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The *hows* and *whys* of language-related stereotypes: A discussion based on Scandinavian examples

Abstract (English)

The article compares widely shared attitudes (stereotypes) which appear in analyses of language-related evaluative data that have been elicited by using two different methodological approaches: questionnaire-based elicitation and speaker evaluation experiments. Results obtained in three survey studies in Scandinavia are reported and discussed. The results indicate, on the one hand, that *overt* stereotypical judgements – as propagated in ‘learned’ public discourse – have an immense impact on ‘lay’ people who readily reproduce them in answers to direct questioning about language, as in an interview or a questionnaire. At the same time, all three studies indicate, on the other hand, that ‘lay’ people share opposite, *covert* stereotypical judgements, which reflect ‘lived experience’ and may appear in speaker evaluation experiments. In any attempt at intervention in the domain of language-related stereotypes and prejudice (in terms of education, policies and politics), it will be wise to take into account the possible divergence between *overt* and *covert* stereotypical judgements.

Abstract (Dansk)

Artiklen sammenligner vidt udbredte holdninger (stereotypier) som fremkommer ved brug af to forskellige metodologiske tilgange til elicitering af sproglaterede holdningsdata: spørgeskemabaseret elicitering og sprogbrugerevalueringseksperimenter. Der rapporteres og diskuteres resultater fra tre survey-undersøgelser i Skandinavien. På den ene side tyder resultaterne på at *overt* stereotype vurderinger – som udbredes i ‘lærd’ offentlig diskurs – har enorm indflydelse på ‘almindelige’ mennesker, som beredvilligt reproducerer dem når de fx i interview og spørgeskemaer udsættes for direkte udspørgning om sprog. På den anden side synes alle tre studier samtidig at vise at ‘almindelige’ mennesker er fælles om modsatte, *covert* stereotype vurderinger, som genspejler ‘levet erfaring’ og viser sig i sprogbrugerevalueringseksperimenter. Ethvert forsøg på at ville påvirke sproglaterede stereotypier og fordomme (i form af pædagogiske og politiske tiltag) gør klogt i at regne med at der kan være forskel på *overt* og *covert* stereotype vurderinger.

1. Introduction: stereotypes – consciousness – behaviour¹

1.1 Stereotypes

As suggested in the invitation to this EFNIL conference on *Stereotypes and linguistic prejudices in Europe*, a ‘stereotype’ can be defined as a generalising

¹ I am grateful to Frans Gregersen for helpful comments on an earlier version of this article.

opinion or belief which is widely shared by the members of a community.² Fundamentally, stereotyping is a categorisation process which helps us to ‘orient’ ourselves in the world by turning chaos into order, shades of grey into either black or white. According to social psychologists, an important aspect of categorisation is that the process involves comparison and evaluation (e.g. Hogg/ Abrams 1988). Thus, there is evaluative up- and downgrading involved in categorisation, just as there is both *positive* and *negative* evaluation involved in ‘prejudice’ (as noted in the EFNIL invitation).

1.2 Stereotypes and consciousness

A more tricky issue is how we should see stereotypes in relation to consciousness or awareness. Within sociolinguistics, the term *stereotype* is used technically (in the Labovian, variationist tradition) to refer to *variables* which are “the overt topics of social comment” (Labov 1972, 180; 1994, 78) – for instance, the presence or absence of ‘r after vowels’ in the pronunciation of English words like *car*, *her*, *door*, etc. But *stereotype* is also used in its everyday sense (e.g. in studies of language attitudes (Garrett 2010) and ‘folk linguistics’ (Niedzielski/Preston 2003)) to refer to the *comments* which may target particular variables (‘car with an r sounds awful’) as well as whole varieties (‘American English sounds awful’). Thus, the core aspect of both uses of *stereotype* refers to particular ways of talking about language that are common and shared, in the sense that they are readily available in public discourse.

However, ‘overt commenting’ was not included in our definition of stereotype (in Section 1.1). If we stay with a definition of stereotypes as generalising opinions and beliefs which are widely shared – but not necessarily represented in public discourse – there are substantial theoretical and methodological implications to be considered. In terms of theory, we need to consider how stereotypes may exist at another (lower?) level of consciousness/awareness than the level which is sustained by and materialises in ‘talk’. For us to be entitled to argue for the existence of another ‘hidden’ or ‘implicit’ set of shared values (corresponding to Labov’s notion of ‘covert’ values (Labov 1972, 249; 2001, 196, 222)), we will have to establish empirically that common language-related judgements may differ depending on whether they are readily available in public discourse (i.e. *overt*) or not (i.e. *covert*).

In terms of methodology, the hypothesised existence of language-related values that are shared but not necessarily present in public discourse seems to necessitate the use of other data-gathering methods than those which are purely language-based, such as interviews and questionnaires (which is not to deny, of

² See Stickel in this volume.

course, that analyses can extract ‘implicit’ attitudes from what people say and write). In the Scandinavian investigations reported below, we have made use of various ‘speaker evaluation experiments’ (SEE).

1.3 Stereotypes and behaviour

Another tricky issue we need to consider concerns the complex relationship between stereotypes and behaviour. Although it has been a well-established fact since LaPiere’s famous 1934 study that stereotypical attitudes do not necessarily predict people’s behaviour in concrete encounters, there is little doubt that stereotypes, beyond their fundamental cognitive function, have consequences ‘in practice’. In the domain of language, there are certainly consequences for the evaluative hierarchisation and use of language varieties in society, and also for how people treat each other in interpersonal and intergroup encounters. The complexity of the stereotype-behaviour relationship can only be augmented by the possible existence of a complex stereotype-consciousness relationship. It seems reasonable to suspect that *overt* and *covert* stereotypical judgements (may) play different roles in ‘the practice’ of everyday life of speakers in their societies. In any case, I want to argue that any attempt at influencing judgments and behaviours in the societal domain of language – in terms of politics, policies, education – should take into account the potential existence of two modes of stereotypical judgement – *overt* and *covert* – with potentially different roles and consequences in societal life.

1.4 Structure of the article

The suggestion that *overt* and *covert* language-related shared values (stereotypes) may diverge, with different practical consequences, is derived from empirical evidence established in two survey studies of attitudes – towards varieties of Danish, and towards English influence in the Nordic countries – carried out within the frameworks of the LANCHART and MIN projects. These studies operationalised the distinction between *overt* and *covert* stereotypes in terms of consciously and subconsciously offered judgements – i.e. judgements offered by subjects being aware or non-aware of judging (an aspect of) language. In what follows, I summarize the theoretical/methodological approaches and findings of the LANCHART and MIN studies as an introduction to the presentation of survey results from longitudinal studies of the language-ideological situation in the Øresund region, carried out within the framework of a third project: the DASVA project.

