

# Judging the Immigrant: Accents and Attitudes

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*“Simply phonetics. The science of speech. That’s my profession... You can spot an Irishman or a Yorkshireman by his brogue. I can place any man within six miles. I can place him within two miles in London. Sometimes within two streets.”*

*George Bernard Shaw, Pygmalion*

*“One of my favorite philosophical tenets is that people will agree with you only if they already agree with you. You do not change people's minds.”*

*Frank Zappa*



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# Abstract

Spoken language as a means of communication contains huge amounts of information apart from the linguistic message that is conveyed. It is often the first channel of interaction between people and based on the speaker's manner of talk, we create a mental image of the speaker as a person, of the speaker's background, origin and personal qualities. Through five case studies, this dissertation investigates how immigrants to Sweden are judged based on their foreign accents (Cases 1–3) and how the use of an interpreter in court can affect the legal process and the judging of the immigrant (Cases 4–5). Case 1 investigated Swedish students' attitudes towards immigration and immigrants through a survey-based study and revealed that Swedish students hold predominantly positive attitudes towards immigrations and immigrants. Case 2, using accent imitation, asked if Swedish speakers have a cognitive prototype for British English accented Swedish and found that this was the case. This demonstrated that Swedes have models of accented Swedish accents. Case 3 asked Swedish students to rate their impressions of speakers of nine foreign accented Swedish voices on 18 six-point semantic differential scales. They also rated their impressions of each voice for five social factors. The results suggest that the listeners evaluated the voices based on perceived social desirability, or perceived cultural distance between the listener and the voice's country of origin. Juxtaposing these findings with those of Case 1 suggests that even among a group who are positive to immigrants and immigration some groups of immigrants are more welcome than others. Case 4 examined discourse disfluencies in a bilingual court hearing and a Swedish-Polish bilingual court hearing in detail. The case showed that most of the dialogue-related difficulties have other sources than the interpreter, even if the interpreter at first glance often appeared to be part of the problem rather than part of the solution. Case 5 examined the interpreter's role in courtroom dialogue situations through interviews with a court interpreter and a lay judge. The study found that the picture of the interpreter's role differs between the various actors in the court setting. This, in combination with a lack of knowledge about cultural differences in dialogue strategies, creates complications, can have an impact on the perception of the witness and, ultimately, affect the legal rights of the accused. Furthermore, as the interpreter most frequently speaks foreign accented Swedish, the perception and evaluation of their foreign accented Swedish can further place some immigrant groups at a double legal disadvantage when being judged.



# Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate how foreign accent and foreign language affect the judgment of non-native individuals, both in legal and everyday situations. Through a set of five case studies this dissertation shows that, although Swedish students are positive to immigration, there is a clear social desirability effect based on voice alone, and that the use of an interpreter in the bilingual courtroom leads to disfluencies and that the perception of these is complicated by the different understandings of interpretation that are held by the court and the interpreter. This dissertation argues that employers and the legal system need to be aware of this form of discrimination, and educate so that greater variation in foreign accented Swedish is accepted and discrimination based on foreign accent is reduced

Speech is a form of communication that carries more information than the linguistic message per se. When we hear an unfamiliar person speak for the first time, we create a conception of the person and even if we do not see them we often form a mental image of the person as well. The process is quick and immediate. This instant mental image contains beliefs about fundamental features of the speaker. For example, the speakers' gender, how old they are, whether they are tall, to which social, regional and ethnic group they belong, the speaker's frame of mind and if this person poses a possible threat. This is, however, just a part of a larger picture as we quickly, based on the impression of a speaker's voice, form an opinion of the speaker's personal traits such as beliefs about his or hers intelligence, sense of humour, level of education, trustworthiness and reliability. The conception created by these first impressions is, not surprising, more often than not incomplete and erroneous in many aspects. We instantly, both consciously and subconsciously, create an image that we continually revise as more clues and information about the speaker become available to us.

We are generally most positive towards people that we can quickly categorize as reasonably similar to ourselves in one or more respects. The known feels safer and less threatening than the unknown. A person speaking the same language or the same regional dialect as we do takes less time and effort to pigeonhole than someone whom we might not even understand. In order to be able to quickly categorize all these unknown individuals, we resort to what we know, or believe that we know, about the people based on our previous experiences, the stereotypes we have formed and prejudices we hold.

Since it is impossible to know everything about the world surrounding us, we have to make it more manageable, thus making stereotyping and preconceptions a necessary, but coarse-grained, tool for categorizing and

making sense of our impressions of the world. A stereotype is, according to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2004), “...an image or idea of a particular person or thing that has become fixed through being widely held”. A stereotype is, furthermore, an oversimplified image based on easily recognizable features of a certain group of people or things. Such features are often, but not always, associated with negative connotations. For example, the image held of an easily discernable group of people without considering individual variation. The time span from hearing someone speak and identifying the speech as native or foreign accented is very short, and once identified as “foreign” both the conscious and subconscious aspects of the listener’s mental image of the speaker are affected. Common opinions of non-native groups of speakers are covered by a wide range of positive and negative stereotypes, prototypes and prejudices. The listener’s idea about the origin of a foreign accent can, as will be discussed in this thesis, have a drastic impact on the evaluation of the speaker. If the foreign accent is associated with a country where values and culture are close to the listener’s own, the evaluation tends usually to be more positive than if the associations are with a culturally more distant country. It seems that the cultural distance between countries is of greater importance than the geographical distance when forming first impressions.

Although all speakers are continually assessed, positively or negatively, based on the manner in which things are said and not only the linguistic message, this dissertation focuses on just one group of speakers. Namely, immigrants and foreigners, living in Sweden who do not have Swedish as their first language. This dissertation is structured around five cases — i) student attitudes to immigration, ii) awareness of foreign accented Swedish, iii) attitudes to foreign accented Swedish, iv) discourse and translation in the courtroom, and v) implications of understandings of the courtroom interpreter’s role. Each of these studies provides a different window onto the way in which immigrants are assessed based on their lack of Swedish or their foreign accented Swedish. Together the five studies illuminate how this group of people living or temporarily staying in Sweden are perceived and ask whether the immediate assessment affects their position in the legal system.

## **1.1 Structure of the dissertation**

The dissertation is built around five separate studies, each possible to read as a separate piece of work but taken together they form a broader picture of the area. Initially, this work considers previous research that feeds into the five studies. This includes an overview of Sweden’s recent history of migration and of some linguistic consequences of immigration. The concept of culture is discussed and related to communicative aspects of language.

Previous research on accented speech including attitudes to accents, to immigration and to immigrants is discussed as a base for studies 1, 2 and 3. A background to interpreting and interpretation, with a focus on court interpreting is given in order to form a base for studies 4 and 5, dealing with courtroom dialogues. Thereafter the five case studies are presented. The presentation begins with the individual case study research questions and an overview of how the studies link together. Before the first case study is presented in Chapter 3, the five case studies are overviewed. After the five case studies, the conclusions and suggestions for further work are presented in Chapter 8.

## Chapter 2: Background

As mentioned in Chapter 1, along with the linguistic message conveyed between the speaker and the listener, the speech signal carries a multitude of other information. Part of this information is factual and part of it is a construction made up by the listener, and contains information about the speaker, the situation and setting. Early in the twentieth century Saussure (1912) stated that a complete language cannot exist within one individual, but only in the collective of users of a language. Labov (1966) claimed that the perception of language is chiefly about the perception of social experiences and of socially accepted statements about language. The language used by a particular speaker thus serves not only as a means of conveying a linguistic message but also as a sign, or symbol, for the speaker's social identity. The creation of such an identity requires the existence of a language community with shared conceptions and criteria for the interpretation of language varieties that are different from current linguistic practice within the community. When listening to spoken language, the listener picks up and registers extra-linguistic information that is contained in an utterance and uses this information to make judgements about the speaker's personal characteristics. The assessment concerns both the actual and physical properties of the voice as well as purely speculative conceptions about the speaker and the speaker's personal traits.

Traunmüller (1994; 2006) argues that there are four types of information present in a spoken utterance. The first type consists of the purely linguistic information made up by the speech sounds, words and prosodic patterns produced by the speaker. This information includes the linguistic message and the idiosyncratic features of the speech like the speaker's dialect, possible foreign accent and speech style.

The second type of information comprises the expressive part, varying within a speaker depending on state of mind, attitude, setting and other affective and adaptive factors. The cues to this kind of information consist of factors like vocal effort, speech rate, and variation in fundamental frequency and voice quality.

The third type of information in a spoken utterance is the organic information that varies between speakers and depends on factors such as the general size of the vocal organs, including the size of the larynx and the length of the vocal tract. What can be derived from this type of information are clues about the speaker's gender, age, body size and possible speech pathological conditions.

The fourth type of information deals with the perspectival information that contains clues to spatial relations. Our stereophonic hearing ability makes it possible to draw conclusions about where the speaker is located relative to our own position, and to estimate the distance and direction to the



speaker. Much of this information is possible to measure, quantify and give an opinion on.

Information about the speaker's inner psychological state, intentions, ideas or thoughts is not present in the speech signal. It is therefore, as e.g. Hollien (2002), Eriksson and Lacerda (2007) and Lacerda (2009) have pointed out not possible to have an opinion on these factors, or whether the speaker tells a lie or the truth, based solely on acoustic clues derived from the speech signal.

## **2.1 A short overview of recent Swedish migration**

Migration in Sweden was until the 1930s characterised by emigration. From the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century just before the start of the Second World War, roughly 1,5 million Swedes emigrated, of which approximately 1 million moved to North America. This pattern of migration changed after the Second World War, and immigration to Sweden is now larger than emigration. During the final stages of the war and the period immediately following the end of the war, immigration to Sweden was dominated by refugees from the Baltic States and the neighbouring Nordic countries (Lundh & Ohlsson 1999). The post-war era up to the 60s was characterised by a substantial economic growth and expansion in the industrial sector. The immigration during this period consisted largely of immigrant labour from Western Europe. From the final years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until today immigration has been dominated by refugees from third world countries and, with the European Union's opening of borders, immigrants from Eastern Europe. Out of Sweden's current population of just over nine million inhabitants, more than 1,5 million have a foreign background, and of these circa 1 million are foreign born (SCB 2005). This constitutes a major, and rapid demographic change to a country that up until a few centuries ago would have been classified as homogeneously white and Lutheran. The increased number of immigrants arriving from African and Asian countries has meant that the immigration has been made visible in a more evident way than earlier. The perceived degree of distance and alienation is larger when a native Swede compares himself with, for example, a Somali immigrant than with an immigrant from a North European country. What seems to emphasise this increased perception of alienation is not geographical distance but rather perceived cultural distance between people.

## **2.2 Culture as concept**

An everyday, informal definition of the concept culture could be "the way we do things in this country". Hofstede (1980) described this as "the collective mental programming of people in a certain environment". Culture is, thus, a human phenomenon including all the conceptions, knowledge, moral

concepts, ideas, values and symbols that makes one group of humans different from another group. Hoecklin (1996) building on Hofstede's model saw culture firstly as a shared system of meaning. A prerequisite for meaningful communication to be able to exist is that a group of people have the same view on meaning. This is also the case for gesture and other non-linguistic behaviour that would be incomprehensible without contextual information and consensus on their meaning. Secondly, as a relative term, there is no such thing as an "absolute" culture; there is no norm nor a prototype for what culture is or is not. Thirdly, as something that is learnt. It is derived from peoples' social context, and not from any biological or genetic background. Fourth, Hoecklin saw culture as being about groups and not about individuals; it is a highly collective phenomenon based on shared values.

Hofstede (1994) identified five parameters for comparing cultures. These five parameters are not used to rank cultures qualitatively, but as a means of comparing the degree of likeness or difference of cultures and societies along a scale. The *Power Distance* parameter is a measure of equality in a society and the perceived distance between, for instance, the government and the citizens, or between the executives and employees of a company. The *Collectivism – Individualism* parameter describes a society depending on how its citizens define themselves relative to other members of the community. More collectively oriented societies are based on family, relatives and networks of people, and more individually oriented societies sees individuals as strong in themselves. The third *Femininity – Masculinity* parameter describes a society's outlook on how it is organised in terms of self-centeredness, cooperation, competition and inter-personal relations. The "*Uncertainty avoidance*" parameter describes the degree of regulation in a society and the fifth parameter, "*Long-term – Short-term orientation*", describes how a society is oriented in time, and its roots regarding philosophy and values.

### 2.3 Accented speech

A common signal that a speaker is an immigrant, even if he/she is highly competent in the language of their new home nation, is what accent the speech has. There are a few immigrants who achieve native-like accents in the language of their new home country, but most retain traces of their first language in their second language accents. There is no such thing as a "non-accent"; everyone speaks with some sort of accent. Received Pronunciation (RP) English is an accent of English as any other English accent. Similarly, Central Standard Swedish is an accent of Swedish in the same way as any other variety of Swedish. Thus, although people often refer to people speaking with no accent, no one speaks a language without an accent.

English is spoken as a first language in a multitude of ways depending on where a speaker has acquired the language. There are significant differences between, for instance, the accents of Northern British English, RP, New Zealand English, and General American. All, however, are accents of English. One definition of accent suggested by Trask (1996) defines an accent as:

*...a particular way of pronouncing a language, seen as typical of an individual, a geographic region or a social group. Every speaker of a language necessarily speaks it with some accent or another. (p.5)*

A speaker with a different linguistic background, using a language as a second language, adds another dimension to accent, namely foreign accent. The term foreign accent has been defined in a number of different, but largely overlapping ways. Flege et al. (1995) described the accented speech produced by a second language (L2) speaker, as differing from the first language (L1) norm in at least partially systematic ways that are non-pathological and that have perceptual consequences for a listener. McAllister (2000) provided a production-related model of explanation:

*[foreign accent] refers consistently to the inability of non native language users to produce the target language with the phonetic accuracy required by native listeners for acceptance as native speech. (p. 50)*

In this dissertation, the term “native Swedish speaker” refers to any speaker, regardless of regional Swedish dialect with Swedish as first language and term “foreign accented Swedish” refers to any speaker with Swedish as second (or third) language whose accent reveals a different linguistic background than Swedish.

## **2.4 Placing the speaker**

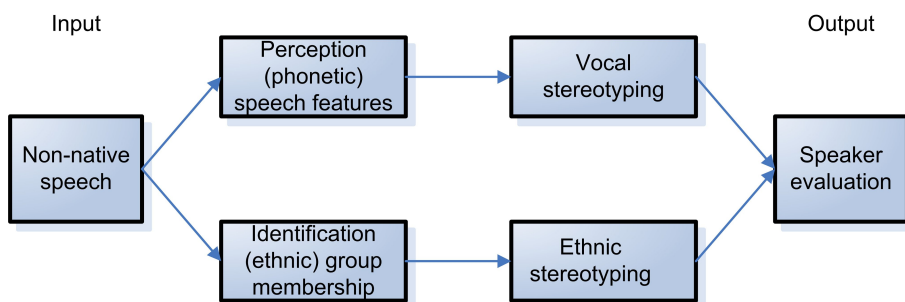
First language speakers of any language have a highly developed competence to immediately recognise if another person speaks their first language with a foreign accent. This judgement can be made based on very short excerpts of speech, or even parts of words (Flege, 1984). In fact, even when presented with audio stimuli that have been manipulated to remove all linguistic content, e.g. through low-pass filtering (Munro & Derwing 1995) or by reversed playback (Munro et al. 2003), whether the speaker has a foreign accent or not can be judged with a high degree of accuracy. How accurately listeners can determine a speaker’s first language based on the foreign accent is less clear. This is investigated in the third case study.

Research that has looked at listeners’ ability to connect a speaker’s dialect and a geographic region has reported different rates of success. On a national scale, considering regional dialects from an entire country, results suggest that the diffusion is high, and the precision is limited to attributing a speaker

to a particular region with similar dialect rather than a specific area or town (e.g. Clopper & Pisoni 2004; Williams et al. 1999). In areas with a high dialectal resolution, that is with many local varieties of the same regional dialect, the ability to correctly place a speaker is much higher, provided that the listener and the speaker have the similar regional background (Preston 1993; Remez et al. 2004). This suggests that categorisation ability can be correct and permit identification of a dialect at the level of village in rural settings, and at the level of the district of a town in more urban settings provided that the listener is familiar with the dialect varieties. Dialects less well known to the listener are classified with much lower resolution, for example, as “northern” rather than connected to a specific area.

The ambition to place a speaker regionally or geographically based on the manner of speaking is part of the process of perception of speech. Listeners create a mental image of the speaker that is far more extensive than where the speaker comes from. The image formed includes conceptions of everything from the speaker’s intelligence, level of education, aptitude for an occupation, sense of humour and inclination to commit a crime. Unlike geographical categorisation, this psycho-social categorisation is based on preconceptions and factors that the listener cannot express with any degree of certainty. This first and immediate mental image of a speaker can be correct, but it can also be erroneous.

Doeleman (1998) posited a model of how native reaction to speech was affected by a foreign accent (See Figure 1). Her model is based on a synthesis of general attitude studies (Ajzen 1998; Eagly & Chaiken 1993; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975) and studies examining attitudes specifically to languages (e.g. Cargile et al. 1994). The two parallel processes described in the model are based partially on the phonetic features of the heard voice, and partially on a social categorisation of the ethnic group of which the speaker with the foreign accent is thought to be a member. Together, these evaluations form a baseline for the mental image the listener creates of the speaker.



**Figure 1: Process model of native reactions to non-native speech (after Doeleman 1998).**

The base for the phonetic part of the evaluation of a speaker with a foreign accent is the phonetic features at segmental and supra-segmental level. Speech with a foreign accent deviates from native speech both in terms of the pronunciation of individual phonemes and of phoneme combinations, that is, at the segmental level. These deviations depend on the speaker's linguistic background including speaker's first language. The phoneme inventory of the first language affects the pronunciation of the second language in different ways, and can give clues to a speaker's linguistic background. The supra-segmental features of the first language, such as intonation patterns, stress patterns, and quantity features are also reflected in the accented speech. Some of these features are known to be of importance for the process of stereotyping speakers with foreign accents. Generally speaking, the smaller the deviation from the native normative pronunciation, the more favourable the evaluation (e.g. Dixon & Mahoney 2004; Giles & Coupland 1991; Giles & Powesland 1975). Other factors contributing to a positive evaluation are fast speech rate, confidence and lively intonation as opposed to monotonous or hesitant speech (Erickson et al. 1978).

