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working on a small scale without having any *idea* what the text as a whole is about.

Another stumbling block to the machine is the fact that a human translator is, in the greater part of his work, translating the sense and not the individual words (see Malmberg 1986). The problem is, then, how to give the machine the ability to analyse the sense of an expression – an impossible task?

What we must remember is that the machine is an aid, a helping device, and not a replacement:

If translators are to co-exist with computers we must become actively involved in directing their uses, let us be their masters and they the tools. If we are unaware of, or fail in this respect, we have only ourselves to blame if, ultimately, we are the slaves of computers, compilers of word-lists and one-to-one glossaries, constrained to write in words and forms that machines understand. (Snell 1978, Introduction)

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# Attitudes towards Varieties of Swedish

## Hans Dahlbäck

#### Abstract

In this paper, results from a survey of attitudes towards regional and other Swedish language varieties are presented. Over 700 teenagers in the Swedish city of Malmö were asked about attitudes towards the Malmö dialect and other varieties of Swedish. Urban varieties were found to be most popular, immigrant Swedish least. The Malmö dialect was preferred in local media and Standard Swedish in national radio and television, although in entertainment both were accepted. Girls were more negative than boys towards the local dialect and more prone to codeswitching.

#### INTRODUCTION

Speech variation continues to be an object of popular interest and evaluation, and attitudes towards speech varieties have in recent years become a concern for linguists as well. Another dimension of variation has been added by immigration to Western and Northern Europe, creating new and often negatively evaluated ways of speaking the language.

To study attitudes towards dialects and immigrant speech in Sweden, I have carried out a questionnaire survey among over 700 teenagers in Malmö. The study has the twofold purpose of a) investigating the evaluation of different varieties and venture some generalizations, and b) exploring to what extent sex and socio-economic status of the individual influence attitudes.

After some preliminary sections dealing with earlier research on language attitudes in Sweden and elsewhere and about regional variation in Sweden, the survey is described and the results are given.

## ATTITUDES TOWARDS VARIETIES: SOME POSSIBLE DETERMINANTS

There are by now a great number of studies that report differential attitudes towards Standard and Non-standard speech, even if it is the same person speaking in both cases, as in the so-called matched guise experiments. Generally, speakers of the Standard are rated highly in terms of social competence factors such as intelligence, whereas Non-standard varieties confer to the speaker characteristics of social attractiveness, e.g. friendliness, sociability and toughness. Cf. Trudgill 1983.

Evaluation of speech varieties has also been found to differ according to the sex of the listener (and, of course, the speaker). Women are generally more positive than men towards the Standard, and more prone to consider themselves closer to the Standard. See Elyan et al. 1978, Trudgill 1983:175ff.

As for attitudes towards regionally delimited Non-standard varieties or dialects, they are naturally subject to the same kind of evaluation as other Non-standard varieties. But there are a number of criteria which can be used to make hypotheses about attitudes towards dialects:

- 1. Distance in space. It has been suggested (Andersson 1985) that dialects spoken far from one's own place of living are more popular than the dialects of neighbouring parts. This would probably relate to general tendencies of mistrust and rivalry between adjacent groups.
- 2. Social connotations. Attitudes towards the dialect are determined by attitudes towards speakers of that dialect or aspects of life in that part of the country. One example of this would be the negative views British people hold of urban accents, especially that of London, and the high estimation of rural accents. Cf. Trudgill 1983. This requires some independent means of measuring social connotations, such as the method employed by Gould 1975, who asked people in Sweden where they would like to live.
- 3. *Power*. One factor giving rise to social connotations is the economic, political, etc. power of the region where the dialect is spoken. According to Andersson 1985, negative evaluation of dialects spoken in dominant centres of power, such as the capital, may have its origin in a reaction against this threatening dominance. On the other hand, power may have attraction as well, especially through domination of the media.