2 The evaluative hierarchisation of Danish varieties (the LANCHART studies³)

2.1 The accents of contemporary Standard Danish

Differences of a ‘dialectal’ nature at linguistic levels other than phonetics are practically non-existing among present-day Danish adolescents (Pedersen 2003); in accordance with quite common sociolinguistic terminology, we may say that all speak *accents* of Standard Danish.

The phonetic variation in question includes segments (both vowels and consonants) and prosody. The segmental variation spreads to all corners of the country from Copenhagen; the linguistic standardisation (homogenisation) of Denmark is a ‘pure Copenhagenisation’ (Maegaard et al. 2013). Some of this variation used to be linked to social class stereotypes and therefore referred to as ‘high vs. low Copenhagen’ in much Danish sociolinguistic literature (Brink/Lund 1975), but today the social class associations are clearly less predominant. In consequence, it has become common to say in more recent literature that adolescent segmental variation today consists of ‘conservative’ variants (some of which used to be ‘high’) and ‘modern’ variants (some of which used to be ‘low’). To the extent that Standard Danish is heard as ‘local’, this will typically be due to prosodic features that differ from Copenhagen prosody (Kristiansen/Pharao/Maegaard 2013). Speech with the characteristics mentioned above will be called CONSERVATIVE, MODERN and LOCAL respectively in what follows.

2.2 Subconsciously offered judgements of Danish accents (SEE results)

The described phonetic variation can be assumed to be part of social-grouping and identity-formation processes among adolescents in any community in contemporary Denmark. In a nation-wide study, the LANCHART centre investigated how a representative sample of some 600 9th graders (age 15-16) evaluated audio-recorded adolescent speakers of CONSERVATIVE, MODERN and LOCAL in a speaker evaluation experiment (SEE) which was designed and administered in a way that prevented listener-judges from becoming aware of its purpose in respect of attitudes to language variation.

³ The LANCHART centre (<http://lanchart.hum.ku.dk/>) was initiated and financed by the Danish National Research Foundation (grant DNR63) for the ten year period 2005-2015 and directed by Professor Frans Gregersen, University of Copenhagen. The centre continues as part of UCPH’s Department of Nordic Research. LANCHART investigates ‘LANguage CHAnge in Real Time’ and has re-interviewed as many as possible of the informants who participated in sociolinguistic studies in Denmark in the 1970-1980s. Many kinds of language-ideological data have also been collected.

The speakers (four per accent) were evaluated on eight seven-point scales representing ‘personality traits’. Results showed the MODERN accent to be strongly upgraded, compared to the other two accents, on *dynamic* values (‘fascinating’, ‘interesting’, ‘cool’, ‘nice’), while CONSERVATIVE did as well or better on *superiority* values (‘intelligent’, ‘conscientious’, ‘goal-directed’, ‘trustworthy’). LOCAL was the sure loser on all values. In other words, in all research sites outside of Copenhagen (the SEEs carried out in Copenhagen proper included only CONSERVATIVE and MODERN), adolescents strongly downgraded what in most cases would represent their ‘own’ LOCAL way of speaking, i.e. Standard with a touch of local prosody.

While the LOCAL speakers used in the SEEs did of course differ between research sites, the CONSERVATIVE and MODERN speakers were the same (adolescents from Copenhagen). An important finding with regard to the issue of shared values (stereotypes) was that the non-Copenhagen listener-judges ascribed the same amount of ‘personality value’ to the CONSERVATIVE and MODERN voices as their Copenhagen peers. The evaluative patterns obtained in our SEEs look like copies of each other across Denmark. Thus, the linguistic variation which is relevant to social identifications among Danish adolescents is indeed subject to subconscious stereotyping. *The covert values are indeed shared.* The practical consequences are plain to see in the domain of language usage: in recent decades, ‘local’ features have largely disappeared from the speech of young non-Copenhagensers (more and more even in terms of prosody); Standard (i.e. Copenhagen) speech is taking over, predominantly in its MODERN version.

2.3 Consciously offered judgements of Danish ‘dialect names’ (LRT results)

In contrast, when the same adolescents (after having assessed the SEE voices in a *non-awareness* condition) were given a list of Danish varieties, designated by their commonly known ‘names’, and were asked to rank them according to their own preference in terms of ‘liking’, they (now in the *awareness* condition of a so-called ‘label ranking task’, LRT) turned the evaluative hierarchisation upside down: their own *local dialect name* was ranked in top position, followed by *rigsdansk* (corresponding to Standard Danish in common parlance, and in our terminology to CONSERVATIVE), and with *københavnsk* (corresponding to Copenhagen ‘working class’ dialect in common parlance, MODERN in our terminology) further down in the ranking – with the exception of the Copenhagen adolescents who, following the principle of favouring the local dialect name, gave top position to *københavnsk*. (A detailed presentation of the LANCHART attitudes studies can be found in Kristiansen 2009.)

Thus, the evaluative principle behind the results obtained in our LRTs appears to be the same across Denmark. The linguistic variation which is relevant to social

identifications among Danish adolescents is indeed subject also to conscious stereotyping. *The overt values are indeed shared as well.* However, as LOCAL is disappearing while MODERN spreads, it is plain to see that the consciously professed attitudes have no practical consequences in the domain of language usage in Denmark. (We may, however, suspect that they do have practical consequences in other domains of Danish societal life.)

2.4 Why the difference between SEE and LRT results?

In sum, Danish adolescents produce opposite evaluative hierarchisations depending on whether they are aware or non-aware of offering language attitudes. Notwithstanding the clarity of this picture, there is no obviously correct answer to *why* this is so; but we do have suggestions along the following lines:

In respect of the adolescents' *overt* evaluative hierarchisation – shared nationwide – it seems to reproduce the way in which the 'norm and variation' issue has been treated in 'official' language ideology since the 1960s. In various instantiations of 'elite discourse', *rigsdansk* (CONSERVATIVE) and *dialekterne* ('the dialects') are interchangeably extolled depending on whether the evaluative perspective is 'communicative effectiveness' or 'social identity', while *københavnsk* (MODERN) retains its traditional stigma. This is the case not least in the domain of primary schooling, where teachers work under directives and guidelines for mother tongue education that explicitly construe the (vital and spreading) MODERN accent as a 'generational problem' to be dealt with by teachers, while 'tolerance, respect and love' is required for the (dying or dead) LOCAL forms of language, 'the dialects' (Kristiansen 1990).