In order to be able to categorise a speaker as belonging to a certain ethnic or national group, it is necessary that the listener can make use of the available acoustic clues to identify the linguistic background of the speaker. The first step in this process is to react to the perceptual difference between native speech and non-native speech. This step happens instantly and automatically, rapidly followed by an estimation of the non-native speaker's nationality. The stereotypes connected to nationality that we hold contribute to the creation of a general assessment of the speaker. A stereotypical view of a certain group as industrious or criminal will, thus, have a profound effect on the view we hold of an individual believed to be a part of the group in question.

Initially, the picture, or notion, formed of a person is composed of personality traits associated with the national, regional and/or ethnic group that the listener assigns to the listener based on the acoustic cues and stereotypical characteristic features thought to define this group. It is, however, far from certain that the estimations regarding a speaker's first language, and country or region of origin are correct. The attitudes a listener form toward a speaker with a foreign accent may also be influenced by the listener's general attitudes towards immigration and immigrants.

## **2.5 Attitudes to immigration, immigrants and their accents**

Attitudes, both to immigration and to the immigrants, differ considerably both between receiving countries and within countries depending on from where the immigrants have come. Sweden is one of the European countries most positive both to immigration, per se, and to the immigrants themselves

(Svallfors & Hjerm 2006; ISSP 2003). The extensive study National Identity, by the International Social Survey Programme (2003) revealed substantial differences in citizens' attitudes towards immigration and immigrants between the 34 countries included in the survey.

Simon and Lynch (1999) selected five of the questions from the ISSP study to illustrate differences in attitudes to immigrants and immigration across six nations, the USA, Canada, and Australia (traditional immigrant-receiving countries), Great Britain, and Germany (countries that are ambivalent to immigrants) and Japan (a country with no concept of the immigrant and immigration). The five questions asked were:

1. Do you think that the number of immigrants coming to (name of country) should be: increased a lot, increased a little, remain the same, reduced a little, reduced a lot?
2. Do you think immigrants are generally good for the economy?
3. Do you think immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in (name of country)?
4. Do you think immigrants increase crime?
5. Do you think immigrants make (name of country) more open to new ideas and cultures?

Greatly simplifying the findings, Japan was shown to be the most negative to immigrants and immigration, and Australia the most positive. Simon and Sikich (2007) compared the 1995 survey data presented in Simon and Lynch with the 2003 survey data. They also included France, a country they refer to as ambivalent to immigration, to their study. No consistent trend over the eight-year period was seen in attitude to immigration and immigrants. It was found however, that

*more positive feelings were expressed about the role immigrants play vis-à-vis the economy, more negative feelings were voiced about immigrants and criminal behavior and the likelihood that they improved their adoptive countries by bringing in new ideas. (p. 962)*

The Simon and Sikich study provides a set of questions by which to delimit data extracted from the ISSP database. This makes it possible to baseline Swedish attitudes to immigration and immigrants. It also provides a set of questions to investigate how Swedish students view immigration and immigrants, and hence form the base of study presented in Case Study 1 in this dissertation.

No one, however, holds a single attitude towards all immigrant groups. In the same way that Bayard et al. (2001) showed that different native Englishes evoke different attitudes, listeners hold different attitudes towards different foreign accents. Not only have researchers (see e.g., Boyd et al. 1999; Boyd 2003; Cunningham-Andersson & Engstrand 1990; Derwing 2003; Giles 1970) shown that to native speakers of a language, speech with a

foreign accent is perceived as less prestigious than speech with a native accent, but that there are differences in attitude that depend on the foreign accent being spoken. A foreign accent signals that the speaker comes from a foreign country. This indicates difference. How this difference transfers into attitudes towards a set of foreign accented Swedish voices is investigated in Case Study 3. This study permits detail to be given to the Svallfors and Hjerm's (2006) findings that Sweden has one of the most positive attitudes towards immigration and immigrants, further supported by the outcomes of Case Study 1.

Attitudes to foreign-accented Swedish are not the only way in which immigrants are assessed. If an individual's Swedish is non-existent or poor an interpreter is used in contact with the legal system, the health care system and other Government authorities.

## **2.6 Translation and Interpretation**

The commonly accepted distinction between translation and interpretation is that translation deals with written texts and that the process is performed after a text has been finalised. Interpretation, on the other hand, deals with spoken language and is performed in real time and often simultaneously. Case studies 4 and 5 in this dissertation focus on interpretation in a legal setting, the Swedish Court Room.

Catford (1965) wrote that "translation is the substitution of the text material of one language by the equivalent text material of another language" (p.20), and Mounin (1967) stated that "Translation is in theory impossible, but in practice fairly possible". Nida (1975:32) expressed this in a more elaborate manner: "Translation consists in producing in the target language the closest natural equivalent of the text material of the source language, in the first hand concerning the meaning, in the second hand concerning the style" (p. 32). These definitions are equally valid for interpretation. The interpreter's working conditions differ from the translator's. The timeframe to find the "closest natural equivalent" is to say the least dramatically different. The interpreter has to find "closest natural equivalent" immediately after someone has stopped speaking, or simultaneously as the participants continues speaking.

Depending on the situation and how the discourse evolves, interpreters must adapt their strategy. The fundamental task for the interpreter is to, without being a part of the discourse, translate everything that is said. Hidden within this task is one of the great challenges of interpreting; what does to translate "everything" actually entail?

Nida (1964) posited a distinction between formal and dynamic equivalence. Formal equivalence places the focus on preserving the structure of the source language to keep the translation as close to verbatim as possible. Although, the aim of formal equivalence is to maintain the

structure and context of the source language, understanding can be impaired and there is a risk that the original illocutions of the source language are lost. Dynamic, or functional, equivalence, places the focus on the receiver rather than on the source language. Deviations from the structure, content and form of the source language can be made in order to retain the intended effect or meaning of the message. This strategy, more focused on the relationship between the receiver and the message than on the source language, aims to convey the thought behind an utterance rather than a verbatim rendering of the original utterance.

Newmark (1988) made a similar distinction between what he called semantic and communicative translation. Semantic strategy is similar to Nida's (1964) formal equivalence and is chiefly focused on the culture and language of the sender of a message, that is, the source language. Phenomena specific to the culture of the source language are, thus, not adapted to the the culture of the target language, and the translation therefore runs the risk of being clumsy and in parts difficult to understand. Newmark's communicative strategy, on the other hand, is focused on the receiver and aims to adapt idiomatic expressions and metaphors, as far as possible, to the equivalent expressions and metaphors of the target language culture. This means that even if the translation at times deviates from the literal translation, it gains in illocutionary force and clarity.

The accuracy of the translation is paramount in the legal context. Yet, what accuracy means is not self-evident, as the distinction between formal and dynamic equivalence, or semantic and communicative strategies, suggests. The interpretation process and the understanding of the interpreter's role held by the interpreter, the court and the lawyer could affect the assessment of the immigrant in the judicial process.

## **2.7 Interpreting in judicial settings**

In all contacts with the Swedish police, courts and other Government authorities, an interpreter must be summoned as soon as it is clear that a person does not have sufficient knowledge of Swedish to communicate satisfactorily. This interpreter is, in the ideal world, summoned from an agency where all interpreters are certified by Kammarkollegiet (The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency). This procedure is to guarantee that the interpreter meets the required standards both regarding language knowledge and knowledge about the interpretation process as such. To get authorisation as an interpreter, the applicant has to go through a series of tests regarding areas as social welfare, medical care and basic law. Once authorised as interpreter by The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency, the interpreter can take further tests to get authorisation as court interpreter or medical interpreter. All these authorisations are valid for a period of five years, after which a re-authorisation test has to be taken. For



all interpreters, irrespective of type of authorisation, the set of basic ethical and practical rules that are part of The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency's document *God Tolksed* (Kammarkollegiet 2004 a) must be followed. This dictates how a certified interpreter shall act and what attitude the interpreter is to take to the different parties involved in interpreting situations.

The criteria for an interpreter to receive a certificate of authorisation are, in other words, strictly defined. However, there is no rule stating that an interpreter in a court case must have an authorisation. Any person estimated to have "sufficient knowledge" about both languages can be summoned as interpreter. It is the court's duty, according to the Code of Judicial Procedure, to:

*...when the need arises summon an interpreter when dealing with any person who is not in command over the Swedish language. If an interpreter in command over the language at hand is present at the court, he shall be engaged. If no such person is at hand, the court shall appoint a suitable person to assist as interpreter. (Rättegångsbalken, 5 Kap. 6 §)*

Hence, individuals lacking any formal training as interpreters work, from time to time, as interpreters at police interviews, interrogations and judicial proceedings. The use of an unqualified interpreter can affect the application of the law; no control is made of the interpreter's ability to perform the task at hand.

No education or training is given to the legal staff regarding the way interpreters work, or about what the interpreter's commission does and does not entail. This means that there is a possible discrepancy in the view of what the interpreter's role is, and the way in which the task should be performed. The interpreter could have one view, and the judicial staff have another view and other expectations. The regulations for interpreters published by the The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency, states that

*An authorised interpreter shall during interpretation render all information as exactly as can be done (Kammarkollegiet 2004 b: 14§).*

This includes that not only the linguistic message, but also the extra- and paralinguistic signals used by the foreign language speaker. This means that, apart from the spoken words, body language, state of mind and emotions must be a part of the translation. This is not a trivial task. There are, however, situations during court hearings where the right of law can depend on an interpreter's ability to perform this complex task.

## 2.8 The research questions

This dissertation asks the question, how immigrants are judged in contemporary Sweden and place this question within the field of forensic linguistics by considering whether assessment of the immigrant can affect an immigrant's position in the legal system. Each of the five case studies provides a window onto the way in which immigrants are assessed based on their lack of Swedish, their foreign accented Swedish, and their need for interpreters in the legal process. The case studies fall into two parts. Part 1, Case Studies 1–3, focuses on assessment of the immigrant and foreign accented Swedish and Part 2, Case Studies 4 and 5, focus on courtroom interpretation and its impact on assessing the immigrant in the legal context.

The first window, Case Study 1, baselines the Swede's and the Swedish student's general attitude towards immigration and immigrants with the research question: What are the Swedes and, in particular, the Swedish students' attitudes to immigration and immigrants? Swedish students form the listener group for Case Study 3 and it is therefore important not only to baseline the Swede's attitudes in comparison to other countries, but also the Swedish students' in comparison with the Swedish population in general.

The second window, Case Study 2, considers the individual's awareness of accents, stereotypes, and ability to detect nuances of foreign accented Swedish and poses the research question: Do speakers, when mimicking foreign accented Swedish, have similar cognitive prototypes of the mimicked accent? In order to do this imitation of British English accent Swedish before and after training was investigated. This study places a baseline on the Swede's awareness of foreign accented Swedish that is of importance for Case Study 3.

The third window, Case Study 3, considers how the Swedish students' attitude to immigration and immigrants is reflected in their judgements about speakers with different foreign accented Swedish. Two research questions are posed: Can the linguistic and national background of the speaker of foreign accented Swedish be identified, and which personal traits and social abilities are ascribed to speakers of non-native accented Swedish? These attitudes possibly feed into how immigrants are assessed within the legal process. The use of an interpreter can further complicate communication and affect the picture that is built of the immigrant, and affect the legal assessment of the immigrant.

The fourth window, Case Study 4, focuses on disfluencies in the bilingual court hearing. The research question asks: Where and why do disfluencies occur in courtroom interpretation? The study examines a Polish-Swedish court case. A factor that complicates the courtroom interpretation is one of role, competence and knowledge of the complexities of interpretation. The fifth window, Case Study 5, poses the research question: Do the court interpreter and other legal staff have different views on the role and task of

interpretation? The impact of disfluencies on assessment could depend upon the understood task of interpretation and the way in which the interpreter's foreign-accented Swedish is assessed.

## **2.9 Summaries of the five case studies**

Before presenting the full case studies, summaries of the five case studies follow.

### **2.9.1 Case Study 1: Student attitudes towards immigrants and immigration: An explorative Swedish Case study**

This case study examines general attitudes to immigration in Sweden to set a base line in comparison to other countries. This study replicates Simon and Sikich's (2007) work on attitudes toward immigrants and immigration in seven nations. The countries included countries with a tradition of immigration, The USA, Canada and Australia, countries with a more ambivalent attitude towards immigration, Great Britain, France and Germany, and Japan where the concept of immigration is close to nonexistent. The five questions asked in the study concerned the level of immigration, the immigrants' impact on the economy, whether immigrants take jobs away from other citizens, the immigrants' impact on crime and if immigrants contribute to new ideas and culture. Simon & Sikich found that even though immigrants and immigration in most of the studied countries were seen as positive for the economy, the common view was that immigrants at the same time had a negative impact on crime rates in the receiving countries.

In order to make a comparison with Swedish conditions, the same questions as in the Simon & Sikich study were used to explore Swedes attitudes. The overall results show that the Swedish respondents generally have a positive, or very positive, attitude to immigrants and to immigration compared to the seven countries in the Simon & Sikich study. The Swedish respondents also, to a very high degree, thought that immigrants make Sweden more open to new ideas and new culture. The only negative opinion from the Swedish respondents is regarding whether immigration contributes to an increase in crime rate. The group of Swedish students revealed a slightly more positive attitude to immigrants and immigration than the Swedish population in general.

### **2.9.2 Case Study 2: Mimicked accents – do speakers have similar cognitive prototypes?**

A prerequisite for the ability to detect an accent, foreign or regional, is an awareness of the differences between the accented varieties and the varieties without foreign accent. To access this phonetic awareness an imitation task

was used, namely native Swedish speakers mimicking Swedish being spoken by native British English speakers. This study represents as Neuhauser and Simpson (2007) and Neuhauser (2008) pointed out “one of the few studies that focuses on the speakers’ strategies when imitating a foreign accent” (p. 133). The findings from this second study support the idea that speakers have a type of prototype for the distinguishing features of a particular foreign accent. This is composed of a number of necessary features, and other optional features of an accent. The results also show that the speaker’s ability to mimic the accent could be improved after listening to a genuine British English accented Swedish.

The study was carried out as an experiment in which native speakers of Swedish were asked to first read a Swedish text in their natural reading style. Then directly after the first reading, and unprepared, the speakers were asked to read the text with a British English accent that would convince a listener that they were British English second-language speakers of Swedish. The speakers were then given a recording of the text read by British English speaker. The speakers were given a week to train their British English accented Swedish by listening to the recording of the text. After a week the speakers returned to the studio and read the text again with their post-training British English accented Swedish imitations. Acoustic and auditive analyses were made of the recording to compare and contrast the speakers’ imitation strategies. Intra-speaker comparisons showed learning effects from listening to the genuine accented speaker. Inter-speaker comparisons revealed similar strategies for imitation of the foreign accent. The results show such a degree of correspondence between the strategies that it is motivated to assume the existence of a shared cognitive prototype for this accent.

### **2.9.3 Case Study 3: Native reactions to non-native accented Swedish**

This case study questions whether the Swedish student’s positive attitudes towards immigrants and immigration are reflected in the assessment of foreign accented Swedish. Are speakers from different immigrant groups ascribed different personal traits and social abilities after hearing non-native accented Swedish readings of a text? The study took the form of a descriptive survey study, using a written questionnaire for data collection. The design of the questionnaire follows the Bayard et al. (2001) survey on attitudes toward different varieties of English with minor changes to make the questionnaire more appropriate for the task of assessing foreign accented Swedish accents. The listeners were all Swedish university students from Umeå University and University of Skövde. None of the students in the population had studied any linguistics or sociology.

Nine foreign accented voices, American English, Arabic, Finnish, German, Hungarian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, and Turkish accented Swedish, were selected from *The Accented Swedish Archive* (Bannert 1980) as test stimuli. Replicating the methodology of Bayard et al. (2001) these excerpts of accented speech were played to the respondents, who were given a questionnaire consisting of three parts. Part one collected demographic data including each respondents' place of birth and language background. Using six-point semantic differential scales reaching from "not at all" to "very", part two collected perceived personal trait qualities. These included *reliability*, *competence*, *friendliness* and *intelligence*. Part two also contained five questions about each voice, regarding whether the voice was perceived as pleasant, attractive, powerful, strong and educated. Part three collected information about the perceived social factors, such as the speakers' education level, line of work, first language and country of origin.

#### **2.9.4 Case Study 4: Discourse disfluencies in bilingual court hearings**

The fourth case study is a case study of a bilingual hearing in a Swedish District Court where an interpreter was present. Interpreted hearings are increasingly common in Swedish courts, and the interpreter has a central role for the communication between the involved parties. It is not uncommon that interpreted discourse gets confused or breaks down completely. The focus of this study was to identify and analyze the situations when disfluencies occur, and to find the reasons for these disfluencies. The study is based on the official court recording of the court proceedings of a case where Polish-Swedish interpretation was required.

The disfluent situations were analyzed and found to have common features, making categorization of the disfluencies possible. The discourse disruptions were found to originate from all involved discourse participants. Apart from the rarely occurring cases of pure misinterpretation, a common denominator for the miscommunications could be attributed to a lack of knowledge and understanding about multi-lingual communication and cultural differences in communicative strategies. Increased insight into the interpretation process by those using interpreters would aid to lessen the occurrence of the most frequency disfluent situations. This, in turn, would be beneficial for the judicial process and the individual and ultimately for the legal rights of the immigrant.