To this I would like to add a fourth candidate:

4. Linguistic distance. The greater the linguistic distance between the other dialect and one's own, or the Standard, the greater one's potential dislike is for that dialect. Crude measures of linguistic distance would be based either on "objective" counts of differences or on subjective reactions.

## REGIONAL SPEECH VARIATION IN SWEDEN

Due to vast distances and geographical conditions, Sweden has developed a farreaching dialectal differentiation within its borders. Radio and television, compulsory education, and increased mobility have of course diminished this variation, but it is still difficult for a person from one part of the country to understand a speaker of a broad dialect from another part.

The Standard Swedish norm (*rikssvenska*) is based on Central Swedish. Standardization of the written language is done by the Swedish Academy through

its dictionary, and by the recommendations of a language committee (Svenska Språknämnden). Traditionally, Standard Swedish has also been the only accepted spoken variety for serious purposes in radio and television and on the stage. On the whole, however, children have not been taught to speak Standard Swedish in school, except in cases of extreme dialectal differences, as in the northern parts of the country.

At the same time, there have been many leading figures in public life who have spoken dialect. Politicians such as the late prime minister Per Albin Hansson (from Malmö) preserved their dialects more or less and gave greater prestige to them when speaking to the nation.

During the past few decades, dialects have become increasingly accepted in new contexts. Thus, regionally coloured speech may be heard from the stage and used by reporters in nationwide news broadcasts.

Radio broadcasts on the regional and local level have come to enjoy an increasing popularity among listeners. Here, dialects are of course used to a great extent, especially in local transmissions run by political, religious and other organizations.

## ATTITUDES TOWARDS SWEDISH DIALECTS

Earlier surveys of dialect attitudes among students at the *gymnasium* ('highschool', 16-18 years) level show that there is a positive attitude towards dialects in general (Loman 1973, Hammermo et al. 1981). Loman 1973 also found that dialects spoken in the northern part of Sweden and in Gothenburg (second largest city) were most popular, and those spoken in Stockholm and in Scania least.

To the best of my knowledge, no earlier research has been done regarding attitudes towards the Malmö dialect. Comments from people living in and close to Malmö indicate, however, that the dialect is negatively evaluated. A widely used university textbook of phonetics (Malmberg 1971) even characterizes Malmö diphthongization as "careless".

## **METHOD**

## Questionnaire

The questionnaire employed in this study is an improved version of a questionnaire from an earlier pilot study. In the new version there are 33 questions, mostly of the multiple choice variety. Besides a number of questions regarding background variables – grade, sex, social background, place of birth etc. – there are questions about attitudes towards the Malmö dialect and a number of other Swedish varieties. Further questions concern, among other things, perceived suitability of the Malmö dialect versus Standard Swedish in different

contexts and code-switching. See the translated version of the questionnaire in the appendix.

## Procedure

The questionnaires were sent out to teachers of Swedish at twelve schools in Malmö, i.e. to almost all schools with a secondary level. The pupils filled out the questionnaires anonymously at a Swedish lesson and the teacher then returned them to me.

Each school received 100 questionnaires to be distributed among three classes. All schools participated, although with a varying number of responses (from 47 to 94), yielding a total of 741 usable questionnaires and a negligible number that were discarded.

## RESULTS

## Background data

Of the respondents, 14% were in grade 7 (≈13 years), 16% in grade 8, and 70% in grade 9, 46% were girls and 54% boys. 70% had always lived in Malmö.

A socio-economic classification was made from father's occupation or, if no data were available about that, from mother's. The classification is based on the system of the national bureau of statistics (Statistiska Centralbyrån 1982), which I have divided into three socio-economic groups:

III Manual workers (37%)

II Lower and intermediate non-manual employees (32%)

I Higher non-manual employees and self-employed (20%)

The remaining respondents could not be classified.

#### Use

As can be seen from table 1, a majority consider themselves speakers of broad or moderate M(almöese). Girls to a greater extent think that they speak a fairly broad M. The higher the social background, the less M spoken.