As to the adolescents' *covert* evaluative hierarchisation – again shared nationwide – it is hard to see how it can result from anything other than shared experience of how the 'norm and variation' issue is treated in the modern media, where 'local' colouring of speech hardly exists (except to provoke ridicule), while MODERN has become increasingly frequent on broadcast radio and TV since the 1960-70s, arguably as the language of 'dynamic' informality. (Both production and perception aspects of this development are studied in Thøgersen and Phrao 2013; Thøgersen 2016. Kristiansen 2014 discusses the media's role in the development of the very different language-ideological situations in Denmark and Norway.)

3. The ‘purism profiles’ of Scandinavian speech communities (the MIN studies⁴)

3.1 The ‘purism ranking’ of Nordic speech communities in public discourse

Resulting from long-standing historical relationships of domination and subordination in the Nordic area – with Denmark dominating Iceland, the Faroes and Norway in the west, and Sweden dominating Finland in the east – the Nordic speech communities have developed ‘official’ language politics which show considerable differentiation in terms of ‘external purism’: measures taken to limit and eradicate linguistic influence from the outside. The perception of ‘purism’ differences involved is largely shared by linguists engaged in language politics, who easily agree on ranking the Nordic communities from more to less purist as follows: ICELANDIC > FAROESE > NORWEGIAN > FINNISH > FINLAND-SWEDISH > SWEDEN-SWEDISH > DANISH (see Lund 1986, 35; Vikør 1995, 181).

This agreement about ‘Nordic purism’ among ‘experts’ can be taken to reflect a shared acquaintance with the realities of language politics. But how do we explain that ‘lay people’ in all of the communities – in responses to a questionnaire-type approach to the ‘Nordic purism’ issue as part of qualitative interviews – by and large (re)produce the ‘expert’ ranking (see Fig. 2 in Kristiansen/Sandøy 2010, 4)? The ‘lay’ ranking can hardly result from generally existing first-hand acquaintance with language politics across the whole Nordic area from Iceland to Finland. It must be understood as resulting from generally existing acquaintance with ‘expert’ discourse about purism in Nordic language politics, which in itself is surprising. However, the shared nature of this acquaintance, together with the ability and readiness to reproduce it, once again (as in the case of the ‘official’ evaluation of Danish varieties, see 2.4) testifies to the significant impact of ‘expert’ discourse on what people consciously have ‘to say’ about language.

3.2 ‘Purism profiles’ emerging from consciously offered data (Interview)

Even more intriguingly, when we hired professional polling organisations to conduct telephone interviews with representative population samples (total N about 6000) and ask some questions (constructed to be the ‘same’ as far as this is possible across different languages and communities) about people’s own opin-

⁴ The MIN project (Modern Import words in the languages in the Nordic countries; <http://folk.uib.no/hnohs/MIN/>) was initiated by the then existing Nordic Language Council (*Nordisk Språkråd*), was led by Professor Helge Sandøy, University of Bergen, and was financially supported by various sources in the period 2000–2010. For detailed presentations of the MIN attitudes studies, see Kristiansen/Vikør (2005), Kristiansen (2005); Kristiansen (2010).

ions about the influence of English in their respective languages and communities, comparative analyses of the answers again reproduced the same ‘purism’ ranking.

Unless this finding is a strange coincidence, it indicates that the relative level of ‘purism’ which is ascribed to each of the Nordic communities in comparative meta-discourse (among experts and lay people alike) exists in each community in a way which makes its population produce exactly that level when offering their own opinions about the English influence. If that indeed is the case, it certainly testifies to an amazing level of effectiveness of ‘official’ language-ideological discourse, which is able to instil a particular level of language-ideological purism in people and prompt them to reproduce that level ‘correctly’ in talk about language (as the population average in comparison with the other population averages). In the face of such effectiveness in establishing shared (stereotypical) views in a population, there is no reason for institutions with language-related responsibilities (in terms of politics, policies, education) to be pessimistic about their potential for ‘governing’ the language-ideological sphere of society – the *overt* part of it, that is.

3.3 ‘Purism profiles’ emerging from subconsciously offered data (SEE)

When we turn to the *covert* part, as we also did in the MIN project, things look different. In SEEs with roughly 600 participants in each community (with a broad range in terms of background factors, although not strictly representative as in the telephone survey), we used the ‘matched guise technique’: the same speaker appeared twice in the audio-recorded stimulus material, reading the same news text on an IT-related theme (with presumably ‘naturally occurring’ English colouring), once in a ‘pure’ national guise (voice) and once in a slightly English-coloured guise. The matched guises were ‘concealed’ in-between three filler voices who also read the same text with some minor variation included. The cover-story presented to the respondents said that the five speakers (four in reality) were applicants for a position as news reader at a radio station, and that they had been given ten minutes to edit the text and prepare it for presentation to the radio audience. The task of the respondents was to assess the applicants on eight scales (*ambitious, intelligent, independent, efficient, pleasant, trustworthy, interesting, relaxed*) before ranking them according to their suitability for the job.

The text was translated into all the languages involved, and we made efforts to make the ‘English-colouring’ the ‘same’ in all languages – which is impossible, of course. There are clear differences among the languages and communities in question with regard to how ‘natural’ ‘English-colouring’ sounds, especially in news being read on the radio. This is no doubt the reason why we only succeeded in avoiding arousing awareness among the SEE participants of the purpose of

the experiment (i.e. attitudes to English influence) in the ‘central’ Scandinavian-language communities, i.e. the Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, and Finland-Swedish communities, but were less successful in the Icelandic, Faeroes and Finnish communities. Comparison of *overt* and *covert* shared attitudes towards English influence is therefore limited to the ‘central’ Scandinavian-language communities. In these communities, the SEE results showed the opposite picture of the one which emerged from consciously offered answers: Danes, followed by Swedes, turned out to be far more negative to the English-coloured guise than to the ‘pure’ national guise, whereas Norwegians and Finland-Swedes showed no difference, or even a tendency to react more positively to the English-coloured guise than to the ‘pure’ national guise.

