taken into account, it could at least be argued that the progressive in this example has closer ties to the participle than some of the other progressives.

As previously mentioned, the semantic distinction between participles and progressives is not always 100% clear. “Is dying” is at a point on the cline from participle to progressive where it is difficult to say which meaning is more likely. As it has been argued before, in some cases it is perhaps not as meaningful to argue this distinction so strongly. The translations suggested by the informants support this ambiguity in meaning. Although quite a few had chosen from a variety of progressive markers in the Norwegian language, the majority had chosen the present participle form “er døende”. One might argue that since the sentence translates into “er døende”, the English verb form is also more likely to be a participle. If such were the case, the finite verb “is” would be the predicator of the sentence, and “dying” would be a predicative realised by an adjective. However, since the sentence also translates into “er i ferd med å dø”, “holder på å dø” etc., the verbal part of “dying” cannot be ignored either.

The large variation in the choices made by the informants supports the theory of the versatility of some progressives (/participles). Suggestions included [Kona di] + “holder på å dø”, “er i ferd med å dø”, “kommer til å dø” and “er nær døden” and of course “er døende”,

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all of which focus on different aspects of the situation, and all of which are as likely to be a part of the meaning expressed in the English sentence. This variation could not have been empirically shown merely with the results from the OMC, where only one of the possible interpretations is given. The suggestion made by the corpus translator and only one of the informants, “Hun kommer til å dø” (She’s going to die) doesn’t even express progressive meaning, but, as previously mentioned in connection with Wekker (1976), the “going to-construction” predicts the future event on the basis of signals/signs in the present (In this case: “On the basis of what we know, there is reason to believe that your wife will die”).

There is only a marginal group of Norwegian present participles which to some extent corresponds to English progressives. Not surprisingly, this correspondence is found in the cases where the English progressive shows a relatively clear tie to the adjectival features as well. In many cases, the translation from English to Norwegian may result in a change from progressive to participle, and the progressive meaning is lost. What is interesting is the fact that in these cases, the loss of meaning is not so easy to trace, since the correspondence seems so natural:

102. The prices are falling – Prisene er fallende
103. Their market share is increasing – Markedsandelen deres er økende.
   (My own examples)
104. Sawdust in the gear-boxes, the electric-drill on the speedometer cables, a splash of paint here and there and a few other clever little tricks and the idiots were all falling over themselves to buy.”
   (RD1)
Another example with some variation was sentence 8199 (“From the knee down my leg was hurting”). Some informants had used a verb with different semantics: “Kneet pulserte med smerte” (My knee was pulsating with pain), some had changed the aspect: “Jeg hadde smerter i foten fra kneet og ned” (I had a pain in my foot from the knee down), others still had made the effort to expand the scope of the Norwegian participles: “Fra kneet og ned var min fot verkende” (From the knee down my foot was hurting).

In the cases where the corpus translator had used a progressive and the majority of the informants had not, the possible explanations are numerous. For one thing, the informants are more likely to overlook the progressive meaning altogether. They can be assumed to have a linguistic apparatus which is less developed than the apparatus of the corpus translators, so they may not know how to express themselves idiomatically in Norwegian, and they may not now all the effects of the progressive in English. Also, they do not have the context that the corpus translators have. The latter might be the case in examples like 95 and 101, where the translator has added a progressive marker which reveals something about the posture of the body despite the fact that the English version does not state anything about body posture. When no context is provided, it is more difficult to defend adding such information about the situation. However, if the context suggests that one body posture is more likely than the other, this type of progressive marking is more defendable. In example 101 it might even be argued that the lexicality of the verb suggests that this situation is likely to occur standing, and that in 95 the most common thing to do when one waits is to sit, but there are still no linguistic evidence in the English sentence to support this notion.
In example 97 the translator has chosen to change the lexical verb as well as the aspect, whereas the informants (67/69) chose the simple form. The lexicality of the verb “å lure på” rules out a punctual situation, so the durative part of the progressive meaning is preserved even without progressive marking in Norwegian. Once again, the context might be the reason why the corpus translator has chosen to change the verbal.