In this connection it is interesting to note that boys more often think that boys speak more M. 26% of the boys think that, but only 11% of the girls.

The majority (81%) are happy with the way they speak, and only 15% want to speak less M. Girls are more anxious to speak less M than boys (21% vs. 10%). Social differences exist, but are smaller (I: 19%; II: 15%; III: 13%).

Almost a third (28%) do in fact speak less M occasionally. And again girls do it more often than boys (35% vs. 22%), and higher socio-economic groups more often than lower (I: 36%; II: 27%; III: 25%).

Table 1. Self-evaluation of own dialect. Percentages.

Broad M	-		No M at all	Others
15	40	33	8	4
14	45	30	7	4
16	36	36	8	4
19	44	25	8	4
13	39	38	5	5
9	31	44	13	4
	15 14 16 19	broad M  15 40  14 45  16 36  19 44  13 39	14     45     30       16     36     36       19     44     25       13     39     38	broad M M at all  15 40 33 8  14 45 30 7  16 36 36 8  19 44 25 8  13 39 38 5

Not surprisingly, adjustment occurs most often on visits to other places and with speakers of other dialects. Less frequent answers are: on the phone, at home, at school, for fun, when acting, in special words, in English, when reading, when singing. One boy found M to be a less effective means of speaking to girls (for what purpose he did not say), and another had obviously had bad experiences due to his dialect in the context of sport events, since he claimed to speak less M "when our football team meets another team away and you meet fans from that team".

39% think that people speak differently in different parts of Malmö. Some speak about more general differences between fashionable or rich districts (less M) as against poor districts (more M) or suburbs (more M) versus the inner city (less). Often reference is made to districts of high immigrant concentration, where people are said to speak "spaggedialekt", a derogatory term derived from the local name for immigrants "spagge" (probably from Italian *spaghetti*). It is also claimed that native Swedes are influenced by foreign languages, which is reminiscent of the situation in the Stockholm suburb of Rinkeby, described by Kotsinas 1988.

The pupils were also asked to decide for a number of contexts if M or Standard Swedish was more suitable or both equally suitable. The results for that question are shown in table 2.

Obviously, M is preferred in local media and Standard Swedish in serious contexts in nationwide media. For teaching and entertainment, both varieties are accepted to a great extent.

Table 2. Judgements of suitability. Percentages.

## Preferred variety:

Malmöese	Standard Swedish .	Both equally good
Local radio 67	TV, news 75	Teacher in Malmö 38
Regional radio, entert 60	National radio, news 71	Rock music 36
Regional radio, news 59	Politician on TV 63	TV, entert 35
Teacher in Malmö 44	National radio, entert 52	National radio, entert 31
Politician in Malmö 41	TV, entert 45	Play at city theatre 28
Play at city theatre 28	Rock music 44	Politician in Malmö 27
TV, entert 17	Play at city theatre 42	Politician on TV 26
Rock music 17	Politician in Malmö 31	Regional radio, entert 23
National radio, entert 13	Regional radio, news 22	National radio, news 18
National radio, news 9	Teacher in Malmö 16	Local radio 17
Politician on TV 8	Regional radio, entert 14	Regional radio, news 17
TV, news 7	Local radio 13	TV, news 17

## Attitudes to the Malmö dialect

An overwhelming majority (86%) think that dialects should continue to exist, while only 8% think that they should disappear. Girls are somewhat more positive than boys (89% vs. 83%).

At the same time, one fifth think that M sounds ugly. Almost the same proportion think that it sounds nice, and the rest are neutral. About the same proportion girls and boys think that M sounds ugly, but more boys think that M sounds nice (24% vs. 14% for the girls). Socio-economic group I is more negative than the other two (I: 30% ugly; II: 18%; III: 16%).

When asked about the connection between broad M and education, almost a fifth relate broad M to low education. 6% connect it with high education, and the majority (72%) do not find any connection between the two.