In order to explain the existence of this difference in *covert* (subconscious) tolerance of English influence, we may again (as in the case of Danish varieties, see 2.4) consider the impact of the media on *covert* language ideology in a society. For Norwegians, comprehensive dialectal variation is the normal everyday media experience. For most Finland-Swedes, living with two languages (Swedish and Finnish) is part of their everyday life, including media usage. Even if these everyday experiences have little to do with English, it seems likely that the habituation to variation and difference as the normal media situation makes people more accepting and tolerant of variation and ‘accented’ speech in general, including English-colouring. If that is a correct interpretation, our findings sustain the view that *covert* language ideology can be influenced through policies for language use in the media.

With regard to the issue of practical consequences in terms of language use, we may notice that another MIN sub-project found that Norwegian newspapers (editorial texts) in 2000 had the highest frequency of English words compared with newspapers in any of the other six communities, and also that this frequency had increased most in Norwegian newspapers since 1975. Again, then, we see that *covert* attitudes correspond to changes in use in a way that *overt* attitudes do not.

4. Stereotypes across Øresund (the DASVA studies⁵)

4.1 Purpose and design of the DASVA attitudinal studies

Øresund is the belt which separates Eastern Denmark from Sweden. The first (and so far only) bridge across the belt was opened in the summer of 2000. In accordance with the European Union’s ‘cross-border cooperation’ policy, which aims to “exploit the untapped growth potential in border areas” (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/cross-border/#9), the joint Danish/Swedish political aim was, and is, for the bridge to contribute to developing the Øresund-region into an economical stronghold in Northern Europe.

⁵ For a general presentation of the DASVA project, see Gregersen (2003).

In the longitudinal project called DASVA (Danish/Swedish Accommodation), the idea is to follow the language situation in the Øresund region as it develops after the opening of the bridge in terms of (i) linguistic *production*, i.e. how the neighbouring languages, Danish and Swedish, are used in various encounters between Danes and Swedes, (ii) mutual linguistic *intelligibility*, i.e. how well Danes and Swedes understand each other's languages, and (iii) *attitudes*. Only the latter aspect, attitudes, will be illuminated in what follows. Attitudinal data has been collected twice, first in 2001, and again in 2014.

With the aim of constructing as representative a sample as practically possible, data has been collected in a variety of social contexts where many people come together (workplaces, choir sessions, rotary meetings, educational settings). Only people who reported having either Danish or Swedish as a first language are included in the analyses below. There were 569 of these in 2001, and 683 in 2014. (In both years, 6.6 per cent of the total sample either reported having 'another' first language or did not give any information about themselves in this respect.)

Exactly the same methods were used for the 2001 and 2014 data collections. Informants first participated in a SEE (Speaker Evaluation Experiment) where they reacted to three degrees of linguistic accommodation by speakers of both their own language and the neighbour's language. Then, in a short questionnaire, they expressed their degree of agreement with a number of statements concerning the cross-border situation in the Øresund region.

As it would hardly be possible to design and administer a SEE with Danish and Swedish voices, whether accommodating or not, in a way that prevents subjects from becoming aware of the language-attitudes purpose of the experiment, the DASVA SEE differed from the SEEs used in the LANCHART and MIN studies by being designed without the aim of eliciting subconsciously offered attitudes; participants in the experiments were aware of giving away attitudes towards language. Thus, the rationale behind the use of two data elicitation methods is not to tap into a possible difference between *overt* and *covert* values in terms of consciously and subconsciously offered judgements, but to allow for registration of a possible difference in how lived experience affects language-related evaluations which are offered, on the one hand, as answers to questions about language beauty presented 'abstractly' in terms of language names (questionnaire), and on the other hand, as answers to questions about the functionality and beauty of 'concrete' speech (SEE). Perhaps lived experience 'after the bridge' promotes the development of new values which, without (yet?) having entered public discourse, may be trackable in reactions to 'concrete' speech? We may find that the *overt* values of public discourse are just not reproduced in the SEE data (although consciously offered); in which case we will say that the SEE judgements reflect *covert* values.

4.2 The DASVA Questionnaire study

As we think that the language-ideological situation should be seen as one of several dimensions of the general ‘attitudes-across-Øresund’ situation, the informants were presented with 9 evaluative assertions, of which 3 related to *integration* in the Øresund region, 3 related to the *neighbour* (Swedes in the case of Danes, and Danes in the case of Swedes), and 3 related to *language*. The informants signalled their degree of agreement/disagreement by ticking off on five-point scales from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’.

4.2.1 Attitudes towards *integration*

The assertions⁶ exploring attitudes towards cross-border *integration* were: (1) Danes and Swedes in the Øresund region should work closer together. (2) It is good that the bridge brings Danes and Swedes closer together. (3) It is good that we have got the bridge. The results showed Swedes to be the more positive on the *integration* dimension, both in 2001 and 2014 ($p < .001$ on all three items). This pattern no doubt reflects the asymmetric job market situation in the Øresund region, which leads Swedes to see job opportunities (on the Danish side), whereas Danes see threats to their jobs (from an incoming Swedish workforce).

The three *integration* items were intended to represent a gradual change of perspective – from a focus on Swedish-Danish cooperation ‘abstractly’ (item 1), through a focus on the cooperation-promoting role of the bridge (item 2), to a focus on the ‘concrete’ bridge (item 3). The 2001 results showed that both Swedes and Danes were more enthusiastic about cooperation in the abstract than about the ‘concrete’ bridge (with scores on the cooperation/bridge-combining item 2 lying in between). Interestingly, the 2014 results produced the reverse ordering. Now, on both sides of the belt, people were more enthusiastic about the ‘concrete’ bridge (item 3) and its role in promoting cooperation (item 2) than about cooperation ‘abstractly’ (item 1). This reversal resulted from divergent developments in the scores on the three *integration* items: compared with 2001, we found more positive scores in 2014 (i.e. more agreement with the positively formulated assertions) on items 3 and 2 in both populations (all 4 p 's $< .001$) whereas item 1 yielded less positive scores in 2014 in the Danish population ($p < .01$) and no change in the Swedish population.

Although these reactions to the *integration* assertions may not qualify as stereotypical opinions about the *neighbour* and their *language* (the theme of the EFNIL conference), I include them here because they clearly illustrate my main

⁶ The assertions are shown as they appeared in the Danish version of the questionnaire; the Swedish version was the same with the appropriate rearrangement of Danes/Danish and Swedes/Swedish. In the questionnaire, the assertions appeared in another ordering, not grouped into the three dimensions as in this presentation.

point about the permanent potential of discord between opinions which result from exposure to public discourse and opinions which result from lived experience. Prior to and during the construction of the bridge, opposing views and various warnings – primarily concerned with possible negative consequences for the marine environment – were strongly present in public discourse on both sides of the belt, and that may well explain the relative caution with which people praised the benefits of the bridge in 2001. By 2014, the lack of manifest negative consequences had ousted such opposition completely from public discourse, and most people had time and again experienced ‘how easy and beautiful’ it is to take the bridge across the belt.