#### **2.9.5 Case Study 5: What's in the interpreter's interpretation**

Informal interviews and on-site observation in district courts suggest that there is a discrepancy between the interpreter, the judges and other legal workers as to what interpretation entails. Two semi-structured interviews, one with a court interpreter and one with a lay judge, were conducted to

interrogate the observations of the district court. An interpreter is often, from the non-interpreter's viewpoint, more or less seen as a living dictionary or translation machine. Even though the interpreter's task is clearly defined and regulated by the authorities, he or she is often faced with situations where the other involved parties have little knowledge about these directives. This was confirmed in the interviews, both by the interpreter and by the lay judge.

It is furthermore the case that a mutual feeling of lingering mistrust is present at times during court hearings. The fact that the interpreter is the only person in the dialogue situation able to understand both languages serve as a breeding ground for this mistrust. It manifests itself in that the interpreter can get a feeling of insecurity in situations where the interpretation is less fluent due to reasons beyond his or her control, e.g. a client unable to express himself verbally. The interpreter, not really being the one to blame, is the one who gets questioned with respect to professional skills.

Other participants in the communicative situation can experience doubts about whether everything that is said really gets translated, and if parts of a message, even though translated, fail to be understood. The difficulty of such a standoff of mistrust is that the only person who has the complete picture is the bilingual speaker, i.e. the interpreter.

It is also not uncommon that the interpreter, often sharing linguistic and cultural background with the client, is seen by the court staff as being on the client's side in the hearing. This is, rationally and logically, not the case but it can be emotionally difficult to disregard the bond created by the linguistic unity.

## **Chapter 3: Case Study 1: Student attitudes towards immigrants and immigration: An explorative Swedish case study**

In a research note published in *International Migration Review* in 2007, Rita Simon and Keri Sikich reported a follow up to the research note published in 1999 (Simon & Lynch, 1999) that reported public attitudes to immigrants and migrants across a motivated selection of seven nations. Simon and Sikich (2007) grouped the seven nations as follows: the United States, Canada and Australia that they viewed as “the traditional immigrant-receiving countries”; Great Britain, France and Germany that they viewed as “ambivalent vis-à-vis immigrants”, and Japan that they viewed as “a country that does not even have the concept of immigrant and immigration”. Simon and Sikich reported on national public opinion data collected in 2003. This piece explores Swedish university students’ attitudes to immigrants and migrants using data collected in 2008 using the same items presented by Simon and Sikich (2007). The students’ attitudes are compared with national opinion data from the seven nations reported by Simon and Sikich and the national opinion data for Sweden that were also obtained in 2003. Opinion data are compared for the following items:

1. Do you think that the number of immigrants coming to (name of country) should be: increased a lot, increased a little, remain the same, reduced a little, reduced a lot?
2. Do you think immigrants are generally good for the economy?
3. Do you think immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in (name of country)?
4. Do you think immigrants increase crime?
5. Do you think immigrants make (name of country) more open to new ideas and cultures?

Sweden is one of the most prominent examples of multiculturalism in Europe with long established multicultural policies (Entzinger, 2003; Joppke & Morawska, 2003; Bayram, Nyquist, Thorburn & Bilgel, 2009). A good summary of the reforms in this area can be found in Bayram, Nyquist, Thorburn and Bilgel. Of central importance is official integration policy and its paraphrase of the French Revolution’s slogan to *Jämlikhet, valfrihet och samverkan* (equality, freedom of choice, and partnership) that was part of the government report (SOU 74: 69) that was passed into law by the Swedish parliament in 1975. These principles still apply in contemporary Sweden

although as Bayram, Nyquist, Thorburn and Bigel pointed out the terminology has changed.

Although, Svallfors and Hjerm (2006) reported that Sweden is the most immigrant-friendly nation in Europe, Sweden also has difficulties with the process of immigrant intergration (Westin & Dingu-Kyrklund, 2000, cited in Bayram, Nyquist, Thorburn & Bigel, 2007). These difficulties make an exploratory case study of Swedish university student attitudes interesting; students are young, trained to think critically and exposed to cultural diversity during their studies. Figure 2 shows the ratio between immigrant population and total population per geographical unit based on the most recently available data (2005). GIS methodology was used to smoothen out the spatial patterns using neighbourhood statistics with a radius of 5 kilometres. The share of foreign-born people in Sweden is circa 10%; this is why 10% is used as the middle point of the scale.

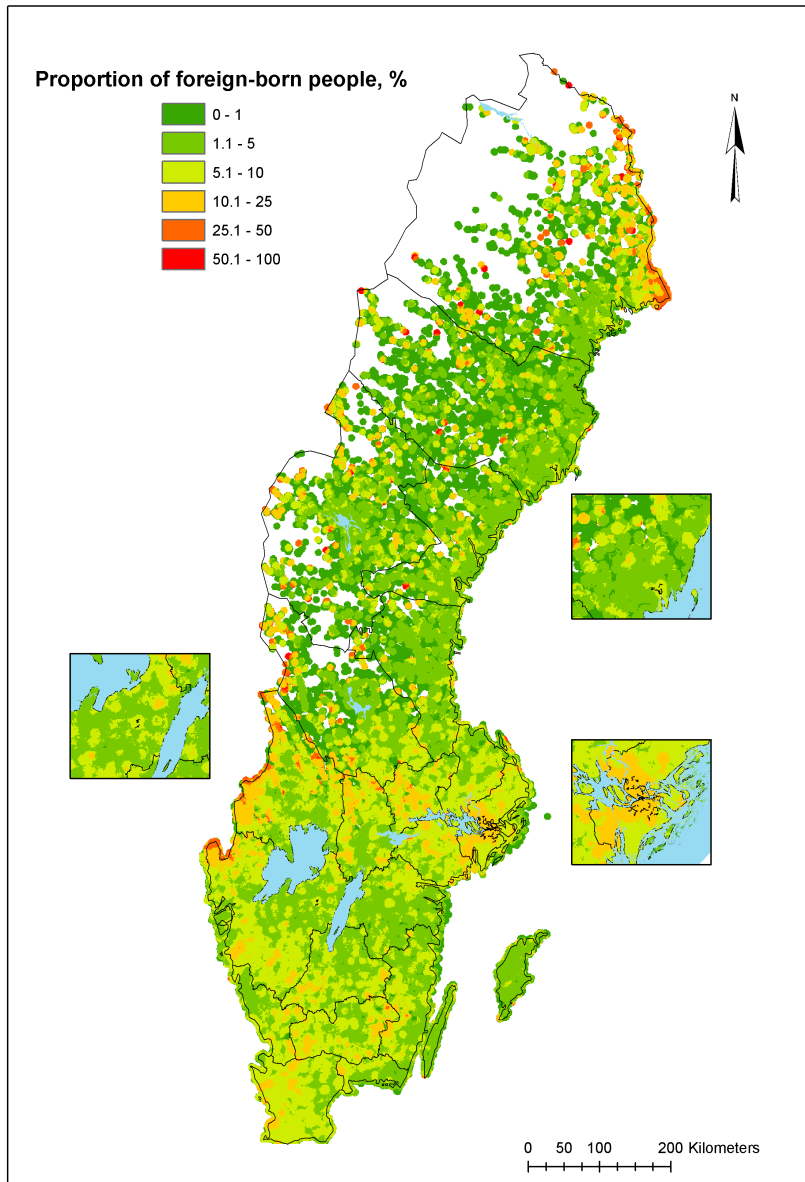
The student data was collected at Umeå University and Skövde University College during the first 10 weeks of the Autumn Semester 2008. The participants were 142 (mean age = 21.8, range 18–34) full-time students with 93 male (mean age = 21.28, age range = 18–39), and 48 female (mean age = 22.79, age range = 18–34) and one participant who did not report their gender who was 23 years old. The participants placed their answer sheets into an envelope and sealed it before giving them to the experimental leader. All reported Swedish to be their sole first language. The answer sheets of participants who reported more than one first language were removed from the data analysis.

The responses to Question 1 are presented in Figure 3<sup>1</sup>. To compare with Simon and Sikich (2007) we have included the 2003 survey data for the seven countries they reported in their research note. The 2003 survey data for Swedish is also included along with the data from the exploratory case study of Swedish students' attitudes collected in 2008. Simon and Sikich found the Canada and Australia were the most positive to increased immigration with the other five countries favouring a reduction in immigration. Sweden, as can be seen in Figure 3, most closely follows the opinions of the United States and thus favours a reduction in immigration. The Swedish student group clearly differs from the Swedish ISSP group. They are almost as positive as Australia to increasing immigration, but are happiest with the status quo and are the group that is most negative to a reduction in immigration.

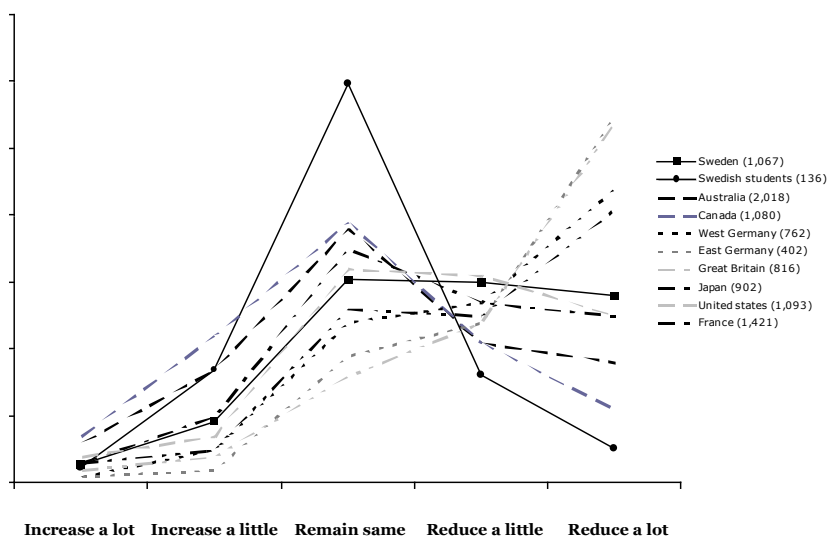
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<sup>1</sup> All of the survey data comes from the International Social Survey Programme's (ISSP) National Identity Series (2003). The public opinion survey data can be accessed through the ISSP website <<http://www.issp.org>>.



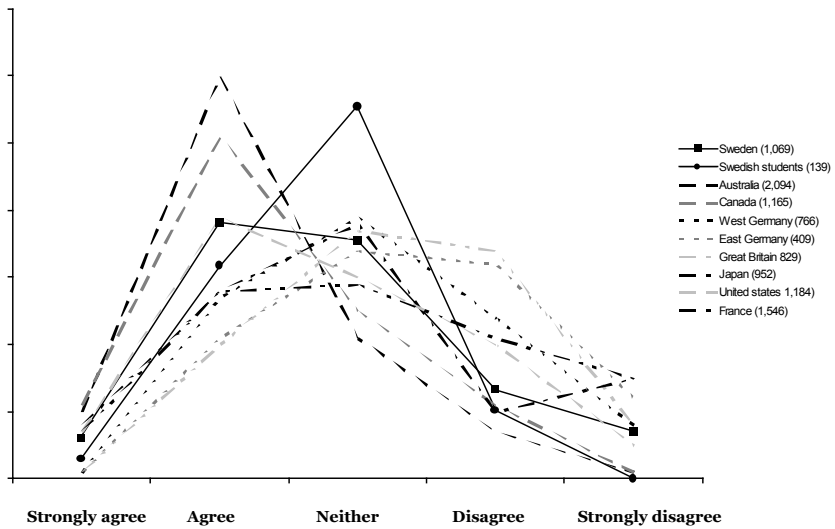


**Figure 2: The proportion of immigrants to the entire Swedish population. The white parts of the map have no inhabitants. Skövde (left), Umeå (top right) and Stockholm (bottom right) are shown in greater detail.**



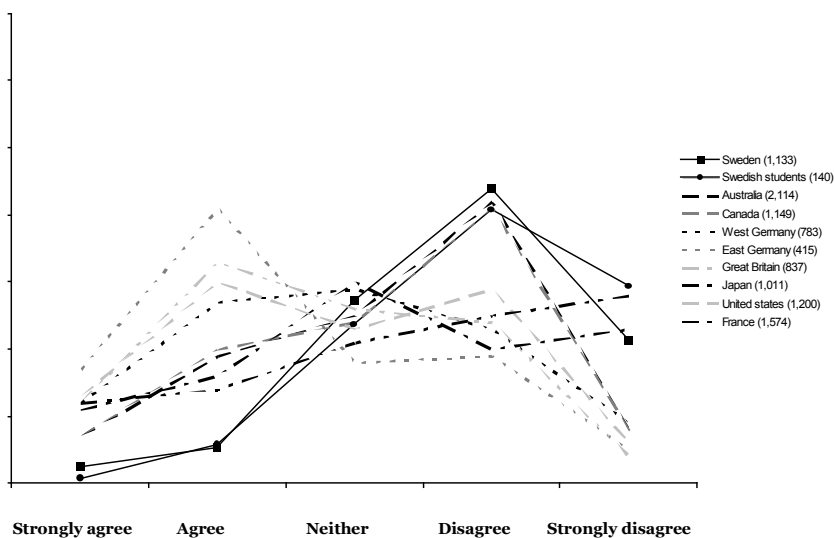
**Figure 3: Opinions about whether the number of immigrants to the country should be increased, reduced, or remain the same. The number of participants for each country is shown in the figure legend.**

That the respondents believe that immigration to their country is generally good for economy can be seen in the results shown in Figure 4. The most positive views were found by Simon and Sikich (2007) to be held by respondents from Australia and Canada. The United States, the other traditional immigrant-receiving country lagged, as Simon and Sikich put it, behind Australia and Canada. The answers from the Swedish group, although very slightly less negative than the United States, closely follow those of the United States. The Swedish student group's responses are centred on the neutral opinion, indicating that immigrants are neither good nor bad for the economy. They disagree more often than the Swedish ISSP group that immigrants are not good for the economy and simultaneously they do not think that immigrants are as good for the economy as the Swedish ISSP group. Great Britain, East and West Germany, France and Japan all hold more negative views on whether immigrants are generally good for the economy than the Swedish student and ISSP groups.



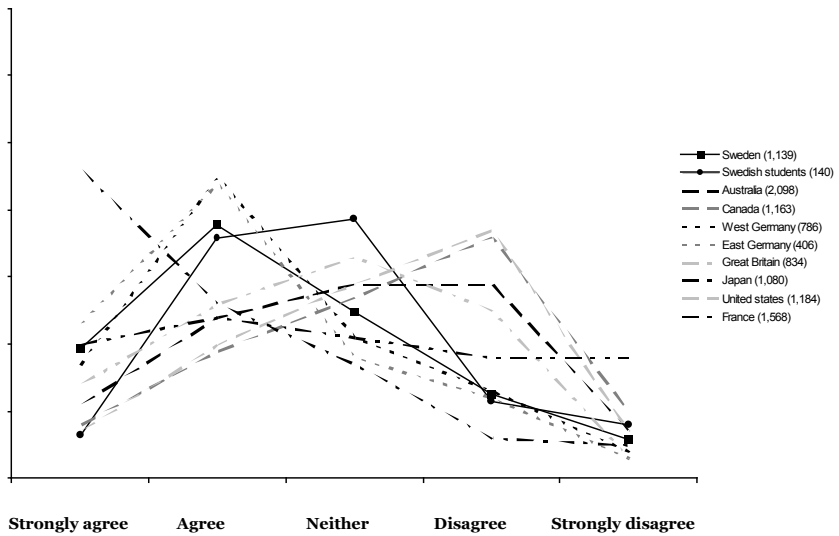
**Figure 4: Opinions about whether immigrants are generally good for the economy. The number of participants for each country is shown in the figure legend.**

The answers to question 3, on whether immigrants take the jobs away from the non-immigrants, presented in Simon and Sikich (2007) show a polarization between positive and negative answers (Figure 5). East Germany, Great Britain, and West Germany group together on the side that believe that immigrants take jobs from the native citizens. The United States responses are polarized with a peak for those agreeing and those disagreeing that immigrants take away employment opportunities from those born in the United States. The Australian and Canadian answers suggest that they do not see immigration taking jobs away from those born in the country. The Swedish ISSP group answers disagree most with statement that immigrants take away jobs from those born in the country. This is seen in the low number of respondents who agree or strongly agree the statement and the high number of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. The Swedish student group closely follows the Swedish ISSP group.



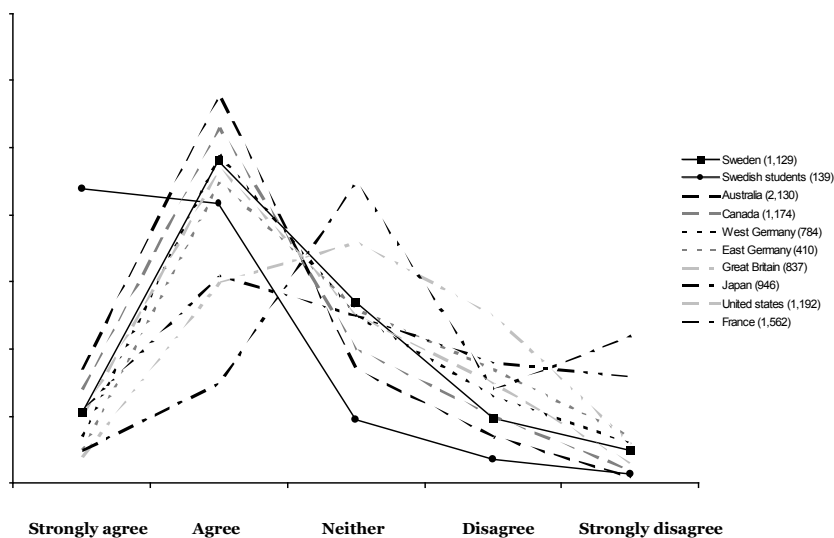
**Figure 5: Opinions about whether immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in the country. The number of participants for each country is shown in the figure legend.**

Moving in to the area of immigration and crime (Figure 6) Japan stands out; 46% of the Japanese respondents strongly agree and 26% agree that immigrants increase crime. Simon and Sikich's data showed that on this issues the U.S. and Australia are in close agreement and are the least likely to believe that immigrants increase crime. Australia respondents hold this view, but to a lesser extent. The East and West Germany data suggest that a majority (67% and 62%, respectively) believe that immigrants increase crime. A majority of the Swedish ISSP group (57%) also hold this view. For the Swedish student there is no majority (42%), however most (39%) neither agree nor disagree.