The respondents often characterize broad M in derogatory terms: bleating sounds, horribly ugly, uneducated, nobody wants to speak that way, boorish, silly, suits old ladies, rasists, ugh! Some stress the unclearness (muddled, slurred, careless, difficult to understand), incompleteness (they skip letters, they eat half the word) and slow tempo (slow talk).

But there are more positive characteristics, which often stress masculine features: it's groovy, it's so fucking super beautiful, relaxing, it's broad and heavy and sounds cool.

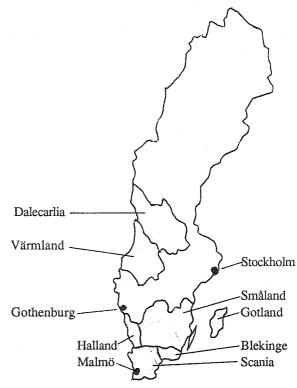


Figure 1. Locations of the dialects.

## Attitudes to other varieties

There were also two questions about attitudes towards some other Swedish varieties, the locations of which can be found on the map (figure 1). In both questions the respondents were asked for each variety to state whether they found it ugly, nice or neither. In table 3 the varieties occur in two rank orders, one for ugliness and one for niceness.

Obviously, foreign-sounding varieties enjoy the least popularity. Since Finland is far away, the pupils probably cannot distinguish between Swedish as spoken by the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland and as spoken by Finns. Thus, the low rating of Finland Swedish is a sign of negative attitudes towards a particular variety of immigrant Swedish, i.e. the one spoken by Finns in Sweden.

Among domestic dialects, the dialect of Gotland is the most negatively evaluated. Neighbouring dialects are not consistently judged more ugly (or nicer) than more distant ones.

# **Table 3.** Attitudes to some Swedish varieties. Figures refer to the percentage that have marked the alternative.

UGLY	NICE
1. Finland Swedish 80	1. Standard Swedish 48
2. Immigrant Swedish 70	2. Gothenburg 47
3. Gotland 53	3. Stockholm 39
4. Dalecarlia 36	4. Scania 30
5. Blekinge 35	5. Småland 20
6. Småland 34	6. Värmland 20
7. Värmland 34	7. Dalecarlia 19
8. Stockholm 30	8. Gotland 15
9. Halland 27	9. Blekinge 14
10. Scania 27	10. Halland 12
11. Gothenburg 24	11. Immigrant Swedish 6
12. Standard Swedish 8	12. Finland Swedish 5

The most positively evaluated variety is Standard Swedish ("as spoken on TV"), followed by the two urban varieties of Gothenburg and Stockholm. Note that the variety of the capital is not as highly valued as that of the second largest city, Gothenburg.

Note also that the percentages in the UGLY column are much higher than in the NICE column. Negative attitudes are obviously more widespread than positive ones.

As can be seen from the figures above, there is a varying percentage of individuals who prefer the third alternative, i.e. they find the variety neither nice nor ugly. For two varieties, those of the neighbouring provinces of Blekinge and Halland, over half of the respondents take a neutral position. For five varieties, the proportion of neutral judges fall below 40%. The varieties are those with a foreign tinge (Finland Swedish and Immigrant Swedish) and the dialect of Gotland, all three negatively evaluated, and the urban varieties of Stockholm and Gothenburg, which awake more positive feelings.

There are 97 respondents with both parents born outside Sweden. These respondents have a somewhat more positive view of immigrant Swedish: 24% think that it sounds nice and 33% that it sounds ugly.

With the same method, dialects in five Scanian places were judged similarly, with one exception: the dialect of Lund, the university town, was put a bit above the other four.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The young people of this study are obviously in favour of dialects in general, since they mostly want to maintain their own way of speech and do not think that dialects should disappear. At the same time, they downgrade the dialect of their own city, placing it below that of other urban centres.