In addition, the development of a less positive view of Dano-Swedish cooperation among Danes (item 1) may arguably result from lived experience of the increasing number of Swedes who do in fact commute across the bridge to work on the Danish side – an experience which Danes may well perceive as a growing threat to their jobs. In any case – and importantly for the argument about the disharmony between stereotypes resulting from public discourse and stereotypes resulting from lived experience – if we take it that the increased negativity towards cooperation with Swedes is experience-based, it is contradicted by an increased positivity towards Swedes as *neighbours* (as we shall see in Section 4.2.2), a development which no doubt is rooted in public discourse rather than lived experience.

4.2.2 Attitudes towards the *neighbour*

The characterising adjectives used in the questionnaire assertions which focused on attitudes towards the *neighbour* were the same (here in Danish spelling): (4) Swedes are *usympatiske*; (5) Swedes are *sympatiske*; (6) Swedes are *dygtige*. The meaning of *sympatisk* is ‘pleasant, nice, likeable’, whereas *usympatisk* means the opposite. By asking in this way for assessments of pleasantness/unpleasantness, we wanted to see if people are more prone to express disagreement with a negative characterisation of the *neighbour* than to express agreement with a positive characterisation. To be *dygtig* is to be ‘clever, able, capable’.

Regarding ‘pleasantness’ (items 4 and 5), it turned out that both Danes and Swedes expressed more disagreement with the negative characterisation (*usympatisk*) than agreement with the positive characterisation (*sympatisk*), both in 2001 and 2014. However, an intriguing change occurred in the evaluation pattern. In 2001, Swedes were more positive than Danes in seeing their *neighbour* as ‘pleasant’, whether expressed as disagreement with the negative characterisation (*usympatisk*) or agreement with the positive characterisation (*sympatisk*) ($p < .001$ on both items). This difference did not reappear in 2014, due to an opposite development in the two populations: whereas Swedes were ranked higher on ‘pleasantness’ by Danes, Swedes now saw Danes as less pleasant than in 2001.

This change appeared on both ‘pleasantness’ items, but, interestingly enough, in an asymmetrical way in terms of statistical significance: whereas Danes found it easier to express agreement with the view of Swedes as *sympatiske* ($p < .05$), Swedes were less prone to express disagreement with the view of Danes as *usympatiske* ($p < .01$). Arguably, this relative re-evaluation from 2001 to 2014 is likely to reflect a more general trend in this period with regard to how the neighbours see each other as ‘friendly and open’ (the Swedes) versus ‘hostile and closed’ (the Danes) as a consequence of how the two countries’ strongly diverging politics with regard to fugitives and migrating people in general have developed in public discourse.

With regard to how the neighbours see each other in terms of ‘cleverness’ (item 6), there was no difference in 2001, whereas Swedes had become more positive than Danes in 2014 ($p < .001$). This greater positivity among Swedes may reflect more positive experiences in actual cooperation, but it should be noticed that the development *within* the Swedish group (from the 2001 to the 2014 sample) is not statistically significant.

4.2.3 Attitudes towards *language*

The 3 statements relating to *language* were: (7) Danish is a beautiful language; (8) Swedish is a beautiful language; (9) Danish children should learn more Swedish in school. The term used for ‘beautiful’ language was *pænt* in Danish, *snyggt* in Swedish.

Figure 1 presents a comparison of first the 2001 results and then the 2014 results across the two national groups. Grey shading highlights the more positive group. We see that Swedes by far surpass Danes in finding their own language beautiful (item 7), whereas Danes by far surpass Swedes in finding the neighbour’s language beautiful (item 8) – both in 2001 and 2014.

As to the issue of whether their own children should learn more of the neighbour’s language in school (item 9), we notice that Swedes expressed more readiness than Danes in that regard in 2001, but that this difference had disappeared in 2014.

The presentation of the same results in Figure 2 focuses on the difference across years (2001 and 2014) within each of the national groups, and thus indicates whether the development is positive or negative (to the extent that we take a stronger agreement with the assertions in 2014 than in 2001 to represent a positive development). In the Swedish population, there is no change in how Swedish and Danish are seen (items 7 and 8), and less support for the view that Swedish children should learn more Danish in school (item 9). In contrast, Danes have become stronger in their conviction that Swedish is a beautiful language (item 8), and that Danish children should learn more Swedish in school (item 9). At the same time, they have become less convinced that Danish is a beautiful language (item 7).

	Swedes	Danes	sign.
2001	Nmax=216	Nmax=353	
(7) [own] is a beautiful language	1,82	2,62	***
(8) [neighbour's] is a beautiful language	2,83	2,43	***
(9) learn more of neighbour's lang. in school	2,39	2,99	***
2014	Nmax=118	Nmax=565	
(7) [own] is a beautiful language	2,03	2,93	***
(8) [neighbour's] is a beautiful language	2,85	2,06	***
(9) learn more of neighbour's lang. in school	2,83	2,76	ns

*** = $p < .001$, ns = non-significant (test: Mann-Whitney)

Fig. 1: Comparison *across* Swedes and Danes *within* years on the language items
(The lower the mean score (on 5-point scales), the stronger the agreement with the assertions. Grey shading highlights the more positive group)

	2001	2014	sign.
Swedes	Nmax=216	Nmax=118	
(7) Swedish is a beautiful language	1,82	2,03	ns
(8) Danish is a beautiful language	2,83	2,85	ns
(9) Sw children should learn Da in school	2,39	2,83	**
Danes	Nmax=353	Nmax=565	
(7) Danish is a beautiful language	2,62	2,93	***
(8) Swedish is a beautiful language	2,43	2,06	***
(9) Da children should learn Sw in school	2,99	2,76	**

*** = $p < .001$, ** = $p < .01$, ns = non-significant (test: Mann-Whitney)

Fig. 2: Comparison *within* Swedes and Danes *across* years on the language items
(The lower the mean score (on 5-point scales), the stronger the agreement with the assertions. Grey shading highlights the more positive year)

Although the increased positivity among Danes towards learning Swedish corresponds to their stronger upgrading of Swedish as a beautiful language, there is probably no interesting connection to be noted here. Reality actually shows the opposite development in the level of interest in learning more of the neighbour's language. A variety of Danish language courses and classes have developed on the Swedish side, whereas nothing similar has happened on the Danish side.

