

**Patterns of linguistic change in a late modern society  
– different variables; different patterns**

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The LANCHART project investigates language change in real time. Panel studies of two age cohorts, based on old recordings from the 1970s and 80s and recent re-recordings have been carried out at six different sites in Denmark. In addition, new recordings have been made with teenagers at the same locations, and studies of attitudes towards local as well as standard varieties of Danish are also included in the study.

The language attitudes studies together with analyses of the history of the Danish speech community provide basis for the *standardization hypothesis* that linguistic changes in the late modern Danish speech community originate in Copenhagen and spread from there to the rest of the country in a pace determined by (geographical or cultural) distance to Copenhagen. In the paper we test this hypothesis by analysing the geographical and social distribution of three grammatical and five phonetic variables across communities.

For all the variables, there are significant differences between localities, between age cohorts (i.e. change in apparent time), and between old and new recordings (i.e. change in real time). The central question addressed is whether the patterns of variation may be explained by the standardization hypothesis.

The results do not support the hypothesis in a simple way, but they can be understood as different patterns of linguistic change, all consistent with the standardisation hypothesis. The results highlight the relationship between stable variation and unidirectional variation leading to change: The distributions of some of the variables indicate that the direction of change has reversed during the time period covered in the study, whereas other variables show a pattern of change towards completion. We argue that the patterns of change for the different variables need different interpretations, and that this has to do with social factors as well as the history of the specific variables.