**Figure 6: Opinions about whether immigrants increase crime. The number of participants for each country is shown in the figure legend.**

The final question asked whether immigrants make the country more open to new ideas and cultures. The results are presented in Figure 7. Simon and Sikich (2007) reported that a majority of respondents in all countries except Japan (20%) and Great Britain (34%) thought immigrants made their countries more open. They also found that Australia (77%) and Canada (67%) were the most enthusiastic. A majority of the Swedish ISSP group (59%) think that immigrants improve their country that is marginally less enthusiastic than Canada and more enthusiastic than West Germany (56%). The Swedish student group are by far the most enthusiastic; 86% think immigrants make their country more open to new ideas and cultures. Of further note it that 44% of this group strongly agree with this statement, whereas only 17% of Australia's strongly agree with the statement.



**Figure 7: Opinions about whether immigrants make the country more open to new ideas and cultures. The number of participants for each country is shown in the figure legend.**

The public opinion survey from 2003 shows that Sweden is an immigrant-friendly country as reported by Svallfors and Hjerm (2006). However, Sweden is not the universally most positive nation among the eight discussed in this study. The difficulties with the process of immigrant integration (e.g. Westin & Dingu-Kyrklund, 2000, cited in Bayram, Nyquist, Thorburn & Bilgel, 2007) clearly present themselves in the question: Do you think immigrants increase crime? A majority of Swedish respondents agree with this statement. The Swedish data suggests that Swedes in principle are positive to immigrants and think that they make Sweden more open and culturally interesting. However, when the Swede needs to find someone to blame the immigrant is a perhaps good target. The Swede thinks that an increase in crime is linked to immigration. If the 2003 study was replicated today in the middle of the world financial crisis, it would be interesting to see whether, and if so how, the Swede's opinion about whether immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in the country changes.

The Swedish student group is happy with the status quo and does not want a reduction in immigration and the majority do not see immigrants as good or bad for economy. These views are reflected in the majority of students not believing that immigrants take their jobs and their highly positive position on immigrants making the country more open to new idea and cultures, more so than the Swedish ISSP group. That students hold these positions is perhaps to be expected considering that students are trained to

think critically and exposed to cultural diversity during their studies. What is intriguing is that the Swedish student group, in spite of its positive attitude to immigration, has the perception of immigration increasing crime; only 19% disagree or strong disagree with this link.

The general conclusion presented by Simon and Sikich (2007):

*While more positive feelings were expressed about the role immigrants play vis-à-vis the economy, more negative feelings were voiced about immigrants and criminal behaviour and the likelihood that they improved their adoptive countries by bringing in new ideas. (p. 962)*

holds for both the Swedish ISSP and Swedish student groups.

## **Chapter 4: Case Study 2: Mimicked accents – Do speakers have similar cognitive prototypes?<sup>2</sup>**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The range of situations in which people might be interested in concealing their voices to avoid being identified and/or deflecting the search for them to another specific individual or group of individuals includes when making threatening phone calls, when orally blackmailing people and when threatening people when masked. Many strategies are available to individuals attempting to disguise their voices and include:

- Changes in the voice source (i.e. change in pitch, creaky voice or whisper)
- Resonance features (i.e. bite blocks or foreign objects in the vocal tract and hypo / hypernasality)
- Manner of speaking (i.e. reduction of pitch variation, change of speech tempo, change of stress patterns)
- The imitation of a specific known individual
- The imitation of a foreign accent.

Künzel (2000) presents and explains many of these different strategies in detail and he also lists the most frequent methods of voice disguise as the use of falsetto speech, whispered speech, and creaky voice, the creation hypo-nasalized speech by holding the nose, and the adoption of imitation of a foreign accent.

Schiller and Köster (1996), Goggin et al. (1991), Tate (1979) and Thompson (1987) have demonstrated that foreign accent, real or faked, has a serious impact on the individual's ability to recognize and identify a speaker. The recognition accuracy not only deteriorates seriously when a subject speaks in a language not understood by a listener (see: Sullivan & Schlichting, 2000), but also when a subject speaks in a foreign accent. There are several possible reasons for this; a foreign accent, or strong regional dialect, tends to distract the listener. The accent has a tendency to mute

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<sup>2</sup> This case study is published as Torstensson, N., Eriksson, E. J., & Sullivan, K. P. H. (2004). Mimicked accents – Do speakers have similar cognitive prototypes? In S. Cassidy, F. Cox, R. Mannell, & S. Palethorpe (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 10th Australian International Conference on Speech Science and Technology*, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, December 8-10 (pp. 271 – 276). Canberra, Australia: Australian Speech Science and Technology Association Inc.



speaker-specific idiosyncrasies so that subtle nuances of the language itself can be lost, and it tends to reduce the number of segmental contrasts (Hollien 2002).

Research on speaker identification and speaker recognition has been carried out on a range of languages, language pairs and accents, e.g. German (Schiller & Köster 1996), English/German and Spanish/English (Goggin et al. 1991) and English/Swedish (Sullivan & Schlichting, 2000, and Sullivan & Kügler, 2001). These investigations have contributed to our understanding of the listener side of speaker recognition, but not much about the speaker and speaker strategies relating imitated accents.

This paper, therefore, focuses on the speaker, and speaker strategies when adapting, or faking, a foreign accent normally not used by the speaker. By ‘normally not used’ it is meant that speakers do not use the particular faked accent for humour or effect in their personal or professional lives; the mimicking of the British English Swedish (BEngSe) accent, that is mimicking of the Swedish spoken by native British English speakers, by native Swedish speakers is the focus of this paper.

## **4.2 The British English Swedish Accent**

At both the phonetic and the phonological level, English is relatively similar to Swedish. For example, Bannert (2004) in his study of the acquisition of a Swedish accent by second language learners described only the mutually understandable Scandinavian languages (Danish and Norwegian), Dutch, German and Icelandic as being more similar to Swedish than English is to Swedish. The result of the distinct set of differences between English and Swedish is that a person speaking Swedish with a British English accent typically exhibits a set of characteristic features. Bannert (1980, 2004) described the differences between Swedish and English, and the characteristics of the British English Swedish accent listed below as based on his work. The presentation of these characteristics is divided into vowel, consonant and prosodic features. Based on these characteristic features it is possible to delimit the features one can expect to define a general British English Swedish accent.

### 4.2.1 Vowel features

- The backed rounded vowel, [u:], is more closed in Swedish than in British English. In words such as *sol* [su:l] <sun> and *stor* [stu:r] <big> [u:] is pronounced as [ʊ].
- The vowels in Swedish words that are phonetically close to the English equivalent tend to be pronounced as in English, e.g. the Swedish *republik* [rɛpøbli:k] <republic> is pronounced as in British English i.e. as [rɛpʌblɪk].
- Vowels, especially the more open ones, in word-final and in unstressed positions tend to be reduced to schwa or to be deleted. For example *mattan*, [mat:an] <the mat> is pronounced as [mat:ən] and *maten* [ma:ten] <the food> is pronounced as [ma:tɪn].
- The rounded front vowels [y:] [ø:] and [u:] have a tendency to be realized as approximations of [i:], [ə] and [ʌ].
- The Swedish long [e:] and [u:] vowels are often diphthongized by British English speakers of Swedish, for example as in *ben* <leg>, pronounced [beɪn] instead of [be:n].
- The phonemic long-short vowel distinction in Swedish tends to normalize towards a vowel length that is somewhere in between the Swedish long and short vowel length; the distinction is generally not present in the British English Swedish accent.

### 4.2.2 Consonant features:

- The British English Swedish speaker has a tendency to delete initial consonants that occur in word-initial consonant clusters that do not occur in British English. For example *knä*, [knɛ:] <knee> is pronounced as [nɛ:].
- Consonants can become syllabic: vowel deletion results in consonants becoming syllabic. For example: *segel* [se:gəl] <sail> being pronounced as [se:gl].
- The Swedish /r/ that in central standard Swedish is normally produced as a trilled [r] is produced as a non-rhotic [ɹ].
- Occurrence of linking 'r' that is not a feature of Swedish, as in *att gå efter* <to go for> pronounced [atgo:ɹæfteɹ] instead of [atgo: ɛfteɹ].
- S-sounds are often pronounced as voiced instead of unvoiced. For example: *näsa* [nɛ:za] <nose> instead of [nɛ:sa].
- Voicing errors due to the non-application of the Swedish devoicing rule. For example in the compound word /företagsekonomi/ <business administration> where the normally voiced [g] in *företag* <business> gets devoiced in the position before the unvoiced [s] at the word juncture. In this example, the voiceless [s] is moreover voiced incorrectly by British English Swedish speakers

#### 4.2.3 Prosody features:

- The Swedish long/short distinction is not maintained by British English Swedish speakers.
- British English Swedish speakers have problems with the Swedish word-stress distribution patterns both for words with one tonal peak, for example, *fattade* <understood> ['fat:ade] that is pronounced as [fat'a:de] and for words with two stressed tonal peaks such as *arbetslivet* <the working life> ['arbe:tsl'ivet] that is pronounced as [a:be:tsl'ivet].
- The British English Swedish speaker does not maintain the difference between Swedish accent 1 and accent 2, as in *anden* [anden] <the duck>, pronounced with one tonal peak on the first syllable, and *anden* [anden] <the spirit>, pronounced with two tonal peaks. Primary stress on the first syllable, more prominent than the secondary stress on the second syllable. This difference in word accent is extremely important as a word's meaning is sometimes dependent on accent and use of the incorrect accent contributes strongly to the impression of "Swedish with an accent"

### 4.3 Research questions

Three research questions were posed:

1. Do Swedes when mimicking a British English Swedish (BEngSe) accent capture the elements of this accent that phoneticians such as Bannert (1994, 2004) describe in their descriptions of this accent?
2. Do Swedes, when mimicking a BEngSe accent, mimic similar features? If so, this could indicate a common cognitive prototype, that may also indicate that the selection of these features who increase the changes of voice disguise.
3. Can the mimicked BEngSe accent be impacted upon by exposure to recordings of a BEngSe speaker?

### 4.4 Method

In order to remove the possibility for grammar mimicry and delimit the range of BEngSe features that could be mimicked it was decided to use read speech for this study.

#### 4.4.1 The passage

The passage read by the experimental participants was a text from the newspaper Dagens Nyheter (Snarud, 2003) about the hibernation of bears. The text read was:

*Dags att gå i ide*

*Skansens björnar gäspar så att tungorna krullar sig. Det är dags att sova. Ny forskning visar att människan har en hel del gemensamt med djur som går i ide, vilket kan leda till säkrare transplantationer av mänskliga organ.*

*Björnhonan Enter kliar sig i sidan med högerfoten så att bilringarna dallrar. Skansens björnar är feta nu, redo att slumra bort den kalla och mörka tiden som kommer. Enter gäspar stort med hängande ögonlock.*

*- Nu dröjer det nog bara en vecka eller två innan björnarna går och lägger sig, säger Hans-Ove Larsson, intendent på Skansen i Stockholm.*

*Svenska brunbjörnar sover normalt ungefär halva året. Under sömnen sjunker kroppstemperaturen från dryga 37 grader till omkring 33 grader. Samtidigt faller pulsen till ungefär tio slag per minut, en fjärdedel av björnens vilopuls i vaket tillstånd.*

*Björnarna sover sig igenom de hårda tiderna när maten är knapp. Fettet från sensommarens frossardagar räcker till våren tack vare att förbränningen går ner till mindre än hälften.*

*Andra djur sjunker ännu djupare ner i vintervila, till en nivå där kroppen bara förbränner några procent av den energi som går åt i vaket tillstånd. Rekordet innehas av en arktisk jordekorre arktisk sisel som i sin djupaste dvala kan ha en kroppstemperatur på ner till minus tre grader.*

*Människan hör till de djur som dör av kyla. En sänkning av kroppstemperaturen med tio grader orsakar hjärtflimmer. Om kroppen blir ännu kallare är risken stor att hjärtat slutar slå.*

*Men även våra kroppar har en förmåga att åtminstone delvis sjunka ner i en mycket djup dvala. En infarkt i hjärnan stryper blodflödet så att nervceller får brist på syre, vilket i värsta fall kan vara livshotande. Syrebristen startar samtidigt ett försvarssystem som effektivt skyddar mot nya infarkter. Ämnesomsättningen faller och blodets förmåga att levera sig minskar.*

*- Reaktionen påminner starkt om vad som händer i ett djur som går i ide, säger Roger Simon, neurologiprofessor vid Oregon Health and Sciences University i USA.*

*Hans slutsats är att hjärnan har samma slags skydd mot syrebrist som ett djur i vinterdvala, vilket han nyligen rapporterade i medicintidskriften Lancet. Roger Simon hoppas att de nya rönen ska leda till mediciner som försätter hjärnan i dvala utan att skada den. En sådan medicin skulle kunna skydda hjärnan mot syrebrist som ibland uppstår i samband med en operation.*

#### **4.4.2 The participants**

There were two groups of speakers: A group of native Swedish speakers and a native British English Speaker.

##### **4.4.2.1 The Swedish participants**

The Swedish participants were three male aged between 30 and 40 years. All were native speakers of Swedish. All spoke with the same regional dialect that was not Central Standard Swedish. All the speakers were advanced learners of English.

#### *4.4.2.2 The native British English Speaker*

The native British English Speaker was a male speaker, aged 39 years who has lived in Sweden for the past 10 years. He is an advanced learner of Swedish. He returns frequently to the United Kingdom and listens to the British Media daily. He speaks with a Southern English modified RP accent. His Swedish accent has many of the expected characteristics described in Section 2.

#### **4.4.3 Procedure**

The Swedish participants were not informed of the exact nature of the task prior to the first recordings. They were asked if they minded being recorded for a phonetic research purpose. On arrival each participant was presented with the text to be read. After they had read the text and felt able to read it aloud without problem, they were asked to read the text as if they wanted a listener to believe that they were English.

After the first recording, a second recording was immediately made with the Swedish participants reading the text in their natural Swedish voices. Thereafter, they were given a recording of the text made by the British English Speaker reading the same text. The participants were told to listen to the text as often as possible during the following week to improve their accent imitation. All of the Swedish participants confirmed that they had done so when they returned one week later to make a second recording of the text.

All of the Swedish participants recordings were made in Skövde using a Røde NT 3 microphone and a Waveterminal U24 A/D-converter, and recorded in 16 bit mono at 22 000 Hz. The speech files were normalized using WaveLab 4.0 software.

### **4.5 Acoustic and auditory analysis**

An acoustic and an auditive analysis were performed. These compared and contrasted the recordings to find both intra- and inter-speaker variations and similarities. The recordings were analysed for the characteristic features of the BEngSe accent as described by Bannert (1994, 2004) and outlined in Section 2. The first analysis concerns the unprepared, intuitive variant of accented speech compared to the reference recording and earlier research in the area and the second analysis the changes that occurred in the imitated BEngSe accents after a repeated listening to a recording of the same text by a native BEngSe speaker.

### 4.5.1 *Intuitive strategies*

Auditive analyses of the first recordings showed similar imitation strategies were used by all three Swedish subjects. All the Swedish subjects had, for example, made distinctive changes to their pronunciations of /a/ and /r/ in all possible contexts in the given text. There are, however, dissimilarities in the realization of these changes. The auditory and acoustic analysis of the subjects in presented subject by subject.

#### 4.5.1.1 *Subject 1*

Subject 1's general strategy is presented prior specific details of his strategy are presented.

#### 4.5.1.2 *General strategy*

Subject 1 altered his intonation pattern and the quality of a few specific sounds that are detailed below. Compared to his normal pattern of intonation, his imitation of a BEngSe accent has much larger fluctuations in  $F_0$ . This is combined with changing word stress pattern so that the first syllable of every word has the word stress.

#### 4.5.1.3 *Specific details*

All /r/-sounds are pronounced as retroflex, fricative or non-rhotic [ɽ] instead of [r] by subject 1 regardless of the position of the /r/. The pronunciation of /a/-sounds were changed to a more fronted [a] instead of the subject's usual variation between [a] and [ɑ]. Pronunciation of non-rhotic laterals are also affected, so that the normal Swedish [l] was often realized as the retroflex [ɭ].

Some realizations of word initial grapheme combinations like /dj/ and /hj/ that are pronounced [j] in Swedish were realized by the affricate [dʒ] and an aspirated [hʲ] respectively. An example is the word /djur/ (animal) normally pronounced [ju:r], but in subject 1's first recording it was realised as [dʒø:ɹ]. Another example is subject 1's imitation of a BEngSe speaker's pronunciation of /hjälp/ (help), that is pronounced as [jɛlp] by native Swedish speakers, yet in his BEngSe imitation it is rendered as [hʲjælp].

Occasional use of English word pronunciation is also found, like in puls (pulse), pronounced like the English [pʌls] instead of the Swedish [pøls].

#### 4.5.1.4 Subject 2

Subject 2's general strategy is presented prior specific details of his strategy are presented.

#### 4.5.1.5 General strategy

Compared to this subjects' manner of reading in Swedish, the first general impressions upon listening to his BEngSe imitation are that speech tempo is substantially lower and that a majority of the vowels are diphthongized. The general articulation pattern is reminiscent of a southern Swedish, Scanian, variety of Swedish with /r/-sounds varying between a back tremulant [ʀ] and a back fricative [ʁ].