By focusing on the scores on items 7 and 8 within Swedes and Danes, we notice that Swedes, not surprisingly, think better of their own Swedish language than of the neighbour's Danish language, both in 2001 (1,82 vs. 2,83) and in 2014 (2,03 vs. 2,85) – but we also notice, more intriguingly, that the Danes follow the Swedes in this upgrading of the Swedish language relative to their own Danish language, both in 2001 (2,43 vs. 2,62) and in 2014 (2,06 vs. 2,93) – and that Danish 'outgroup favouritism' is increasing in the *language* dimension of 'Øresund attitudes'.

How are we to understand the very different evaluations of their own language and their neighbour's language that we have found on the two sides of Øresund? It is fairly straightforward to explain the Swedes' evaluative pattern. Besides being triggered by 'normal ingroup favouritism', the relatively strong downgrading of Danish in terms of 'beauty' is beyond doubt induced from strong public discourse stereotypes which declare, in all the Scandinavian countries, that 'Danish sounds like a throat disease', 'Danes talk with a warm potato in their mouth', and so on.

But how can we explain the fact that Danes embrace this 'outsider view' of Danish and rate their own language low on 'beauty'? I think the explanation has to be sought for in the fact that the 'outsider view' has in fact been a regular ingredient of Danish elite public discourse about the Danish language and the Danes as speakers for a long time, probably accelerating from the 1970s onwards. Danes are rebuked for mumbling and talking indistinctly, and even the language itself is sometimes characterised as indistinct. This kind of discourse explicitly draws on comparisons with Norwegian and Swedish. It hinges on the fact that Danish looks very much like Norwegian and Swedish in how the words are written, but sounds very different when the words are pronounced – a situation which results from many sound changes in Danish which did not happen in Norwegian and Swedish. The strong influence of this discourse in education is demonstrated in our data by the fact that the more educated Danes are, the more strongly they downgrade Danish and upgrade Swedish on the 'beautiful' item. The strongest version of this evaluative pattern is actually found among students of Danish at Copenhagen University.

If it indeed is the case that the bridge and the integration processes in the region do have an impact on the Danes' *overt* stereotypes about the aesthetic value of their own language in comparison with Swedish, we must conclude that it is for the worse, not for the better. However, even if it may well be true that public discourse stereotyping of Danish as an indistinct language and Danes as slovenly speakers has intensified in recent years in Scandinavia, Denmark included, a specific impact of the Øresund bridge in that connection seems questionable. It seems more likely that the bridge connection has an impact on the linguistic situation in terms of accommodation – and on how linguistic accommodation is evaluated.

4.3 The DASVA Speaker Evaluation Experiments

Since Danish and Swedish are more or less mutually intelligible, most communication between Danes and Swedes will include some degree of accommodation – depending on factors such as experience and attitudes. In a Speaker Evaluation Experiment (SEE), we investigated how people on both sides of the Belt evaluated 3 degrees of accommodation, both in their own language and in the neighbour's language. Figure 3 gives a schematic positioning of the six audio-recorded voices in a Danish-Swedish continuum.

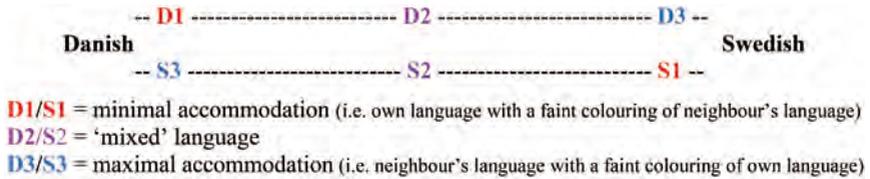


Fig. 3: Schematic positioning of the 6 voices in a Danish-Swedish continuum

The voices talked for about 25 seconds each. Subjects listened to the voices in the order from minimal to maximal accommodation (as indicated by the numbers 1, 2, and 3 in Figure 3). Danish subjects listened to the Danish voices before the Swedish voices; Swedish subjects listened to the Swedish voices before the Danish voices.⁷ The evaluation was made on 5-point scales as answers to questions about (1) FUNCTIONALITY, and (2) AESTHETICS:

- (1) What do you think of this way of talking to a [Swede/Dane]: good /_/_/_/_/_/ bad
 (2) How do you think it sounds: nice /_/_/_/_/_/ ugly

Figures 4-5 show the results for Danes, Figures 6-7 show the results for Swedes. The voices are inserted at their mean scores on the 5-point scales (given in the Figures). A lower mean is a more positive assessment. Significant differences are marked with asterixes – *** = $p < .001$ ** = $p < .01$ * = $p < .05$ – both *witnin* years and *between* years (test: Mann-Whitney).

⁷ Four of the stimulus clips (D1, D2, S2, S3) were taken from naturally occurring accommodation on the radio program *Øresund Direkt* (a weekly one-hour program, established in 1999 as a cross-border cooperation between radio channels on both sides of Øresund; discontinued in 2003 because of few listeners.) As we were not able to find voices in the radio material that accommodated in a way we would classify as D3 and S1, these had to be produced for the experiment by a Dane and a Swede who master maximal and minimal accommodation 'naturally'. (We were fortunate not to have to ask someone produce the 'mixed' version, which might have been more difficult to do 'naturally'.)

4.3.1 Danish accommodation evaluated by Danes

If we begin by looking at the Danes and how they react to the three degrees of accommodation in their own Danish language (Figure 4), we see – for both 2001 and 2014 – that maximal accommodation (D3) is judged to FUNCTION better than mixed (D2), which in turn is judged to FUNCTION better than minimal accommodation (D1). The evaluations of D3 and D1 on AESTHETICS by and large seems to reproduce the evaluations on FUNCTIONALITY, but the very different evaluation of D2 shows that the distinction between the two dimensions has been clear enough to the participants. As mixing of languages often has a bad reputation of being ‘ugly’ – a negative stereotype, indeed – it is not surprising that D2 is judged to sound ‘ugly’. What could be seen as surprising, though, is that D1 (minimal accommodation, i.e. speech close to ‘pure’ Danish) is judged to be almost or just as ‘ugly’-sounding as mixing (the difference is not significant in 2014). But based on what we learned in the questionnaire study about the Danes’ opinion about their own language, we are not surprised.