4.4. Multiple choice

In the multiple choice section, the informants were provided with 12 English sentences, all of which contained progressive verb forms, and were asked to mark one of four Norwegian translations, the one that they felt was closest in capturing the meaning expressed in the English sentence. One of the suggested translations always contained no progressive marking, only a simple form of the verb. The other three had different Norwegian progressive markers. The selected verbs were from different semantic categories, as well as different text categories.

This part of the elicitation indicated some interesting tendencies. The informants were provided with translations which contained progressive markers, and the English sentence had a progressive verb form, but the majority of the informants chose the simple form in quite a few cases:
105. Children are beginning to muscle their way into the centre of the debate on how to manage the environment.

☐ er i ferd med å: 33    begynner å: 29
☐ holder på å: 7        simple form: 0

106. But the main consumers of minerals are becoming extremely reliant on imports.

☐ Simple form: 1        Er i ferd med å: 35
☐ holder på å: 18       begynner å: 15

107. The military planners, on the other hand, maintain that they are "fine-tuning" their weapons of deterrence and levelling the balance of capabilities.

☐ driver og: 23        holder på å: 15
☐ er i ferd med å: 3     Simple form: 27

108. As a result, the older basic industries are suffering from technological stagnation.

☐ blir skadelidende: 15  holder på å: 4
☐ driver og: 1          Simple form: 49

109. I'll be back," she cried, and heard Jasper's "Bring in something to eat, I'm starving."

☐ jeg er i ferd med å: 0   holder på å: 18
☐ Simple form: 51        ligger og: 0

110. I'm losing the appetite for strangers.

☐ er i ferd med å: 14     har ikke lenger: 5
☐ holder på å: 18        Simple form: 32

111. "The way you're eating that toast is nauseating and you know it.

☐ driver og: 12         holder på å: 4
112. "I'll be racing much quicker with a bandage."

- Simple form: 30
- kan begynne å: 28
- kan holde på å: 6
- kan drive og: 5

113. Driving into town, I could have sworn I smelled woodsmoke in the air and I half expected the leaves to be turning yellow and rust.

- skulle gulne: 41
- var i ferd med å: 13
- skulle holde på å bli: 12
- Simple form: 1

114. The huddle of bank customers who had been waiting when he arrived went in before him.

- hadde holdt på å vente: 0
- hadde stått og ventet: 36
- hadde drevet og ventet: 2
- Simple form: 29

115. But she's becoming something of an obsession with Ryan, particularly since his wife's death.

- holder på å bli: 23
- er blitt: 5
- er i ferd med å bli: 32
- Simple form: 8

116. Dr. Jordan said quietly, “Your wife is dying, John.”

- Simple form: 5
- er i ferd med å: 24
- holder på å: 20
- kommer til å: 20
These results indicate some interesting tendencies. One of the clearest ones is that the informants regard the Norwegian progressive marker “være i ferd med å” as expressing ingressive meaning. The sentences where “være i ferd med å” has the clearest majority were examples 106 and 115, and in example 105 the informants were distributed almost evenly between “være i ferd med å” and “begynne å”. All of the progressives in the English versions of these sentences express ingressive meaning. This result does not contradict the results from the corpus material directly, but the tendency in the corpus material was that “være i ferd med å” was used even more frequently in cases where the English progressive could express both ingressive and egressive meaning, especially in the more formal registers. Interestingly, the cases with ingressive meaning together with two other sentences were the ones where the fewest informants had chosen the simple form. For some reason, when ingressive meaning was detected, the simple form seemed to be ruled insufficient by the informants. Judging by these results, ingressive seems to be one of the features of the progressive which is hard to ignore.