All pronunciations of /a/ are more fronted, with a clear tendency to be realised as [a] / [a:] rather than the Swedish variation between [a] and [ɑ].

#### 4.5.1.6 Specific details

Subject 2's most prominent feature is the diphthongization of the vowels. Examples include the imitation of *ide* <winter lair> as [ei:də] (the canonical Swedish pronunciation is [i:de]), and *sover* <sleeps> that in Swedish is pronounced as [so:ver] but was pronounced as [səuvɔʁ] in Subject 2's imitation of a BEngSe accent.

Other intuitive features found for this speaker are English pronunciation of some words, for example, the Swedish *procent* <percent> is pronounced in English instead of the standard Swedish [prɔsɛnt].

#### 4.5.1.7 Subject 3

Subject 3's general strategy is presented prior to the specific details of his strategy.

#### 4.5.1.8 General strategy

Subject 3 changed his intonation pattern dramatically from the intonation pattern he used in his recording of the text in his unaccented speech. Larger fluctuations of FO were combined with a change in stress.

The vowel /a/ is more fronted in this speakers BEngSe imitation than in his Swedish accent and the /r/-sounds are pronounced as retroflex, fricative or non-rhotic [ɻ] rather than as in his Swedish accent where he uses [r].

### 4.5.1.9 Specific details

This speaker uses the English pronunciation of words for several words in his BEngSe imitation. For example, *system* and *pulse* are pronounced as English words. This subject also used the English translation for phonetically close words. For example *from* instead of *från*, [fro:n], and *percent* instead of *procent*, [prusent].

The word-initial grapheme combination /dj/ in words like */djur/* (animal) and */djupare/* (deeper) was consistently pronounced as an affricate in subject 3's BEngSe accent, for example, [dʒø:ɹ] instead of [ju:ɹ] and [dʒø:paɹɛ] instead of [ju:paɹɛ].

**Table 1: Features appearing in the intuitive recordings are indicated by an X; features that were added after training are indicated by [X]. As all of the features used in the first recordings continued to be used in recording 2, there is no indication of features present in recording 1 but not recording 2**

Feature	Reference	Speaker 1	Speaker 2	Speaker 3
backed rounded vowel, [u:]				X
English equivalent word		X	X	X
reduction to schwa	X	[X]	[X]	[X]
vowel deletion	X	X		X
approximations of [y:] [ø:] and [u:]	X			X
[r] produced as [ɹ]	X	X	X	X
diphthongized [e:] and [u:]	X	X	X	X
aspiration between stop and vowel	X			
voiced /s/	X			
vowel quantity errors (long / short)				
word-stress errors	X	X		X
accent 1 / accent 2 errors				
word-initial consonant deletion				
syllabic consonants	X	X	[X]	X
intrusive /r/	X	[X]		X
Word-initial consonant clusters (dj)		X		X
deviant pronunciation of /a/	X	X	X	X



Table 1 presents a summary of the strategies used by the subjects in their imitations of a BEngSe accent and the number of times over a week to a recording of the text by a native speaker of English who speaks Swedish with a BEngSe accent. None of the features focused upon were removed between recording 1 and recording 2. However, a number of features were added: these are indicated by square brackets in Table 1.

## 4.6 Discussion

The inter-speaker comparisons show significant similarities in terms of the features that were changed; this can be interpreted as suggesting that these three speakers hold a common view of the characteristic of a BengSe. Although, it is clear that certain features are seen both as distinctive, typical and necessary for this accent and that together these features could be both necessary and sufficient to create the illusion of a genuine BEngSe, it is unwise to delimit a BEngSe prototype upon data from three male speakers.

The fact that none of the speakers used the voiced-/z/ feature probably depends on source-language factors. As this is a speech sound that is part of the British English phoneme inventory, but not the Swedish, it is likely to be not perceived, ignored, or forgotten. However, since this feature is described as being prominent in the accent description and present in the reference recording, this suggests that it is one of the necessary features for an accent to be universally perceived as BEngSe. The lack of such a feature in combination with the presence of other prominent ones could thus indicate that an accent is mimicked and not authentic.

This manner of reasoning lends support to the idea that rather than defining a prototypical accent, the definition should be of distinctive features, each necessary and together sufficient, to form the cognitive impression of a genuine accent.

## 4.7 Conclusions

After evaluating the results with respect to the research questions posed, the following conclusions can be drawn. Speakers, when imitating a well-known accent, capture many of the prominent features of such an accent. Compared to earlier phonetic research, there is a high degree of correspondence between expected and actual findings. Many of the elements described as being prominent, e.g. by Bannert (1994, 2004) appear in the mimicked accent recordings.

Inter-speaker comparisons show, as mentioned earlier, some differences but at a broader level, a large number of similarities; many of the prominent features are shared between all the subjects that took part in this pilot study on foreign accent imitation. It, thus, appears possible that speakers of

Swedish form a cognitive prototype for accents that are to a high degree similar between individuals.

As for the third research question, if the mimicked accent can be impacted upon by exposure to a genuine BEngSe accent, the answer must be affirmative. Our experiment has shown that exposure over a relatively short time period has effects on all levels, prosodic as well as vowel- and consonant features.

## Chapter 5: Case study 3: Native reactions to non-native accented Swedish.<sup>3</sup>

### 5.1 Introduction

Globalization is often seen as a movement towards to all things American. However, globalization during the late twentieth century not only resulted in a perceived dominance of English as a lingua franca, but also in migration to small language areas, such as Belgium, The Netherlands, and Sweden. This migration has included movement from wealthy western democracies such as the USA, Finland, Germany and the UK and asylum seekers from the countries of the former Eastern block, Africa and the Middle East. For Sweden, immigration has resulted in a rapid change from a near homogeneous white, Lutheran society to one in which close to a million Swedish citizens aged between 16 – 74 years of age are foreign born (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2005).

Case Study one, Student attitudes towards immigrants and immigration: An explorative Swedish case study, investigated how Swedish students answered the following questions

1. Do you think that the number of immigrants coming to (name of country) should be: increased a lot, increased a little, remain the same, reduced a little, reduced a lot?
2. Do you think immigrants are generally good for the economy?
3. Do you think immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in (name of country)?
4. Do you think immigrants increase crime?
5. Do you think immigrants make (name of country) more open to new ideas and cultures?

The student responses were compared with data for public attitudes to immigrants and migrants across a motivated selection of seven nations (Simon & Sikich, 2007) and the national opinion data for Sweden from the same public opinion survey database<sup>4</sup>. The results for the student respondents were found to be consistent with prior results that have

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<sup>3</sup> An earlier version of this study was presented as Torstensson, N., Green, J., & Sullivan, K. P. H. (2008) Native reactions to non-native accented Swedish. Paper presented at the New Zealand Language and Society Conference, 17-18 November 2008, Dunedin, New Zealand

<sup>4</sup> The public opinion survey data can be accessed through the ISSP website <<http://www.issp.org>>.

suggested that Sweden is the most immigrant friendly nation in Europe (Svallfors & Hjerm, 2006) and showed that apart from a slightly negative view on immigration and crime Swedish university students are positive to immigration and enthusiastic about its impact on the country's cultural life.

However, few Swedish immigrants master spoken Swedish to such a degree that they are mistaken as first language Swedish speakers and therefore many foreign-accented varieties of Swedish co-exist. Attitudes towards immigrants may be related to attitudes towards accents as with all varieties of a language (see e.g. Bayard, Weatherall, Gallois & Pittam 2001) each variety conveys more than just the linguistic message to a listener. When listeners only hear the speaker they tend to ascribe properties to the speaker based what they hear. This is true for regional, social and foreign-accented varieties of a language. In all language communities, some varieties for multiple reasons have higher status than others. These reasons can include social, political, and ethnic prejudices and stereotyping. The "accent-effect" can therefore be viewed as lying on the perceptual side of the communication chain. It is of importance to bear in mind that these status evaluations are an effect of learning, personal experiences and the linguistic community in which one grows up and in which one lives.

Listeners make immediate subjective estimations of a speaker's personal qualities and these estimations can concern anything from a speaker's perceived degree of pleasantness (e.g. Bayard & Sullivan 2005), suitability as a teacher (e.g. Abelin & Boyd 2000), social status (e.g. Cunningham-Andersson & Engstrand 1989) and country of origin (e.g. Doeleman 1994).

This case study investigates the values associated with foreign accented Swedish by considering how native Swedish student listeners evaluate recordings of foreign accented Swedish.

## 5.2 Background

A number of studies (e.g. Anisfeld, Bogo & Wallace 1962; Bradford, Farrar & Bradford 1974; Ryan & Carranza 1975) have shown that foreign accented speech is, in general, rated less favourably than non-foreign accented speech. This has even been shown to be the case in matched guise studies (e.g. Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner & Fillenbaum, 1960) where speech samples from speakers who are naturally proficient in two language varieties are presented with and without accent. The Matched Guise Technique is an indirect approach that affords possibilities to find out people's privately held attitudes to languages and accents. These studies have found that the same speaker is attributed with dramatically disparate personality traits based solely on manner of speech, e.g. with or without a foreign accent.

The bulk of research on attitudes towards accented speech deals with different aspects of accented English or local native English varieties. An extensive study on English accent variations (Bayard et al. 2001) shows significant differences in evaluation of speakers based on the English variety spoken. The Bayard et al. material consisted of voice pairs, male and female, with Australian English, New Zealand English, American English and British English accents. Listeners from Australia, NZ and the USA evaluated the perceived personality and demographic traits of the voices. All listener nationality groups preferred the American voices. Bayard et al. interpreted these results as suggesting a shift away from the British English (RP) accent as the most favoured variant of English in preference of the US English accent.

Traditionally, the RP-type English has been seen as the prestige variant, preferred by listeners over other varieties of English in English-speaking parts of the world (see, for example, Stewart, Ryan & Giles 1985) and as the prestige variant it would achieve high scores on power and status variables. The local English variant would score higher than the prestige variant on solidarity traits.

Studies have also been conducted that have investigated attitudes towards different varieties of English by non-native English speakers. One experiment involving national stereotypes and attitudes was carried out by letting native Danish speakers judge five speakers: one American English, one Australian English, one British RP English, one British Cockney English, and one Scottish English speaker (Ladegaard 1998). Although the listeners in Ladegaard's study only had limited experience of English-speaking society and culture, they found it no problem to assess the speakers. Ladegaard emphasised the major role that stereotyping plays in judging the different speakers' personality traits; stereotyping, often only seen as something negative, is also a method to categorise the world and to generalise in order to build representations of the unknown.

Similar studies have been conducted on other languages. Doeleman (1998), for example, studied native Dutch speakers' reactions to foreign accented Dutch. A speaker's competence was found to be associated with the type and degree of accent. That is the listeners had no problem evaluating non-linguistic competences such as general competence, intelligence and other personal qualities and abilities as well linguistics competences. Doeleman posited that the foundation for the evaluations lies in two areas; the phonetic speech features *per se*, and in the social views the listeners hold on different ethnic groups. The phonetic features, both segmental and suprasegmental, such as pronunciation of vowels, consonants and diphthongs, intonation patterns, tempo and loudness, serve as a base for the speaker evaluation. The social view the listeners hold of the foreign accented

speech is found in the coupling of the perceived accent with listener stereotypes and prejudices.

The bulk of accent research on Swedish deals with articulatory phonetic aspects of foreign accented speech, and with phonetic descriptions of different accent varieties. However, Cunningham-Andersson and Engstrand (1988a) is one example of a study that examined the relationship between attitudes to immigrants and attitudes to the way immigrants speak Swedish. They experimentally investigated which foreign accents native speakers of Swedish could identify. Thirty-five accented speech samples were chosen from a speech database of read text. The material was tested both on students with no linguistic training and on a group of linguistically trained Swedish as a second language teachers. The experimental task was to listen to the accented samples and make a statement as to from which part of the world the speaker came. The results found that the teacher group, being linguistically trained, were better at identifying the accents than the linguistically untrained students.

The student group could, at least 40% of the time correctly place the Finnish, Sámi, Norwegian, British English, German, French, Arabic and Russian accents in the appropriate part of the world. In addition, the teacher group were able to place the Spanish, Greek, Turkish, Kurdish, Polish, Czech, Swahili and Yoruba accents in the correct geographic region. Both groups of listeners were not good at identifying the speakers' first language; only five languages (Finnish, Sámi, Norwegian, British English, German and French) were identified with any degree of accuracy.

Another example is the set of experiments, presented in Cunningham-Andersson and Engstrand (1988b) in which the native Swede's ability to identify foreign accents and the Swede's attitudes to immigrant Swedish were examined. They found that the ability to correctly identify a non-native speaker's first language appeared to be limited to the most familiar and geographically closest languages. For the Swede these include the Nordic languages (e.g. Norwegian, Danish, and Icelandic), English, German, French, Spanish and Russian. Cunningham-Andersson and Engstrand (1988b) also report results from a matched-guise experiment regarding beliefs about a speaker's personal traits based on foreign accented speech. Informants were presented with a set of accented voices and given false information about the speaker's origin. One of the voices, Korean accented Swedish, occurred twice in the set of stimuli and was presented once as being a Kurd and once as being German. Responses from the informants showed significant differences in the judgement of the speaker's personality depending on the presented nationality of the speaker.

The ability to identify a speaker's first language has also been tested by Boyd, Abelin and Dorriots (1999). They found that trained judges, teachers of Swedish as a second language, were poor at identifying the subjects' first

language. Only the Finnish and German accents were identified with a high degree of accuracy (80 and 66.7 % correct levels), while the other accents in their study, Polish, Farsi, Spanish, Dutch and Somali, had low or very low degrees of accuracy ranging from 3.3% to 16% correct. The results suggest that Swedes tend to react more to the degree of accent than to the first language, and that the ability to identify L1 in an accent is limited to languages from well established immigrant groups.

Abelin and Boyd (2000) took a broader approach to the accent effect. As well as accent, other voice qualities were taken into consideration when assessing the speakers' personal traits. Recorded material of nine foreign-born teachers was presented to a group of 30 trained linguists and a group of 16 speech and language pathology. Judged parameters were degree of accent, comprehensibility, and pleasantness. The speech and language pathology student were further asked to judge pitch level / variation, voice strength and other voice dimensions used to describe pathological voices. The results showed that listeners are consistent in their judgement of degree of accent, regardless of the accented Swedish being judged. A strong correlation was found between degree of accent and suitability for teaching. The degree of accent also correlated strongly with judged comprehensibility and with judged pleasantness of the voices.

A more recent Swedish study (Boyd, 2003) examined whether and if so how accented Swedish can have a negative impact on the assessment of a teacher's professional skills. Video material of authentic teaching situations involving five foreign-born teachers was judged by school principals and teacher trainers. The results show that the perceived degree of accent had a strong impact on the judgement of a speaker's linguistic competence. In the second part of the study, classes of students from six high schools in metropolitan Gothenburg were presented the same material. It was found that judged degree of accent correlated with judged suitability for teaching. Hence, foreign accent can be seen as impairing judgement when assessing linguistic and personal abilities.

This paper investigates perceptual aspects of accented Swedish. Earlier research strongly suggests that a listener's perception of foreign accented speech extends beyond judging the accent itself, and contributes to form a broader picture of a speaker. Two questions are posed. One, Can the linguistic and national background of the speaker of foreign accented Swedish be identified? Two, which personal traits and social abilities are ascribed to non-native accented Swedish, and do they mirror the positive attitude towards immigration presented in Case Study 1?

## 5.3 Method

The research instrument used in the study is based on Bayard et al. (2001). The changes made to their questionnaire are explicitly stated.

### 5.3.1 Participants

The participants were 42 full-time students from Umeå University, Sweden (21 male students: mean age = 23.8 years old, age range = 19–33 years, std = 2.97, and 21 female students: mean age = 21.9 years old, age range = 18–32, std = 2.87). All the participants were monolingual, native speakers of Swedish who reported no known hearing problem. None of the participants had studied linguistics beyond first semester level and none had read a course in sociolinguistics.

### 5.3.2 *The stimulus tape and characteristics of the foreign accented Swedish voices*

The speech material used to create the stimulus tape is taken from *The Accented Swedish Archive* (Brytningsarkivet) that was recorded in Lund in the 1970s (Bannert 1980). The archive contains linguistically typical recordings of 70 foreign accented Swedish voices. For each voice in the archive there is a recording of a reading of a passage describing two friends going out to eat and talk. The passage was designed by Bannert (2004) and is based on the most frequent Swedish words as listed in Allén's frequency dictionary (Allén 1972). The original recordings were made and are still stored on high-quality magnetic tapes.

Nine foreign accented Swedish voices were selected from the archive: American English, Arabic, Finnish, German, Hungarian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, and Turkish accented Swedish. These were selected to reflect the relative frequency of immigrant groups in Sweden and to reflect current demographic structures of well-established immigrant groups (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2005). However, accented speech from native speakers of the other Scandinavian languages (Danish, Norwegian, Faroese and Icelandic) was excluded due to the high degree of similarity between the Scandinavian languages. An Icelandic accented Swedish voice was, however, selected as the training voice as it is probably the Scandinavian accented Swedish speech with which Swedes are least familiar.