Nevertheless, the local dialect maintains a strong position for local and regional radio transmissions, as shown in table 2. If interest in these media continues to grow, we have a very important counterbalancing force against the Standard. Less encouraging for the prestige of the local dialect is the fact that only a small minority prefer it in rock music, which has a very considerable influence on young people.

Of the four hypotheses presented at the beginning of this paper concerning evaluation of dialects, distance in space accounts badly for the results. I.e., it is not generally the case that more distant dialects are more popular than dialects closer by. Instead, the most popular varieties are those of the cities. The 1980's are indeed a decade of almost exclusively urban culture, and whatever nostalgic longing back to the countryside may have existed in the 1970's is now negligible. The cities dominate the media and offer better economic and other opportunities.

The fact that the dialect of Gothenburg, the second largest city, ranks higher than that of the capital is interesting. It also confirms earlier research on language attitudes in Sweden and is in accordance with Gould's 1975 results concerning preferred place of residence. While Gothenburg can offer the big city thrills, it is not connected with the arrogance of power nor the urban problems of Stockholm.

At the bottom part of the popularity scale we find immigrant varieties. Finland Swedish has probably been construed as a label for Swedish spoken by Finns. Prejudice against immigrants is strong in Malmö, as can be seen from the rise of a local anti-immigration party. Thus, the social connotations of the speakers of the variety have not surprisingly determined the attitudes towards that variety. A change in attitudes towards immigrant Swedish of course requires changes in attitudes towards immigrants, but more foreign accented speech in local and national media might help raise the status of the variety.

The low popularity of the dialect of Gotland is probably not due to any prejudice against the inhabitants of that island. Rather, the very different sound of Gotland speech, with characteristic diphthongization of vowels, is a plausible explanation for the negative attitudes. Also, Gotland will probably seem a forlorn place in the Baltic to young people in Malmö.

This study confirms earlier results about sex differences. Boys are more positive to the Malmö dialect and adjust their own speech less often in the

direction of the Standard. It may seem surprising that girls are more prone than boys to consider themselves speakers of fairly broad dialect. However, this can be due to the fact that girls are more sensitive to deviation from the Standard and the same degree of dialect speech will thus be differently judged by boys and girls.

Social differences also follow the expected pattern, with more negative attitudes towards the local dialect in higher socio-economic groups.

Some possible future developments of this study include collecting data from other parts of Sweden, using a slightly revised questionnaire, and letting a new generation of teenagers in Malmö answer the same questions in a few years' time.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank all pupils who participated and all personnel at schools and at Malmö Skolkontor who made this study possible. Lennart Nilsson, Jan Svensson and Tor Hultman have assisted in different ways, and Bengt Sigurd has been an indefatigable commentator on the survey and resulting reports.

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## APPENDIX

A B

The questionnaire (translated version)

SOME OUESTIONS ABOUT DIALECTS

I am doing a study of young people's attitudes towards dialects and I would like you to answer some questions. Try and answer all questions yourself, as honestly as you can. Your answers are totally anonymous. Write clearly in block letters.

```
1. What school do you go to?
 2. What grade are you in?
 3. Draw a circle around the right letter:
         I am a girl
         I am a boy
 4. What profession does your mother have?
 5. What profession does your father have?
 6. What education does your mother have?
         Compulsory school or the equivalent
         Gymnasium or the equivalent
         University or the equivalent
         Don't know
7. What education does your father have? (Same alternatives as in 6)
 8. What part of the city do you live in?
9. Where do you live?
         In an apartment
         In a row house
         In a detached house
 10. What average grades did you get last? (Four alternatives)
11. What do you want to do when you leave the ninth grade?
         Go the the Gymnasium and then work
         Go to the Gymnasium and then continue studying
 12. What do you want to be?
13. Have you lived in Malmö all your life?
         Ýes
14. If you haven't lived in Malmö all the time, where did you live? Write the place and the
   year(s).
15. Where was your mother born?
16. Where was your father born?
17. What dialect does your mother speak?
18. What dialect does your father speak?
19. Draw a circle around the right letter:
         I speak broad Malmöese
         I speak rather a lot of Malmöese
         I speak a little Malmöese
Ď
        I don't speak Malmöese at all
20.
Α
         Malmöese sounds ugly
B
C
         Malmöese sounds nice
         Malmöese sounds neither ugly nor nice
21.
A
B
C
22.
        I want to speak more Malmöese
        I want to speak less Malmöese
        I want to speak as I do now
```