Even though a part of the explanation why “være i ferd med å” was the most frequent choice in these sentences is that this progressive marker is more common in general, it cannot be the only one. In example 110, for instance, only 14/69 informants had chosen “være i ferd med å”. In example 112, it would not even have been a possibility. The “currentness” and its connection to the about-to aspect are too much a part of this progressive marker for it to be used to predict the future (*Jeg kommer til å være i ferd med å begå en forbrytelse i morgen/*I’ll be about to commit a crime tomorrow). It can, incidentally, be used to report what happened in the past (Hun var i ferd med å lope ut/ She was about to run outside). The English progressive, however, does not have this limitation towards predicting future events: *This time tomorrow, I’ll be committing a crime.* The effect of the progressive in this sentence
is the same as in other tenses (the debate whether or not English has a future tense will not be elaborated here): it stretches the time-span of the situation, making it non-punctual. This difference cannot be expressed by means of the Norwegian progressive markers in reference to future situations. A possible explanation might be that the Norwegian markers are still likely to be bound to the part of progressive meaning which expresses “ongoing activity” or “in the process of”. The reason why they will work in the past tense is that the current moment may theoretically be a part of the past situation; “currentness in the past”, whereas “currentness in the future” is harder to imagine. The obvious exception would be the future present; cases where the present tense is used to report what will happen in a scenario located in the future, but this is a marginal use, and it could be debated whether or not the future present actually predicts the future event as much as reporting the future event from a fictive point beyond the future event on the timeline.

117. “So, he’ll walk past you, you’re waiting in the car...”

“Ok, han kommer til å gå forbi deg, du sitter og venter i bilen...”

The progressive in example 116 (Dr. Jordan said quietly, ‘Your wife is dying, John’) has been thoroughly examined in the previous chapter, so it will not take up a lot of space in this discussion. It should be mentioned, though, that the results from the multiple choice test confirms the tendencies that were commented on in the English-Norwegian translation. There was a fairly even distribution among the three progressive markers, and the simple form was not considered a real option by the informants. In example 113 (Driving into town, I could have sworn I smelled wood smoke in the air and I half expected the leaves to be turning yellow and rust), only one informant had marked the simple form as the closest correspondence. In this example, we are perhaps closing in on what might actually look like a “Norwegian morphological progressive”, in that the Norwegian verb (“gulne”) that expresses
progressive meaning belongs to a group of verbs which are grammaticalized in the Norwegian language, although a fairly marginal one, and which seem to express progressive meaning in the examples where they are used. The majority of the informants chose “skulle gulne” as the best candidate in 113. “Rødme”, “falme”, “gulne”, “blåne” and “svartne” all describe a situation which cannot be punctual. “Hun rødmer” (She is blushing) means practically the same as “Hun blir rød” (She’s turning red). Incidentally, the close connection to the English progressive only seems to be current in the simple present:

118. Hun rødmer – She’s blushing.
119. Det svartner for meg – I’m losing consciousness.

But:

120. Klærne (har) falmet – The clothes (have) lost their colour.
121. Trærne (har) gulnet – The trees (have) turned yellow.

(Examples are fictitious)

This brings the focus back to Leech’s notion of a “current, ongoing action”. If the “Norwegian morphological progressive” only expresses progressive meaning in the simple present, then the “currentness” must be considered to be one of its basic meanings. This was long argued to be the core meaning of the English progressive as well, but as it developed over the years, this could no longer be argued to describe the English progressive adequately. However, in example 113, there cannot be said to be a 1:1 equivalence between the English progressive and the Norwegian translation. With I half expected the leaves to be turning yellow there can be no doubt that the process started at some point prior to the point where I was driving into town, whereas with “Jeg forventet halvveis at trærne skulle gulne”, on the other hand, may express that the process started at the point of my arrival.
It should also be mentioned that in a very limited corpus search of the ENPC, the infinitive, simple present, preterite and perfect forms of “gulne”, “rødme” and “falme” were searched for in Norwegian originals, and only a single example was translated with a progressive verb form in English. Several examples, like the one below, were translated with “turn + [colour]”.

122. Gressbakken rundt huset var allerede begynt å gulne, tomatene trengte vann.

(BV1)

The grass slope around the house had already begun to turn yellow, the tomatoes needed water.