The recordings contained in the Accented Swedish Archive have been analyzed phonetically in detail (Bannert, 2004). The nine accents differ from Central Standard Swedish in the following ways (for more detail see Bannert):



### **5.3.3 American English accented Swedish**

Typical features of this accent are:

- stressed [ɑ:] tends to move forward towards [a] or [æ].
- unstressed [y] gets closer to [i].
- the unstressed backed [u] and [ɔ] move towards a centralised [ə] or schwa or are totally reduced.
- word final schwa is further produced with r-colouring
- the Swedish long-short distinction is problematic and unstressed vowels tend to be too shortened
- words resembling each other in Swedish and English are pronounced with an English intonation
- word initial and word final consonant clusters are often reduced, most commonly when a stop is part of the cluster

### **5.3.4 Arabic accented Swedish**

Typical features of this accent are:

- [ø] moves toward [œ]
- [e] is realised as [ʊ],
- long open [ɑ:] is closer to [o:] so that [svɑ:zɑ] is pronounced [svo:ra]
- schwa-like vowel insertion before obstruents in initial and medial positions
- word-initial fricative [f] is produced more like [χ]
- [r] is pronounced with a sharpened and lengthened the rhotic feature
- in some contexts the Swedish [z] is pronounced as [r]

### **5.3.5 Finnish accented Swedish**

Typical features of this accent are:

- [ç], [ʂ] and [ʃ] are pronounced as [s], e.g. [çø:pa] → [sø:pa].
- Stops are devoiced
- Consonant clusters are frequently reduced, e.g. [tref:ar] is pronounced as [ref:ar], [sømnar] is pronounced as [sømar] and [mørkt] is pronounced as [mørk]

### **5.3.6 German accented Swedish**

Typical features of this accent are:

- [ɑ:] in stressed positions tends to move forward to [a:]
- [y] moves towards [ʊ] or [ø]
- total reduction of [ə] in positions before word-final consonants
- the total reduction of [ə] in positions before word-final consonants is often combined with nasal assimilation after the reduction of the unstressed vowel, e.g. [kɔp:ən] → [kɔp:m]
- rhotic [r] is realised as the [ʀ]
- the long / short consonant distinction is often reduced to a single length that is closer to short consonant's length

### **5.3.7 Hungarian accented Swedish**

Typical features of this accent are:

- Incorrect vowel quality and vowel quantity
- long [ɑ:] is pronounced like [a]
- [ø] is pronounced more like [ʊ]
- unvoiced phonemes are voiced before stops, e.g. [fu:tbɔl:] is pronounced as [fu:dbɔl:]

### **5.3.8 Polish accented Swedish**

Typical features of this accent are:

- the Swedish vowel length distinctions are normalised to a single length that is closer to the Swedish short vowel length than the long.
- combinations of nasals and high fronted vowels are palatalised as in [ju:n<sup>h</sup>i] and [ti<sup>h</sup>:den].
- assimilation of voicing so that [çɔk: bu:k] is realised as [çɔg: bu:k]
- initial [h] before a stressed vowel is pronounced as [ç] or [x].

### **5.3.9 Serbo-Croatian accented Swedish**

Typical features of this accent are:

- frequent vowel quality errors
- vowels [ø] [œ] and [æ] tend to be realised as an approximation of [ɛ]
- frequent assimilation of voicing so that [fik: bre:v] is pronounced as [fig: bre:v]

### **5.3.10 Spanish accented Swedish**

Typical features of this accent are:

- [y] and [y:] are produced more like the unrounded [ɪ] and [i:]
- [u:] moves towards the more open [ø:]
- vowels are inserted word initially e.g. /(e)träffar/
- vowels are inserted word medially e.g. /tid(e)ning/
- [b] [d] and [g] are pronounced [β], [ð] and [ɣ] after [r] and [l]
- the intonation pattern is characterised by the Spanish syllable-timing rather than the Swedish stress-timing at both word- and phrase-level.

### **5.3.11 Turkish accented Swedish**

Typical features of this accent are:

- the vowel quantity distinction is lost and speakers tend to realise these as something in between long and short
- rounded and over-rounded vowels are pronounced with a more central position, e.g. [ø] and [u] are pronounced as [ʊ] and [y:] is pronounced as [y:].
- long open [ɑ:] is often pronounced as the more closed [o:].
- [ŋ] in medial and final positions is typically pronounced as [ŋg] or [ng].
- Frequent insertion of vowel, most often an [ɛ]-like vowel
- The speaker in the material used as stimuli here has a tendency to pronounce all [r]-sounds more rhotic than in Swedish. This is common, but not a general feature for this accent.

As the speakers read the passage at different speech rates we decided to cut the samples at the phrase boundary nearest to 40 seconds. This decision resulted in speech samples that had a mean of 41.8 seconds (min = 36.5sec; max 49sec) and a mean number of read words of 73.78 (min = 73 words; max 95 words). Table 2 shows the differences in speech rate.

**Table 2: Differences in speech rate**

Sample accent	Sample length (s)	No. of words
American English	43.0	73
Arabic	49.0	60
Finnish	36.5	60
German	40.0	84
Hungarian	43.4	95
Polish	38.5	73
Serbo-Croatian	41.9	73
Spanish	40.0	73
Turkish	44.0	73

## 5.4 Materials

The speech samples were digitized from the original archived high-quality magnetic tapes, and sampled at 16000 Hz, 32-bit mono. A test CD was burnt with the Icelandic accented Swedish voice first and the training voice following by the nine test accents in the following random order: American English, German, Spanish, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Finnish, Hungarian, Turkish and Arabic accented Swedish.

A questionnaire that differed slightly from a Swedish translation of the Bayard et al. (2001) questionnaire (Sullivan et al. 2002) was used to record demographic information about the participants and record their impressions of the nine speakers of accented Swedish. Changes to the Bayard et al. (2001) questionnaire are explicitly stated with additions marked in italics. The questionnaire had three distinct parts, which are described as follows.

### 5.4.1 Part 1: Demographic data collection

The questionnaire posed questions to collect the following demographic information: Gender, Age, Place of Birth, the participant's first language, whether the participant had a diagnosed hearing problem, and the varieties of foreign accented Swedish the participant was familiar with. These additional questions replaced the open question about the participant's ethnicity and the question relating to full or part-time student status; all the participants in this study were known to have full-time student status.

#### **5.4.2 Part 2: Impressions of each speaker and each speaker's voice**

The questionnaire presented 13 six-point semantic differential scales with the anchors “not at all” and “very”. The 13 semantic differential scales are the same as presented by Bayard et al. (2001) and as translated by Sullivan et al. (2002). These scales are: reliable, ambitious, humorous, authoritative, competent, cheerful, friendly, dominant, intelligent, assertive, controlling, warm and hardworking.

Following the 13 differential scale questions, five questions are posed that ask participants to rate their impressions of the speaker's voice on the following six-point semantic scales: pleasant, attractive, powerful, strong and educated. These five scales are the same as presented by Bayard et al. (2001) and as translated by Sullivan et al. (2002).

#### **5.4.3 Part 3: Perceived social factors**

Questions in the part of the questionnaire ask the participant to indicate perceived age, perceived *strength of accent*, level of education, occupation and social class on a set of fixed options. The Bayard et al. (2001) fixed option perceived ethnicity was replaced with an option question asking participants to write down the perceived *first language of the speaker and the perceived country of origin*.

### **5.5 Procedure**

After the participants had been given the questionnaires and filled in Part 1 of the questionnaire, oral instructions about the procedure were given to the participants that repeated the instructions presented in the questionnaire. The participants then listened to the test speaker and filled in the questionnaire for this speaker. It was then confirmed with the participants that everyone understood the task before the start of the experiment. After listening to each speaker the participants rated their impressions of the person and their speech in Part 2 of the questionnaire. The speakers were then heard a second time and the participants completed Part 3 of the questionnaire. The procedure took approximately 30 minutes.

## 5.6 Results

### 5.6.1 *Identifying the linguistic and national background of speakers*

One of the questionnaire items asked participants to write down the first language of the speaker and another item asked the participants to write down the speaker's country of origin. These two tasks were presented separately as language and nation are not always a perfect union. For example, German is spoken in Austria, and Switzerland has four national languages.

The participants' guesses to the first language and national background of the speakers are presented in Tables 3–11. Table 3 shows that the identification of the US accented English as English posed no problem for any of the participants.

Table 4 presents the participants' guesses at the first language and national background of the Arabic-accented Swedish speaker. Twelve of the participants failed to make any guess at the speaker's first language. Arabic was the most popular guess but this failed to reach a majority of the guesses. The majority of the participants who guessed a first language for the voice placed the speaker of a language spoken in the Balkans or the Muslim world. When guessing the national background of the speaker a similar pattern is found, although it is apparent that the participants are not sure where Arabic and where Farsi (Persian) are spoken.

The responses to the Finnish accented Swedish voice are presented in Table 5. The majority of participants identified the Finnish accent and the national backgrounds assigned by the participants closely follow the language responses. Table 6 shows a similar pattern for the responses to the German accented Swedish voice.

**Table 3: The participants' first language (L1) and national background guesses (majority/plurality in boldface) for the American English accented Swedish voice**

L1	N	Country	N
<b>English</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>38</b>
		England	3
		Yugoslavia	1

**Table 4: The participants' first language (L1) and national background guesses (majority/plurality in boldface) for the Arabic accented Swedish voice**

L1	N	Country	N
<b>NR</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>NR</b>	<b>13</b>
Arabic	6	Iran	5
Turkish	5	Turkey	5
Portuguese	4	Brasil	2
Spanish	4	Croatia	2
Persian	3	Egypt	2
Asian	1	Portugal	2
Chechen	1	Spain	2
Croatian	1	Chechnya	1
Dutch	1	Chile	1
Hebrew	1	China	1
Serbian	1	Holland	1
Serbo-Croatian	1	Israel	1
Yugoslavian	1	Serbia	1
		South America	1
		Syria	1
		Yugoslavia	1

**Table 5: The participants' first language (L1) and national background guesses (majority/plurality in boldface) for the Finnish accented Swedish voice**

L1	N	Country	N
<b>Finnish</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Finland</b>	<b>30</b>
Estonian	2	Estonia	2
Finno-Swedish	1	Sweden	2
Greek	1	Greece	1
Indian	1	India	1
Italian	1	Italy	1
Latvian	1	Latvia	1
NR	1	Poland	1
Polish	1	Portugal	1
Portuguese	1	Russia	1
Saami	1	Thailand	1
Thai	1		

**Table 6: The participants' first language (L1) and national background guesses (majority/plurality in boldface) for the German accented Swedish voice**

L1	N	Country	N
<b>German</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>22</b>
NR	7	NR	6
Thai	2	Austria	2
Danish	1	Thailand	2
English	1	Denmark	1
Finnish	1	Eastern Baltic	1
Icelandic	1	England	1
Italian	1	Estonia	1
Russian	2	Finland	1
Estonian	1	France	1
French	1	Iceland	1
		Italy	1
		Russia	1
		Scandinavia	1

Table 7 shows that the Hungarian accented Swedish voice is difficult for the participants to identify; no participant identified the voice as having an Hungarian accent or judged the speaker as someone from Hungary. Participants failing to make a guess formed the largest group of respondents for both of these two tasks. Greece and Greek were the most frequent guesses given by the participants. Thereafter the responses covered a broad range of languages and countries.

The participants' responses to the Polish accented voice are presented in Table 8. The responses reveal no majority language or nation. The two most frequently selected languages are both Slavic languages, and were Russian and Polish. The two most frequently selected were Russian and Poland. The remaining guess for both language and country of origin were broadly spread.

The participants' guesses for the Serbo-Croatian voice are presented in Table 9 where it can be seen that the participants were unable to identify or place this accent. The most frequent language guesses were Spanish followed by Turkish and the most frequently suggested national backgrounds were Spanish speaking countries (Spain, 3, Chile, 2, South America, 2, Mexico, 1, and Uruguay, 1 = 10 guesses) and Turkey. The guesses for the Spanish accented Swedish voice (Table 10) are also most frequently Spain and Spanish.



Table 11 shows the participants guesses after hearing the Turkish accented Swedish voice. The guesses are widely spread and reflect those for the Arabic accented Swedish voice. For Turkish accent Swedish voice the number of participants not responding was, however, greater than for the Arabic accented voice.

**Table 7: The participants' first language (L1) and national background guesses (majority/plurality in boldface; major erroneous guesses italicised) for the Hungarian accented Swedish voice**

L1	N	Country	N
NR	16	NR	14
<b>Greek</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>7</b>
Persian	3	<i>Iran</i>	6
Spanish	3	Iraq	2
Arabic	2	Italy	2
Italian	2	Turkey	2
Turkish	2	Croatia	1
Yugoslavian	2	England	1
Croatian	1	Poland	1
English	1	Romania	1
Iranian	1	Russia	1
Polish	1	South America	1
Russian	1	Spain	1
		Sweden	1
		Yugoslavia	1

**Table 8: The participants' first language (L1) and national background guesses (majority/plurality in boldface; major erroneous guesses italicised) for the Polish accented Swedish voice**

L1	N	Country	N
<b><i>Russian</i></b>	<b>9</b>	NR	9
NR	8	<b><i>Russia</i></b>	<b>8</b>
Polish	4	Poland	5
Spanish	2	Croatia	2
Arabic	2	Italy	2
Croatian	2	Spain	2
Italian	2	Turkey	2
Turkish	2	Bosnia	1
Chinese	1	China	1
Ethiopian	1	El Salvador	1
German	1	Estonia	1
Indian	1	Ethiopia	1
Latvian	1	Germany	1
Persian	1	India	1
Portuguese	1	Iraq	1
Yugoslavian	1	Latvia	1
		Middle East	1
		Portugal	1
		Slovenia	1

**Table 9: The participants' first language (L1) and national background guesses (majority/plurality in boldface; major erroneous guesses italicised) for the Serbo-Croatian accented Swedish voice**

L1	N	Country	N
NA	11	NR	10
<b><i>Spanish</i></b>	<b>9</b>	<b><i>Turkey</i></b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Turkish</i>	6	Iran	4
Arabic	4	Spain	3
Serbian	3	Albania	2
Greek	2	Chile	2
Persian	2	Greece	2
Albanian	1	Iraq	2
Iranian	1	South America	2
Italian	1	Brasil	1
Kurdish	1	Italy	1
Portuguese	1	Lebanon	1
		Mexico	1
		Middle East	1
		Russia	1
		Serbia	1
		Slovenia	1
		Uruguay	1

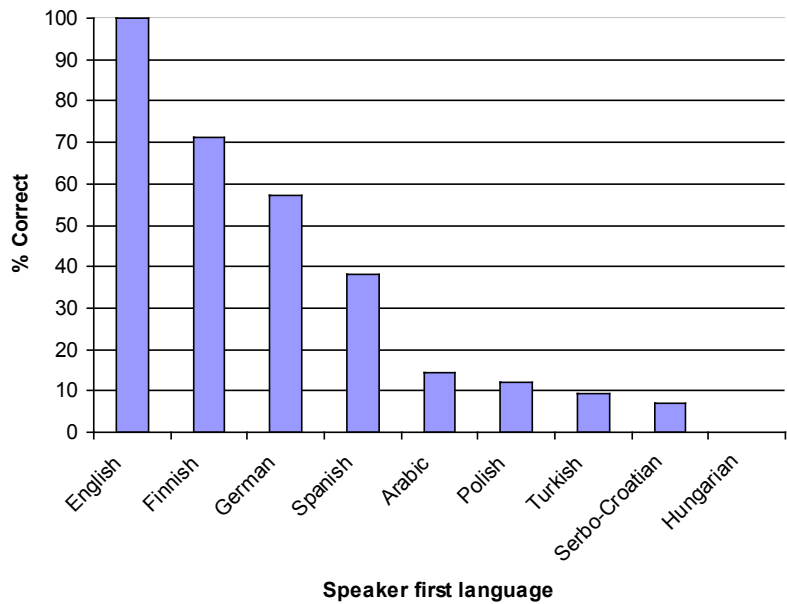
**Table 10: The participants' first language (L1) and national background guesses (majority/plurality in boldface) for the Spanish accented Swedish voice**

L1	N	Country	N
<b>Spanish</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>13</b>
NR	13	NR	11
Italian	4	Italy	4
Turkish	3	Turkey	4
Arabic	3	Iran	3
Persian	1	Mexico	2
Serbian	1	Bosnia	1
Serbo-Croatian	1	Colombia	1
		Eastern Baltic	1
		Hungary	1
		Yugoslavia	1

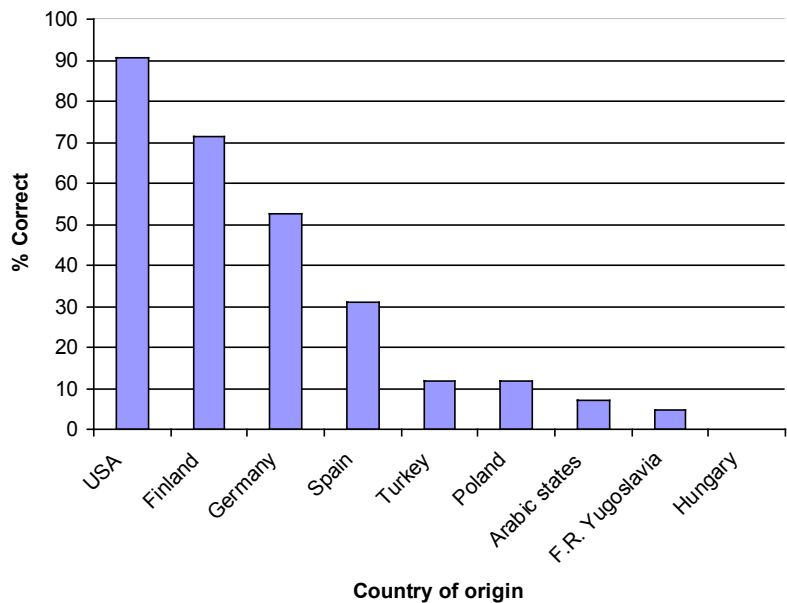
**Table 11: The participants' first language (L1) and national background guesses (majority/plurality in boldface; major erroneous guesses italicised) for the Turkish accented Swedish voice**

L1	N	Country	N
NR	17	NR	15
<b>Arabic</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>5</b>
Turkish	4	Iran	3
Persian	2	Syria	3
Portuguese	2	Brasil	2
Spanish	2	Africa	1
Bosnian	1	Bosnia	1
Eritrean	1	Bulgaria	1
Greek	1	Croatia	1
Italian	1	Eritrea	1
Kurdish	1	Greece	1
Polish	1	Italy	1
Russian	1	Middle East	1
Serbo-Croatian	1	Poland	1
Swahili	1	Protugal	1
		Russia	1
		Serbia	1
		Spain	1
		Yugoslavia	1

An overview of how accurate the participants were in correctly identifying the speakers' first languages is presented in Figure 8. Here it can be clearly seen that American English accented Swedish posed the participants no problem, and that Finnish and German accented Swedish posed less of a problem than the majority of the accents. Of the remaining five accents the Spanish accented Swedish was identified less than 50% of the time, but it was more frequently identified correctly than the other four, and the Hungarian accented Swedish was not identified at all. Figure 9 reveals a similar pattern for the guesses of country of origin. There are minor differences in the relative success rates for Serbo-Croatian, Polish and Arabic, but the accuracy rates are low and hence would have been affected by the responses of one or two respondents.