It is good that dialects remain Dialects should preferably disappear 23. What do you think of the dialect in these places? (Ugly, nice, neither nor) Scania; Småland; Blekinge; Halland; Gothenburg; Stockholm; Gotland; Värmland; Dalecarlia 24. What do you think of these ways of speaking? (Alternatives as in 23)
Standard Swedish (as spoken on TV); Finland Swedish; Immigrant Swedish 25. What do you think of the dialect in these places? (Alternatives as in 23) Lund; Landskrona; Helsingborg; Trelleborg; Kristianstad 26. What is most fitting? (Malmöese, Standard Swedish, Equally good) News on TV; Entertainment on TV; News on national radio; Entertainment on national radio; News on regional radio; Entertainment on regional radio; Local radio; Rock music; Play at city theatre; Politician in Malmö; Politician on TV; Teacher in Malmö. 27. People with high education in Malmö often speak broad Malmöese Α В People with low education in Malmö often speak broad Malmöese Education doesn't have to do with whether you speak broad Malmöese or not 28. What is typical of broad Malmöese? 29. Α People speak different kinds of Malmöese in different parts of Malmö People speak the same kind of Malmöese in all parts of Malmö 30. If you think people speak differently, can you mention any differences? Write the name of the district and how they speak there. Boys speak more Malmöese than girls Α В Girls speak more Malmöese than boys C Boys and girls speak as much Malmöese 32. I sometimes try to speak less Malmöese I never try to speak less Malmöese 33. If you try to speak less Malmöese sometimes, when do you do it?

Thank you very much for your help! Hans Dahlbäck Lund University, Dept. of Linguistics Working Papers 33 (1988), 77-90

## Who's Got the Model?

Problems in Analyzing Mother-Child Communication in Dyads with Internationally Adopted Children

## Boel De Geer

## Abstract1

Three different models for the analysis of dialogues were reviewed and applied to a corpus of video-recordings with play interaction between an internationally adopted child and his mother. They boy had only been living with his new family in Sweden for 0-4 weeks when the different recordings were made. It was found that all existing models would have to be adapted if applied to this corpus. One reason for this is that at least for the child, the somatic modality, i.e. expressed by means of gaze, touch, pointing, reaching etc., is a dominating and also very well developed channel of communication. Suggestions were made for modifications of the existing models in the direction of a more suitable design.

## INTRODUCTION

Starting to dig in the more or less virgin land of the language acquisition of internationally adopted children, I find myself looking for a model for analyzing my data which consists of video-taped interaction between internationally adopted children and their mothers. There are many different models for analyzing discourse and communication, some of them especially adapted for adult-child dyads, the adult part of the dyad most frequently being the mother.

It seems natural to me to at least try to use one of the already existing models. This will enable comparison with at least the sample on which the model in question is based, and it would indeed be interesting and important to compare the language acquisition of the internationally adopted children to that of Swedish children and possibly also of immigrant children.

## SOME ASPECTS ON DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Analysis of communication, and particularly analysis of dialogues and conversation, has been of interest not only to linguists but also to psychologists and ethnomethologists over the past one or two decades (e.g. Levinson 1983,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This is an abbreviated version of an unpublished paper with the same heading. Anyone interested in the complete version should contact the author at the following address: Department of Linguistics and Phonetics, Child Language Research Institute, Lund University, Helgonabacken 12, 223 62 LUND.