(BV1T)

Although 10 occurrences without progressive marking against one with will not serve as empirical evidence to falsify a theory, the fact that there is almost no empirical data to verify the connection between these verb forms and the English progressive in the translation from Norwegian to English supports the notion that the correspondence is not as strong as initially suspected. On the other hand, in a search for correspondences to the progressive forms of blush, turn [+ colour] and fade, some examples were found in which the English progressive had been translated with a “Norwegian progressive”.

123. His back was still slightly tanned from summer, but already fading.

(ABR1)

Ryggen var ennå litt solbrent etter sommeren, men allerede i ferd med å blekne.

(ABR1T)

124. Driving into town, I could have sworn I smelled woodsmoke in the air and I half expected the leaves to be turning yellow and rust.

(SG1)
Da jeg kjørte inn til byen, kunne jeg svere på at jeg kjente lukt av bråtebrann, og jeg regnet halvveis med at løvet skulle gulne og bli rustent.

(5G1T)

At present it is impossible to make a solid argument for any of the two positions.

The discrepancies that were discovered between the corpus material and the elicitation test can in some cases be explained with a lack of reliability in the elicitation, but this should not be considered to be the main reason. Even though the corpus is also limited in size and scope and although the number of informants might be considered low for some purposes, they will certainly both suffice for the purpose of unveiling tendencies within the languages in question, which is exactly what they have been used for in this investigation. Some rogue results are unavoidable in any elicitation test like this, but even so, the numbers and the responses made by the informants indicate some clear tendencies.

The main reason why the results may vary between the elicitation test and the corpus investigation is the form/context of the test compared to the form/context of the corpus translation. The corpus translators have not translated with the same parameters as the informants, who were informed of the grammatical phenomenon being investigated and did not have access to the context in which the sentences occur. It is also safe to assume that the informants have a more limited command of the English language compared with the corpus translators.

In any case, the results from the elicitation indicate that there is rarely a 1:1 relationship between a Norwegian progressive marker and a specific English verb form. Often, the
progressive meaning may be rendered in several ways in Norwegian, and more often than not there is not a clear preference.
5. Conclusion

This investigation was conducted to see how the English progressive aspect was rendered in the Norwegian language, using the English-Norwegian Parallel Corpus (the ENPC) for the collection of the source material of the corpus investigation, as well as an elicitation test to compare the results with. Translations from English into Norwegian as well as from Norwegian into English were investigated to see if any discrepancies between the two translation directions could be traced.

The English-Norwegian corpus investigation indicated that there was a wide range of different progressive markers in Norwegian. Progressive markers in Norwegian which have been treated in this thesis include “la det, holde på å, extra temporal adverbial, extra non-temporal adverbial, semantics of the verb, change of aspect, være i ferd med å, være opptatt med å, drive og, begynne å, participles (-ende), være under + nominal -ing, komme til å, arbeide med å, se å, pleie å, gå (rundt) og, sitte og, fly rundt og, stå og, ligge og”. Some of these markers are less obviously progressive in meaning than others, and the progressive meaning is thus harder to deduce. Such markers include “Extra non-temporal adverbial” (So you will be scratching around looking for a new figurehead? – “Og nu vil dere altså lete med lys og lykte etter en ny gallionsfigur?”), “Semantics of the verb” (The prices of commodities were enjoying a short-lived boom – “Prisene på råvarer sto midt oppe i en kortvarig kursoppgang”) and “Change of aspect”. It is important to stress the fact that these categories and the individual markers mentioned are not to be regarded as a survey of the progressive markers in Norwegian. The markers listed here are the ones which were discovered in the material.
The results from the English-Norwegian corpus investigation also supported the notion that the English progressive has various semantic sub-categories, and that the Norwegian progressive markers often captured these meanings rather than the “quintessentially progressive meaning”, if such a meaning can be claimed to exist. Non-punctuality seems to be the one feature which was present in all the progressives in the material, and this characteristic could be traced both in the progressive forms of English verbs and in the Norwegian progressive markers, confirming the notions of non-punctuality as presented by Comrie (1976).