**Figure 8: Assessed first language based on accent**



**Figure 9: Assessed country of origin based on accent**

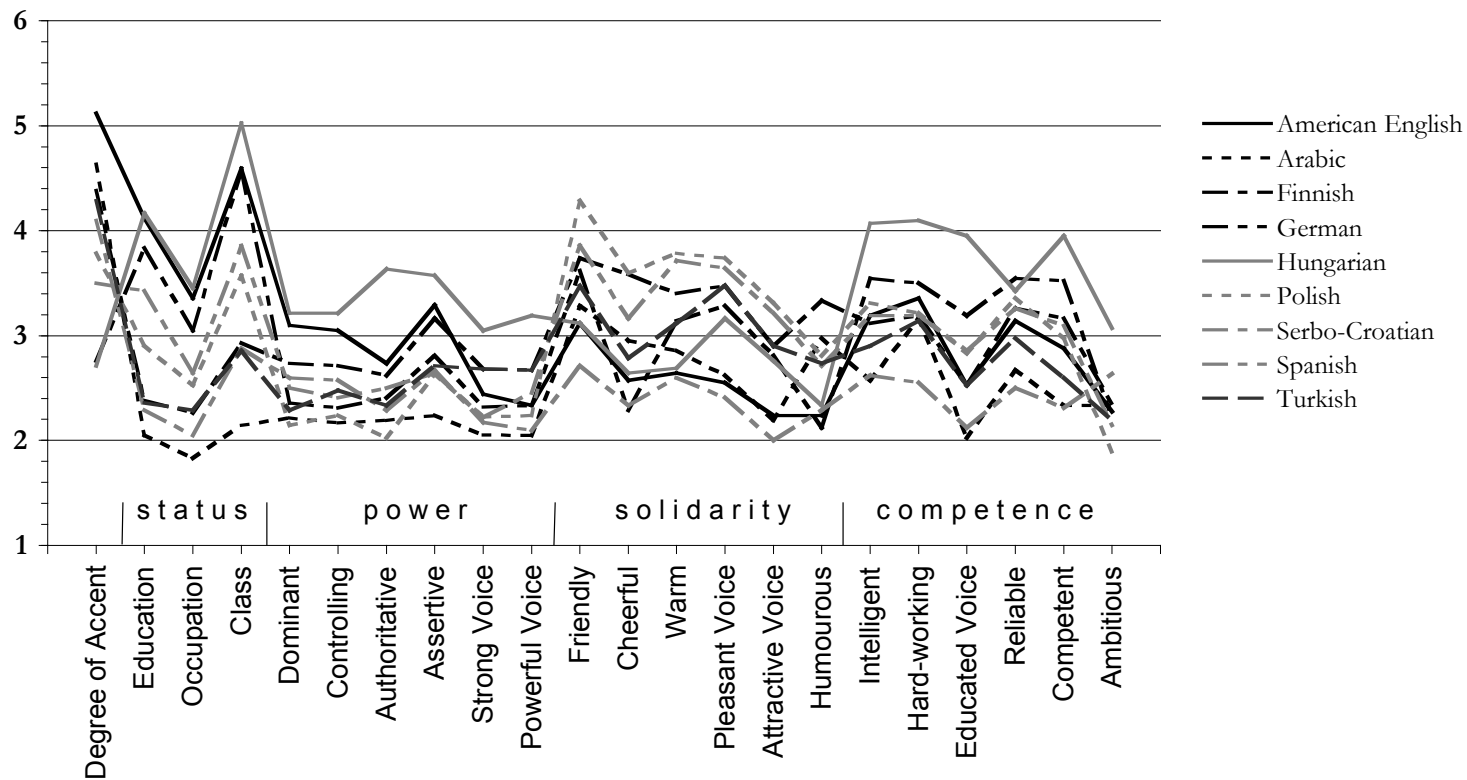
### ***5.6.2 Evaluation of status and personality traits.***

The personality trait means for the 42 listeners are presented in Figure 10 in the form of a Bayard Confusogram. Following Bayard et al. (2001) the traits, with the exception of Degree of Accent, are grouped together into four dimensions POWER, SOLIDARITY, COMPETENCE and STATUS. The averaged personality traits means for these four dimensions are presented in Figure 11 for the male voices and Figure 12 for the female voices.

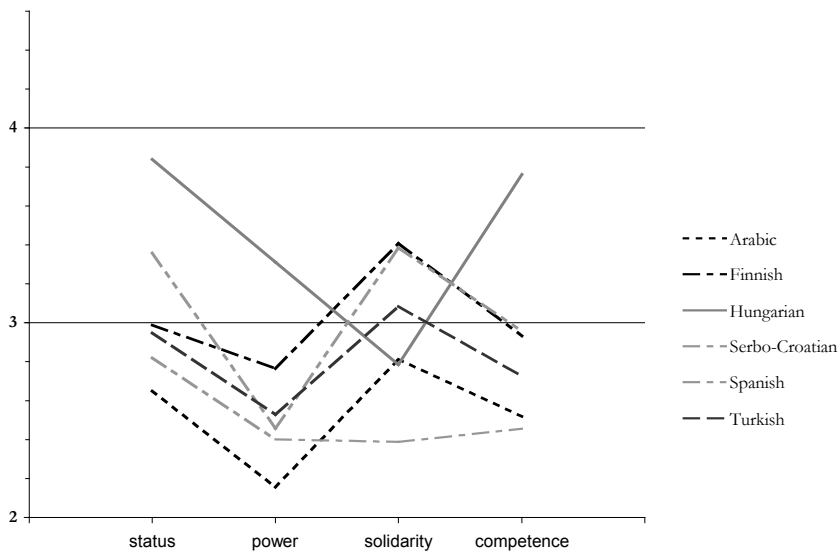
After inspection it was decided not to include the non-Bayard et al. Degree of Accent trait into any of the four dimensions. As can be seen in Figure 9, one voice with a perceived strong accent can on many other traits receive high trait scores, e.g. the American English voice, whereas another voice with a perceived strong accent can on many other traits receive low trait scores, e.g. the Arabic voice. Further a voice with a low perceived accent, e.g. Hungarian, can receive high scores for many other traits.

The averaged male voice personality trait results (figure 11) show that Hungarian accented Swedish speaker whose first language and country of origin the listeners failed to identify achieved the highest ratings for status, power and competence. The Arabic and Serbo-Croatian accented Swedish speakers were awarded the lowest ratings for Status, Power, Solidarity and Competence. The first language and country of origin of these speakers were also infrequently correctly identified. However, the participants also selected countries in the same geographic region and languages spoken in these areas. The Finnish and the Spanish accented Swedish speakers achieved the highest solidarity ratings. Along with Turkish accented Swedish, these two foreign accented Swedishes are more positively viewed than the Arabic and Serbo-Croatian accented Swedishes.

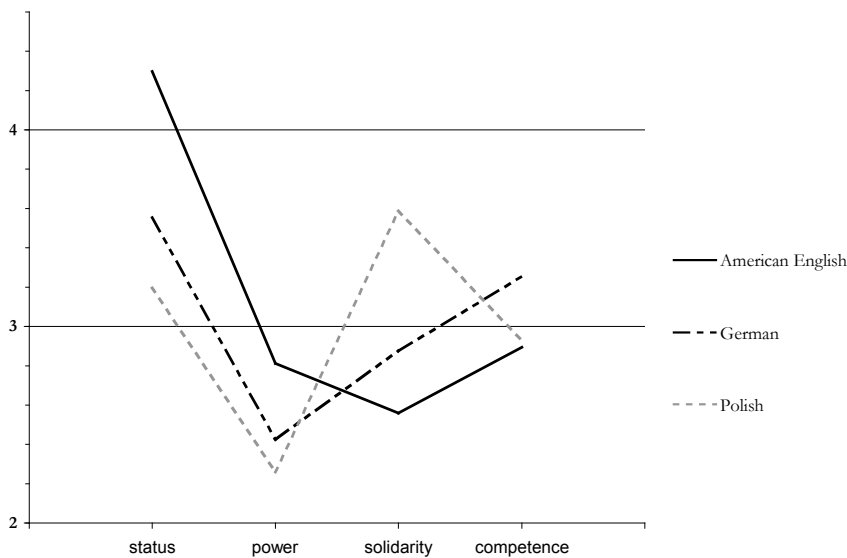
The averaged female voice personality trait results (figure 12) show that American accented Swedish has high status and power, but relatively lower solidarity and competence. Apart from solidarity, these ratings are as high as, or higher than, the highest rating for the male voices. The status ratings for the German and Polish accented Swedish voices that are lower than the American accent Swedish voice are also in the top ranking bracket for the male voices. The power rating for the American accented Swedish voice holds its own among the top male voices. The German and Polish accented Swedish voices, on the other hand, have a power rating in the lowest male bracket. The Solidarity traits place the Polish accented Swedish voice as exhibiting more solidarity than the highest-ranking male voices. Of note here is that the American accented Swedish voice is almost bracketed with the lowest ranked male voice. The German accented Swedish voice falls between the other two female Swedish accented voices, and is viewed as the most competent female voice.



**Figure 10: Personality trait means**



**Figure 11: Averaged personality traits means for the male voices**



**Figure 12: Averaged personality traits means for the female voices**

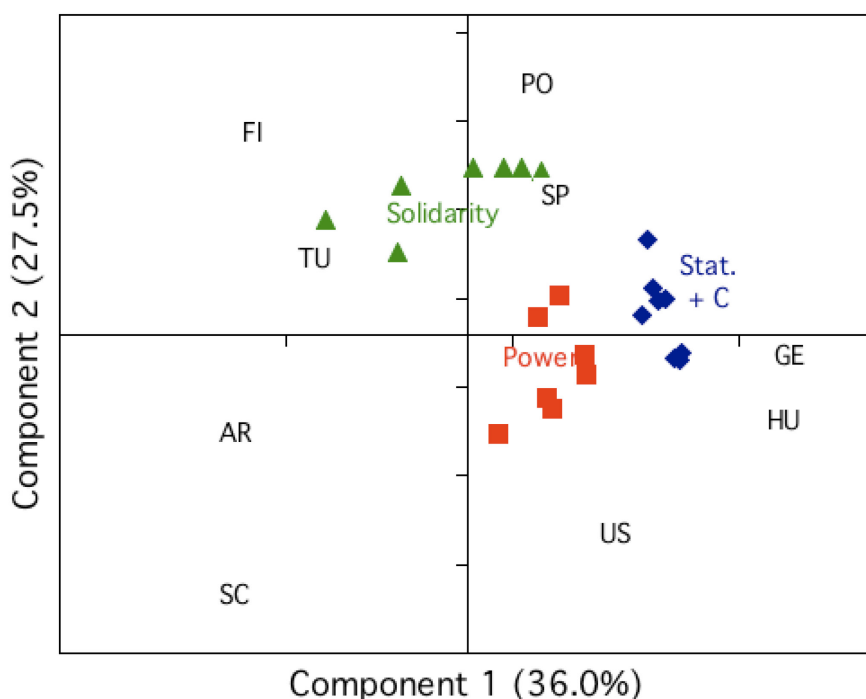
The average personality trait means suggest a small gender factor, but a stronger effect of perceived country (or region) of origin. The Arabic, Serbo-Croatian and Turkish accented Swedish voices are the lower ranked voices, and the Hungarian, American accented Swedish voices are the highest ranked, with the remaining European voices forming a band in between the other two groups.



Re-analysing the data using a factor (principal components analysis) of the mean trait scores produced three components after five rotations (see Table 12): Component 1, Status and Competence (36.0% of the variance), Component 2, Solidarity (27.5% of the variance) and Power (26.4% of the variance). Figures 13 and 14 visualise the rotated component matrix. The individual trait components are plotted as diamonds (Status and Competence), triangles (Solidarity), and squares (Power) and the average trait components for the accented Swedish voices are plotted using two-character codes.

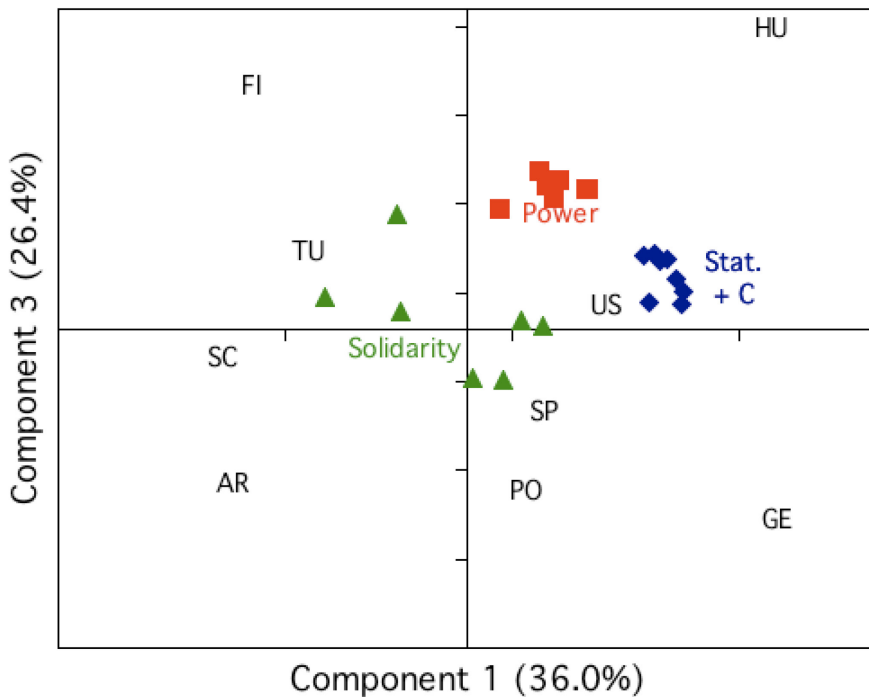
**Table 12: Rotated Component Matrix for the 42 Swedish listeners used in this study. Component 1 = STATUS and COMPETENCE; Component 2 = SOLIDARITY, and Component 3 = POWER**

	Component		
	1 (36.0%)	2 (27.5%)	3 (26.4%)
Occupation mean	<b>0.95</b>	-0.109	0.203
Education mean	<b>0.944</b>	-0.15	0.141
Class mean	<b>0.916</b>	-0.134	0.279
Intelligence mean	<b>0.88</b>	0.198	0.393
Educated voice mean	<b>0.848</b>	0.188	0.385
Competence mean	<b>0.823</b>	0.259	0.422
Reliability mean	<b>0.8</b>	0.535	0.148
Hardworking mean	<b>0.776</b>	0.106	0.408
Strong voice mean	0.317	0.098	<b>0.892</b>
Powerful voice mean	0.406	0.217	<b>0.837</b>
Controlling mean	0.352	-0.361	<b>0.807</b>
Assertive mean	0.521	-0.113	<b>0.785</b>
Authority mean	0.529	-0.23	<b>0.781</b>
Dominant mean	0.38	-0.417	<b>0.737</b>
Ambition mean	0.139	-0.563	<b>0.675</b>
Age mean	-0.309	<b>0.461</b>	<b>0.649</b>
Humour mean	-0.627	<b>0.649</b>	0.173
Cheerful mean	-0.293	<b>0.832</b>	0.094
Pleasant voice mean	0.239	<b>0.942</b>	0.05
Attractive voice mean	0.33	<b>0.92</b>	0.015
Warm mean	0.027	<b>0.936</b>	-0.276
Friendly mean	0.161	<b>0.933</b>	-0.289



**Figure 13: Factor analysis of 22 trait means plotted in Component 1 (Status and Competence) vs. Component 2 (Solidarity) space. The individual trait components are plotted as diamonds (Status and Competence), triangles (Solidarity), and squares (Power) and the average trait components for the accented Swedish voices are plotted using two-character codes: AR = Arabic, FI= Finnish, GE= German, HU = Hungarian, PO = Polish, SC = Serbo-Croatian, SP = Spanish, and TU = Turkish.**

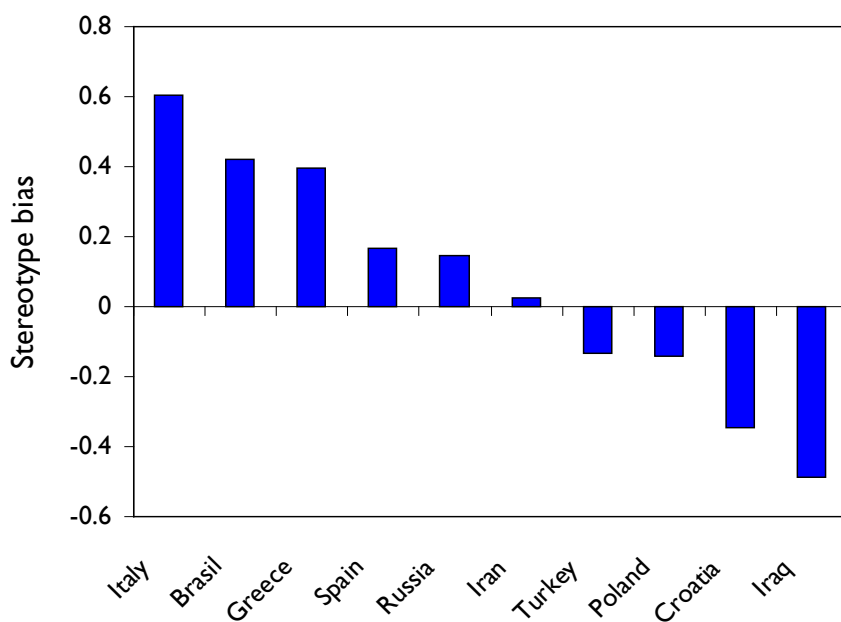
Both figures demonstrate that the three components found by the factor analysis cluster. Figure 13 visualises how Component 1 (Status and Competence) and Component 2 (Solidarity) interact, and how the Serbo-Croatian and Arabic accented Swedish voices are placed in the lower left, low status and competence and low solidarity quadrant. The perceived low solidarity of the American accented voice, and the high solidarity of the Finnish, Spanish and Polish accented Swedish voices is clear from this figure. It is also of note that the Turkish accented Swedish voice is perceived to exhibit more feelings of solidarity than the German and Hungarian accented Swedish voices.