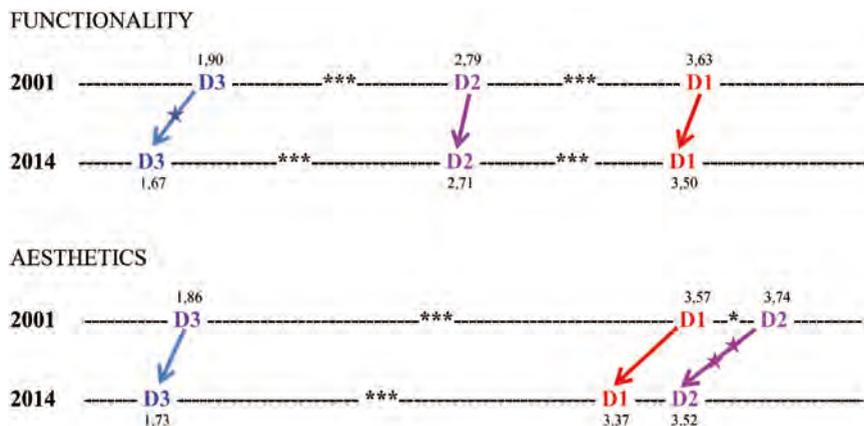


Fig. 4: **Danish** accommodation (D1min–D2mix–D3max) evaluated by **Danes** in terms of FUNCTIONALITY and AESTHETICS in 2001 and 2014

Looking at the arrows which connect D3, D2 and D1 across years in Figure 4, we mainly see a picture of *stability*. All arrows point towards the left, indicating a general trend towards more positive evaluations in 2014 than in 2001, but the differences are small and statistically mostly non-significant (significant in the case of D3 on FUNCTIONALITY and D2 on AESTHETICS).

4.3.2 Swedish accommodation evaluated by Danes

In Figure 5, we see that when Danes evaluated the Swedish voices, they again rated maximal accommodation (S3) highest, in terms of FUNCTIONALITY and AESTHETICS alike, but in contrast to their evaluation of the Danish voices, they relegated mixing (S2) to a secure bottom position on both evaluative dimensions. As for developments from 2001 to 2014, we see that the arrows in Figure 5, as in Figure 4, point to the left and indicate a tendency to general upgrading of the voices. Yet, *stability* is again a dominant feature of the picture except in so far as S1 is concerned: on both dimensions, minimal accommodation fared much better in 2014 than in 2001. It seems reasonable to speculate that this development among Danes is a consequence of more contact with Swedes and Swedish. We may also notice that the upgrading of S1 (i.e. speech close to ‘pure’ Swedish) on AESTHETICS can be seen as the SEE parallel to the Danes’ upgrading of Swedish as a ‘beautiful’ language in the questionnaire study (see Figure 2, item 8 under Danes).



Fig. 5: Swedish accommodation (S1min–S2mix–S3max) evaluated by Danes in terms of FUNCTIONALITY and AESTHETICS in 2001 and 2014

4.3.3 Swedish accommodation evaluated by Swedes

When we move on to looking at how the Swedes evaluated the voices (Figures 6 and 7), we see that in 2001 they produced the same ordering of the Swedish voices as the Danes on both FUNCTIONALITY and AESTHETICS: S3 > S1 > S2 (Figure 6), and a similar ordering to the Danes of the Danish voices: D3 > D2 > D1 (Figure 7), with an even stronger relative downgrading of D1 (i.e. the voice close to ‘pure’ Danish).

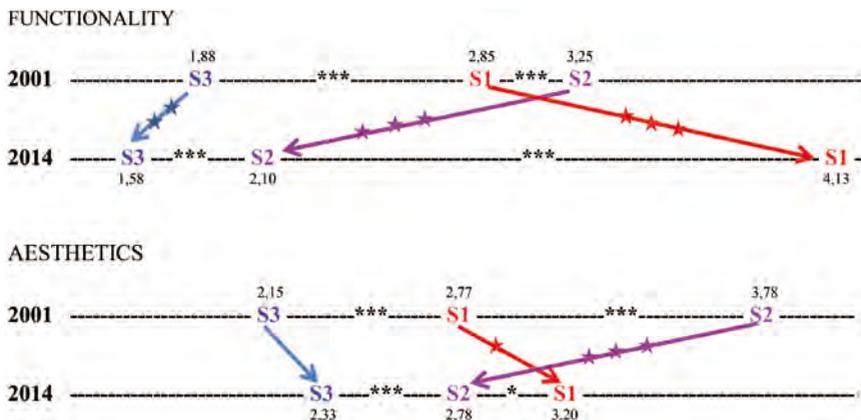


Fig. 6: **Swedish** accommodation (S1min–S2mix–S3max) evaluated by **Swedes** in terms of FUNCTIONALITY and AESTHETICS in 2001 and 2014

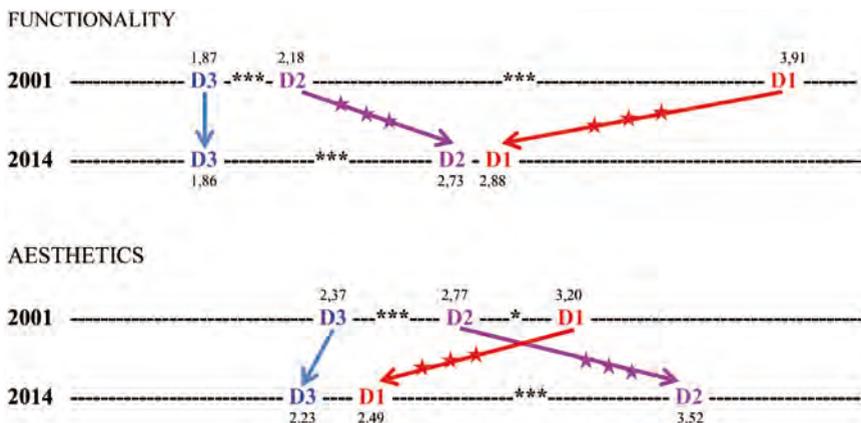


Fig. 7: **Danish** accommodation (D1min–D2mix–D3max) evaluated by **Swedes** in terms of FUNCTIONALITY and AESTHETICS in 2001 and 2014

However, while the 2001-2014 comparison of the Danes’ assessments gave a general impression of *stability*, the same impression is repeated only for maximal accommodation (S3 and D3) in the Swedes’ reactions. In contrast, the arrows connecting minimal accommodation (S1) and mixing (S2) across the years in Figure 6 exhibit a clear cross-over pattern on both FUNCTIONALITY and AESTHETICS. The ordering in terms of positive assessment has changed radically from a statistically secure S1 > S2 order to a statistically secure S2 > S1 order. If this is a ‘bridge effect’, Swedes seem to have learned from increased contact with Danes that mixing (S2) functions much better than minimal accommodation (S1), and they even upgrade S2 to more ‘nice’ sounding than S1.