In the English original texts only 7 % (135 of 1984 occurrences) in fiction and 10 % (54 of 549 occurrences) in non-fiction were translated with a progressive marker in Norwegian. In English translated texts, the corresponding numbers were 10 % in fiction and 25 % in non-fiction, but here overall figures were low and the proportions therefore less reliable (8/79 occurrences in fiction and 21/86 in non-fiction).

This part of the investigation also showed that the Norwegian progressive markers were not compatible with “passive” situations which denoted body posture – in situations where the English progressive said something about the posture of the body and the situation did not require active participation from the subject of the verb, none of the Norwegian progressive markers were suitable:

125. John is sitting/lying – John sitter/ligger.
The reason for this is that the logical Norwegian progressive marker for this kind of situation is one which states something about body posture as well—“sitter og”, “ligger og”, and the lexical verb already states this.

In the comparison between fiction and non-fiction, it became evident that the number of occurrences of progressive forms was generally lower in the non-fictional part of the corpus. This was true for both the English and the Norwegian texts, supporting the claim that the progressive aspect/progressive forms are considered less formal than the simple form. The variation in type of marker in Norwegian was also lower in the non-fictional part. “Være i ferd med å” constituted 3.6% (20 occurrences) of the occurrences in the non-fictional part, but only 0.65% (13 occurrences) in the fictional part. Forms like “driver og”, “går (rundt) og”, “ligger og” and “se å” were not found in non-fiction, suggesting perhaps that these forms are considered even less formal than some of the other markers.

Another part of the aim of this thesis was to describe the effect of the progressive within the framework of Systemic Functional Grammar and theories on pragmatics. In the vast majority of the examples found in the corpus, the progressive meaning in the English version could be expressed by means of a progressive marker in Norwegian, but not all. One effect which could not be rendered by the Norwegian markers was that which occurred in some future situations. A few English examples with progressive future reference were analysed within the notions of politeness theory and meaning interpretation (locution, illocution and perlocution) as presented by Thomas (1997) and speech roles as presented by Thompson (2004) with quite interesting results. The difference in meaning between the progressive for instance in “Will you be taking Bev home tonight?” and the simple form in “Will you take Bev home tonight?” can be analysed in terms of pragmatic force, the size of the imposition,
directness and politeness. While both sentences may have the same communicative goal, the progressive version is a more polite way of asking for help, since this construction implies that what you are asking for is already planned (see chapter 3.2.1.4). Likewise, in the exchange:

Carl: Do you have any plans for tomorrow?
John: a) Yes, I’ll be taking Bev out for a drink.
Or b) Yes, I’ll take Bev out for a drink.

answer a) with the progressive is more polite towards Carl, since this indicates that John has already made plans with Bev. The simple form equivalent suggests that John does not have any plans, but since he does not want to meet with Carl, he makes up an excuse on the spur of the moment. This effect is impossible to render by means of the Norwegian progressive markers, and constitutes an area in which the Norwegian markers must be said to be inadequate in rendering the effects of the English progressive.

The Norwegian-English investigation confirmed the notion that progressive marking is neither necessary nor common in Norwegian. There were generally fewer occurrences of progressive verb forms in the English translations and in the Norwegian originals compared to English originals and Norwegian translations, and the number of different Norwegian progressive markers was much lower in Norwegian originals. Also, the verbs occurring with progressive marking were much more semantically homogeneous, primarily consisting of what Leech refers to as “activity verbs” (see chapter 2.1.2). The most common semantic meaning that could be derived from these verb phrases was “in the process of” or “engaged in”. Ingressive and egressive meanings were also found, but only a few examples.
It also became evident that some of the categories which were used in the English-Norwegian investigation were not necessarily appropriate in the analysis of the Norwegian-English material. In the comparison between a Norwegian original and an English translation, the difference in aspect or semantics of the verb need not stem from the desire to express progressive meaning in Norwegian, but a progressive verb form in an English original could result in a change of aspect or the use of a semantically different verb in the translation from English into Norwegian.

