Dialect imperialism in West Sweden
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Previous research has observed an imperialistic tendency in the dialect of
Gothenburg, the second biggest city in Sweden, spreading among young people
in the surrounding region of West Sweden. A wide-ranging study of societal and
linguistic change in West Sweden 1950–2000 is under preparation, with focus on
urbanization, regionalization and dialect expansion.

One problem, however, is what is meant by “Gothenburg dialect”,
especially in a discussion of its present status. Earlier studies mainly describe the
working class dialect of the 1910–20’s or the 1950–60’s, which differs a great
deal from the present language of young people in Gothenburg, regardless of
social class.

This paper presents a study of phonological variation among two
generations of upper secondary school students from Gothenburg. The data
consists of group conversations recorded 1978 and 1998. Dialect change
between the two generations of teenagers is compared, as well as correlation
with gender, study programmes (vocational and preparatory for university) and
city neighbourhoods. To what extent are traditional variants still in use and what
kind of neologisms are increasing? The study aims to build a basis for further
research on the expansion of the Gothenburg dialect.