Figure 7 shows another, complete opposite, re-evaluation among the Swedes of minimal Danish accommodation (D1) in comparison with mixing (D2). Again, if this is a ‘bridge effect’, Swedes seem to have learned from increased contact that communication FUNCTIONS just as well when Danes speak more or less ‘pure’ Danish (D1) as when they ‘mix’ (D2). Also interestingly, while they downgrade D2 on AESTHETICS in 2014, the Swedes upgrade minimal accommodation (D1, or maybe just ‘pure’ Danish) to be just as ‘nice’ sounding as maximal accommodation (D3, or maybe just ‘pure Swedish’). In the questionnaire data we saw no trace of a parallel upgrading among Swedes of Danish as a ‘beautiful’ language (see Figure 2, item 8 under Swedes).

Indeed, if we consider how the stereotypical view of Danish as an ‘ugly’ language fares in our data, the results from the questionnaire study and the SEE study present a very different picture for Danes and Swedes.

In the questionnaire data, both Swedes and Danes reproduced the public discourse’s stereotypical view of Danish as a less beautiful language than Swedish. The Swedes strongly preferred Swedish to Danish; so did the Danes, i.e. preferred Swedish to Danish. We found this pattern to be stable with the Swedes, while among the Danes the pattern strengthened between 2001 and 2014 (see Figure 2).

If we allow the SEE assessments of the minimal accommodating voices, D1 and S1, to count as assessments of Danish and Swedish (and thus be comparable with the assessments of the language ‘names’ Danish and Swedish in the Questionnaire study), we must say that the Danes also reproduced the stereotypes of public discourse in the SEE. D1 was judged more negatively than S1 in 2001 (see year 2001 under AESTHETICS in Figures 4 and 5), and this difference was not only reproduced but strengthened in 2014 by a more positive assessment of S1 (see year 2014 under AESTHETICS in Figures 4 and 5).

In addition, the Swedes reproduced the stereotypical view of Danish as more ‘ugly’ sounding than Swedish in 2001 (see year 2001 under AESTHETICS in Figures 6 and 7), but in contrast to the Danes, the Swedes reversed the difference in 2014 by downgrading S1 and upgrading D1 (see year 2014 under AESTHETICS in Figures 6 and 7).

5. Conclusion

The main point of this paper has been to compare widely shared views (stereotypes) which appear in analyses of language-related evaluative data elicited by the use of two different methodological approaches: *direct* questioning about language, and *indirect* questioning about language (indirect in the sense that people are asked to react to speakers/voices). In all three reported studies (LANCHART, MIN, DASVA), the results of various kinds of questionnaire-based direct elicitation were compared with the results of Speaker Evaluation Experiments (SEEs).

In the LANCHART and MIN studies, the two approaches operationalised a theoretical distinction between consciously and subconsciously offered attitudes. In both studies, we found that the consciously-offered attitudes (in the questionnaire-based approach) simply reproduced the stereotypical hierarchisation of public discourse in respect of the linguistic varieties in question. In contrast, we found that the subconsciously-offered attitudes (in the SEEs) turned the public discourse's hierarchisation upside down, and we argued that this shared opposite evaluative pattern must have been 'learned' from lived experience (rather than public discourse); in particular from experience of how language is treated in the modern spoken media.

The aim of the longitudinal DASVA approach is to study the possible effect of lived experience over time on language-related attitudes (as one dimension of the more complex 'Øresund attitudes'). A possible difference between *overt* and *covert* values in that respect could not be investigated in consciously versus subconsciously offered data. All data was consciously offered. We did speculate, however, that the use of both a questionnaire approach and an SEE approach might allow for registration of a possible difference in how lived experience affects language-related evaluations.

In the questionnaire study we found that both Swedes and Danes reproduced public discourse's negative stereotyping of Danish as a less 'beautiful' language than Swedish – and we found no change in that regard from 2001 to 2014. In the SEE study, the Danes' evaluative reaction to the voices did not differ from their questionnaire assessments of Swedish and Danish and once again reproduced the stereotypes of public discourse. This was also true of the Swedes in 2001.

But in 2014, the Swedes strongly downgraded S1 (close to 'pure' Swedish) and strongly upgraded D1 (close to 'pure' Danish), both in terms of FUNCTIONALITY and AESTHETICS. Since the DASVA SEE evaluations are consciously offered – and all our evidence so far strongly indicates that the stereotypes of public discourse 'govern' what people say when they are aware of giving away language attitudes – the Swedish 2014 SEE results invite us to ponder whether readily available 'talk' about Danish and Swedish has changed from 2001 to 2014 on the Swedish side of the belt. However, since there is no trace of a similar development in the Swedish 2014 questionnaire results, we can be fairly sure that the registered re-evaluation is not something the Swedes have 'learned' from public discourse; it seems reasonable to argue that they must have 'learned' it from practical experience in the new cross-border reality created by the bridge. In view of the asymmetrical work migration patterns across the belt, it also seems plausible that such re-evaluation is found among Swedes and not among Danes.

The DASVA results do indeed suggest that the two methodological approaches, the SEE and the questionnaire, show a different ability to reflect *attitudinal change* that stems from lived experience. Such change seems to have occurred

among the Swedes and is reflected in their SEE results, in contrast to the *attitudinal stability* (permanence of stereotypes) which characterises public discourse and is reflected in the questionnaire data.

I think all three studies sustain the view that elite public discourse has an immense impact on lay stereotypes, which are readily reproduced in direct answers, as in a questionnaire. These are *overt* stereotypical judgements. But I also think, on the other hand, that all three studies sustain the claim that lay people are likely to share other and more *covert* stereotypical judgements, which may appear when other methods of data elicitation, such as Speaker Evaluation Experiments, are used. In any case, for any attempt at intervention in this domain (in terms of education, policies and politics), I think it will be wise to take the possible divergence between *overt* and *covert* stereotypical judgements into account.

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