The results from the elicitation test indicated that when there is a “natural” correspondence between the English progressive and a Norwegian participle expression, as in “Your wife is dying – Kona di er døende”, the participle was considered the closest Norwegian equivalent of the English progressive by the majority of the informants. The responses from the informants to this sentence in the multiple choice part also suggested that some progressive constructions have qualities of the participle antecedent (of the –ing form in the progressive construction), and that there might be a cline from “progressive” to “non-progressive” rather than a clear dichotomy. Only a small proportion chose the simple form as a possible correspondence to this sentence, but there was a fairly even distribution between constructions of the type be + participle (“være” + -ende), the progressive marker “er i ferd med å” and the non-progressive “kommer til å”, advocating that all three suggestions had captured at least a part of the progressive meaning.

The test also indicated that there was a correspondence between the English present progressive and the present tense forms of “gulne” (turn yellow), “svartne” (turn black), “falme” (fade/turn pale) and the likes. This correspondence was not found in the past tense examples. A further examination of the sentence pair
“Driving into town, I could have sworn I smelled woodsmoke in the air and I half expected the leaves to be turning yellow and rust.” (SG1)

”Da jeg kjørte inn til byen, kunne jeg sverge på at jeg kjente lukt av bråtebrann, og jeg regnet halvveis med at løvet skulle gulne og bli rustent.” (SG1T)

showed that these Norwegian verb forms only matched the passive progressive infinitive on a superficial level, since the English sentence suggests that the leaves had already started to turn yellow at some point before “my driving into town”, whereas the Norwegian form “gulne” might just as well suggest that the leaves started to turn yellow at the point of “my driving into town”.

In the corpus investigation, the progressive marker “være i ferd med å” was used most frequently when both ingressive and egressive meaning could be claimed. The informants, however, chose this marker as the closest correspondence in the cases where ingressive meaning alone was found in the English progressive. The cases where ingressive meaning was detected in the English progressive were also the ones in which the fewest chose the simple form, suggesting that ingressiveness might be harder to ignore than some of the other meanings of the progressive.

Nordset concludes that the Norwegian double-verb constructions (“pseudo-coordinates” in Tonne 2001) are suitable in expressing the imperfective meaning of English progressive verbs in situations which denote activities (Vendlerian categorisation), but not with achievements and accomplishments. Sparboe and Myskja conclude that the Norwegian progressive markers only to a small degree can be said to be equivalents of the English progressive. If one looks individually at each marker, one could make a solid argument for this stand. The validity of
such a claim would also be dependent on what “basic” meaning the English progressive is
given. Each Norwegian progressive marker or group of markers can be said to emphasize one
or more aspects of the English progressive, be it incompletion, ingressiveness, egressiveness
or currentness. They may also express “engaged in” or “in the process of”. If any one of these
is considered to be a “basic meaning” of the English progressive, then the Norwegian markers
must be said to capture its notions quite successfully, even though no single one will do the
job. The material collected for this investigation did show that not all effects of the
progressive are suitably rendered by the Norwegian markers, and that in some situations they
would simply restate a part of the meaning in the lexical verb, but these usages constitute a
marginal group.

There can be no doubt that the Norwegian language has the linguistic resources to express the
same meaning as the English progressive aspect does. What can be questioned are the
liability, necessity and scope of the Norwegian progressive markers. In 93 % of the cases in
the fictional part of the English originals in the ENPC and 90 % in the non-fictional part, the
English progressive verb forms had been translated into an unmarked form in Norwegian,
supporting the claim that there is no progressive/non-progressive opposition in Norwegian,
and that although progressive marking exists, the lack of progressive marking in a sentence
does not exclude a progressive interpretation of the situation.
List of references


**Electronic sources**

The English Norwegian Parallel Corpus (A part of the Oslo Multilingual Corpus):


**Dictionaries**