**Figure 14: Factor analysis of 22 trait means plotted in Component 1 (Status and Competence) vs. Component 3 (Power) space. The individual trait components are plotted as diamonds (Status and Competence), triangles (Solidarity), and squares (Power) and the average trait components for the accented Swedish voices are plotted using two-character codes: AR = Arabic, FI= Finnish, GE= German, HU = Hungarian, PO = Polish, SC = Serbo-Croatian, SP = Spanish, and TU = Turkish.**

A similar picture is found in Figure 14. The Arabic and the Serbo-Croatian accented Swedish voices are again the only voice found in the lower left quadrant, and the Finnish and Turkish accented Swedish voices are again found in the upper left quadrant; they have not moved into the lower quadrant. There has been movement between, and within the upper and lower right quadrants. The Hungarian accented Swedish voice is perceived to as most positive on both dimensions and the only other voice perceived to be positive on both dimensions in the American accented Swedish voice. The other three voices on the right plot in the lower right quadrant. The polish and German voices have component 2 values that are lower than the Arabic accented Swedish voice.

In order to interrogate the impact of perceived country of origin on the trait values assigned to a Swedish-accented voice, the residuals, that is the unexplained variance left over after controlling for participant and the actual ethnicity of the voice the participants were listening to, from the statistical analysis were extracted and averaged. This was done for the Class, Education and Occupation judgements, as these were the first three judgements made by the participants after they have heard the voices. The American, Finnish and German accented Swedish voices were excluded from this analysis as these voices were correctly identified by too many participants and cannot therefore exhibit a bias of perceived country of origin. Further, only when five or more participants had perceived the same country of origin were the participant responses for that perceived country and Class, Education and Occupation included in the analysis. Figure 15 shows that in general Western European predominantly Christian countries have a positive stereotyping bias (a plus value) where as Eastern European and predominantly Muslim countries receive a negative stereotyping bias. Iran and Russia are exceptions; the explanation for these exceptions is unclear.



**Figure 15: Listener stereotype bias after perceived country of origin**

## 5.7 Discussion and conclusions

This case study has posed two primary questions. One, can the linguistic and national background of the speaker of a foreign accented Swedish be identified? Two, which personality traits and social abilities are ascribed to non-native accented Swedish speakers. A secondary question to the second primary question was whether the ascribed traits and social abilities could be viewed as mirroring the self-reported highly positive attitudes towards immigrants and immigration that Case Study 1 found were held by Swedish students.

The results of this study show a difference in recognition ability between the four Western voices and the Eastern European and Middle Eastern voice. The same division into two broad groups of voices was found for the speakers' countries of origin. A majority of listeners correctly perceived English, Finnish and German as the speakers' first languages. These are varieties of foreign accented Swedish that are widely heard in the media and around the university. The non-Western voices were poorly recognized.

Correct accent identification and geographical placement is a complex process (See, for example, Eriksson, 2007). Using the same methodology as used in this case, Bayard et al (2001) found that their American student groups were less successful than their Australian and the New Zealand student groups at identifying accents of English other than their own. The American group was the one least exposed to the nuances of other native accented Englishes and geographic placement, and they were least able to recognize them.

Swedes are regularly exposed to Eastern European and Middle Eastern accented Swedish voices in the media, e.g. the Swedish film *Jalla Jalla*, and at the numerous pizza and fast-food restaurants. However, no clear link is made by the Swedish listener between the foreign accented Swedish and the speaker's first language or country of origin. Any link is a general one between the speaker and region, or a particular group of immigrants without any clear idea of geographical origin or first language.

In the movie industry accents, regional and foreign, are used to create or strengthen the role associated with a character. Foreign accented language speakers in films are often based on a stereotype image of the speakers of a particular language or group of language. It is not a coincidence that villains in American film productions speak with a Russian accent, or that the evil characters in English movies often use a German accent. More recently, these villains are often portrayed with some sort of Arabic accent perhaps as a reaction to the war on terrorism. The relationship between the media and exposure to accents is discussed in Bayard et al (2001) and in this case study it has to be recognized that in Sweden English language media is broadcast with subtitles and shown in the cinema with the original sound tracks

influences Swede's evaluation of personality traits based on non-native accented Swedish voices even though the non-native accented language is not Swedish.

The second question asked which personality traits and social abilities are ascribed to non-native accented Swedish speakers and coupled to this question it was asked whether the self-reported highly positive attitudes towards immigrants and immigration seen in Case Study 1 were reflected in the participants' responses. The findings showed that that there was no simple relationship between perceived degree of accent and scores for the other traits; a strong accent could result in high trait scores or low trait scores, a weak accent could also result in high and low trait scores. The perceived strength of accent appears to be less important in evaluating a speaker based on their voice alone, the existence of an accent that suggests that the speaker is non-native and from where the speaker may come.

The participants' responses were analyzed using a Bayard Confusogram, factor analysis and stereotype bias. The Bayard Confusogram (fig 10) did not reveal a single most liked and single least liked variant of foreign accented Swedish across all personality traits or factors. The Bayard Confusogram shows that Middle Eastern accented voices (The Arabic, and Turkish accented Swedish voices) along with the Serbo-Croatian accented Swedish voice are the lower ranked voices, and the American and Hungarian, accented Swedish voices are the highest ranked. The remaining European voices form a band in between the other two groups.

That the American accented Swedish voice is highly rated is not unexpected. University exchange places to the USA are over-subscribed, many students travel to, or want to travel in, the USA during their summer vacation, NHL hockey has high profile in Sweden and media exposure to the American accent is high. The strength of the media impact on the perception of the American English accent was also seen in Bayard et al (2001), where the Australian and New Zealand student listeners preferred this accent to their own national accents. The strong position of the Hungarian accented Swedish voice is more difficult to explain based on listener knowledge about Hungary. It is however possible to explain this foreign-accented Swedish's position based on the lack of listener knowledge of, and lack of listener stereotype for, the Hungarian accent, Hungarian accented English and Hungarian accented Swedish, coupled with this accent being judged as not having a strong foreign accent. It is important to remember that the Hungarian accented Swedish speaker spoke Swedish with the distinctive features of Hungarian accented Swedish as outlined by Bannert (2004) and presented in section 5.3.2, *The stimulus tape and characteristics of the foreign accented Swedish voices*. The unfamiliar accent was attributed many first languages, and from a range of regions, and was only attributed with average solidarity, c.f. high for status, power and competence. It could be

that solidarity traits requires being able to create a stereotype of the speaker that one can emotionally associate with in a way that status, power and competence traits do not. This is, however, impossible to determine from the data in this case study.

The factor analysis that is plotted in figures 13 and 14 confirmed the findings of the Bayard Confusogram, and made it clear that the two least attractive foreign accented Swedish voices were the Serbo-Croatian and the Arabic accented Swedish voices. These two voices fall into the bottom left quadrilateral in both figures 13 and 14. These two voices were judged negatively across all personality traits. That no foreign accented Swedish was judged positively across all personality traits is made visually clear in figures 13 and 14 as no foreign accented Swedish voice is placed in the upper right quadrilateral in both figures. These figures also show that the Turkish accented Swedish accent is only marginally preferred to the Serbo-Croatian and the Arabic accented Swedish voices.

Taken together the Bayard Confusogram and the factor analysis suggest that in spite of a self-reported global pro-immigration attitude the student listeners have negative attitudes towards some foreign accented Swedish accents. The accents that are perceived most negatively are those from countries with Muslim populations or are associated with religious/nationalist conflict. This is probably a social desirability effect and is one that is currently being exploited by the Swedish right wing anti-immigration party, the Swedish Democrats. This case study shows that even when though Swedish students have a more positive attitude to immigrants and immigration than Swedes in general, who in turn are among the most positive to immigration in Europe, there is an underlying preference for immigrants from some countries over others. Those most similar in value system are preferred over those more different.

The stereotype bias analysis conducted on incorrect country of speaker origin guesses also reveals that voices perceived as having a foreign accented Swedish accent indicating origin in a predominately Western Christian country are more likely to have a positive stereotype bias than a predominately Muslim or Eastern European country. This finding strengthens the conclusion based on the Bayard Confusogram and the factor analysis.

An unacknowledged social desirability effect that is triggered by foreign accented Swedish has implication for the legal system. Earlier studies comparing native English variants e.g., British, American, Australian or New Zealand English (e.g. Gallois & Callan 1981), and non-native English variant, e.g. French or Vietnamese accented English, have found that native English speakers judge native variants more favourably than non-native varieties. It is likely that the same applies to native and non-native Swedish varieties and the speaker of a non-native Swedish variety will be less favourably received

in the legal context than the native Swedish speaker. Moreover, the speaker from a Muslim country or an Eastern European country with foreign accented Swedish will be judged less favourably than the speaker from a Western Christian country with foreign accented Swedish. It is important that those working in the legal system are aware of these issues and reflect upon the way in which they react to individual's foreign accented Swedish. This is an area that demands further research. This case study could be replicated, and extended by including native Swedish voices to baseline the outcomes, with members of the police force, with lay judges and lawyers.

The next case study examines the complexities of courtroom interpretation. In such settings the interpreter most frequently speaks with foreign accented Swedish. This means that the suspect is judged not only on the basis of the case, but the interpreter's foreign accented Swedish can also impact upon the personality traits assigned to the suspect. These issues are not addressed in the next case study that focuses on discourse disfluencies in the bilingual Swedish-Polish courtroom when non-Swedish speaking immigrants are judged, but the issue of the impact of the interpreter's foreign accented Swedish on court proceedings and outcomes is a topic for which this case study has implication and one in which detailed focused research is necessary to strengthen the rights of the non-Swedish speaking immigrant.



## **Chapter 6: Case study 4: Discourse Disfluencies in bilingual court hearings<sup>5</sup>**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Every year, more than 130 000 civil- and criminal cases are settled in Swedish District Courts. In about 9 % of these cases, i.e. in approximately 10000 court hearings, the help of an interpreter is required, since at least one of the involved parties speaks another language than Swedish. According to the Swedish law, all court hearings must be held in Swedish, even if all involved parts understand the other language spoken in the courtroom. The motivation is that any Swedish citizen shall have the right to attend and to understand a Swedish court hearing. The interpreters are ideally summoned from an agency that provides certified interpreters. If no such person can be found, someone with sufficient knowledge of both source and target language can function as an interpreter.

No matter how well the interpreter performs, disfluencies in the discourse are bound to arise from time to time. In our paper, we study discourse disfluencies and discourse techniques aimed at disfluency correction and prevention. By discourse disfluencies we mean not only phenomena traditionally defined as speech disfluencies (self-corrections, hesitation marks etc.), but also disruptions of the interpretation process, and of the dialogue as a whole.

The base for this study consists of recorded hearings from a Swedish District court. We focus on hearings interpreted between Swedish and Polish. Parts of the dialogues are translated, studied and discussed more in detail with respect to theories of translation and discourse.

### **6.2 The interpreter's dilemma**

Focusing on the translation process, it is unavoidable to deal with the question of what shall be translated, and what shall be emphasised in the translation. Since Nida (1964), translation theorists distinguish between formal and dynamic equivalence. In translation oriented towards the formal equivalence, the source language structures are maintained - as far as it is possible - in the target language. The obvious drawback of this strategy is

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<sup>5</sup> This case study is published as Torstensson, N. & Gawronska, B. (2009) Discourse disfluencies in bilingual court hearings. *Comparative Legilinguistics : International Journal for Legal Communication*, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland, 1:2009, 60-72.

that the original illocutions of the source language may be lost. The other approach, dynamic equivalence, has a stronger focus on the receptor:

*the relationship between the receptor and the message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message (Nida 1964:159).*

This implies that it often is necessary to deviate from the form of the source text to retain the meaning of the message.

A similar distinction is expressed by Newmark (1988) in the terms of semantic and communicative translation. Semantic translation resembles Nida's formal equivalence: the focus is on the thought processes of the sender. This type of translation is rooted in the source language culture, which means that the result is close to the original, and does not adapt foreign elements into the target language culture. This type of translation, however faithful to the source language, has a tendency to be complex, very detailed and with a risk for "overtranslation" (Munday 2001:45). Communicative translation is more oriented towards the receiver and the culture of the target language society. It transforms foreign elements, e.g. metaphors and idioms, into the target language culture, hereby deviating from the literal translation but gaining in illocutionary force and clarity for the target language speaker.

Along with the demands for linguistic accuracy, the translator should ideally both literally and figuratively be invisible, i.e. to translate so idiomatically correct that an illusion of transparency is created (Venuti 1995). The ideal translator should in other words perform his task in a manner that renders him/her invisibility.

The theoretical notions mentioned above are primarily concerned with translation of written texts, but of high relevance also for interpreting spoken language. There are several factors working against the court interpreter, as compared to the translator. The perhaps most crucial of these is the time factor. The interpreter has little or no time to decide on what strategy to use to achieve equivalence in a particular situation. He or she is very much present in the court room, making the invisibility aspect yet more complicated. To add to this complex situation are the cultural differences between speakers and idiosyncratic speech styles.

The aim of this work is to study and define the types of discourse disfluencies that occur in court hearings when the dialogue is interpreted. The discourse is analysed with respect to the interpreter's role and the roles of addressor and addressee to find the main causes of disfluencies.

### **6.3 The Swedish judicial system**

The Swedish judiciary is organized in three different organizations; The general courts, (i.e. district courts, courts of appeal and the Supreme Court), the general administrative courts (i.e. county administrative courts, administrative courts of appeal and the Supreme Administrative Court) and the special courts (i.e. the market court and the labour court). The general courts handle criminal cases and civil disputes, e.g. disputes between individuals. Such civil disputes concern family law, divorce proceedings and custody of children.

The primary objective of the general administrative courts is to handle disputes between the public authorities and a private individual. Typical issues include tax cases, cases on treatment of drug addicts and alcoholics, treatment of mentally ill, and cases on social insurance issues.

Special courts handle civil suits where, as the name implies, special competence in a field is required. To this category of courts belong for instance the Labour Court and the Market Court.

The cases included in this work are all civil and criminal cases from district court hearings. As seen in table 14, the trend is clearly rising as for interpreted court hearings. The total number of criminal cases shows an increase over the last eight years, while the trend regarding civil cases is less clear. As for the increase regarding interpreted hearings, one explanation could be that since joining the Schengen-treaty in late 1996 it has become easier for people to move freely across borders in Europe. Without moving into socio-political discussions it goes without saying that such possibilities for movement between countries include individuals who, for one reason or another, will get into contact with the judicial system. As a direct consequence of this, the need for increased knowledge about and ability to handle interpretation situations is needed.

### **6.4 Interpretation in the courtroom**

According to The Swedish Judiciary, all main hearings in Swedish courts are based on the principle of orality: a case must be decided after an oral hearing. It is also stated that all hearings in Swedish courts must be held in Swedish, even if all involved parts understand the other language. One reason for this is that, according to the principle of free access to records, any Swedish citizen has the right to attend a court hearing, and understand the language spoken. This illustrates the view of the importance of language as a tool for achieving justice. It also shows the need for accurate interpretation in cases where any of the involved parts speak little or no Swedish.

**Table 13: Total number of civil and criminal cases in Swedish District Courts. Statistics from the Swedish Judiciary 2006**

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Civil	68557	65805	64563	64548	64761	66297	67080	65010
Criminal	61085	60436	62584	60861	62236	64894	68512	69215
$\Sigma$	129642	126241	127147	125409	126997	131191	135592	134225

**Table 14: Total number of bilingual hearings in Swedish District Courts. Statistics from the Swedish Judiciary 2006**

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Bilingual	9205	7953	8900	9907	10287	11676	12610	12348
<b>Rate of bilingual hearings, per cent of all civil- and criminal hearings</b>								
Civil	1,6%	1,6%	1,8%	2,1%	1,8%	1,6%	1,7%	1,6%
Criminal	5,5%	4,7%	5,2%	5,8%	6,3%	7,3%	7,6%	7,6%
$\Sigma$	7,1%	6,3%	7,0%	7,9%	8,1%	8,9%	9,3%	9,2%

In cases where other languages than Swedish are spoken, a court interpreter is summoned to the hearing. Ideally, the interpreter should be certified by the National Judicial Public Board for Land and Funds (Kammarkollegiet). The dominating interpretation method in hearings is consecutive interpreting: the interpreter listens to what is said, and gives a batch-translation when the speaker pauses. Simultaneous interpreting occurs, e.g. when both addressor and addressee are Swedish speaking, and the suspect is not. In-between stages of the two interpretation strategies can be seen as an accelerated consecutive, without actually going as far as simultaneous interpretation. (c.f. Gile 2001)

## 6.5 Material and method

This study is based on material from ten criminal case hearings in one of the 95 Swedish district courts. All hearings referred to were cases where the defendant spoke a language other than Swedish, and thus had an appointed translator to make hearings possible. The most common scenario, and all the court hearings referred to in this paper, is that the suspect constitutes the non-Swedish speaking part and that the interpreter has the same first language as the suspect. Languages included in the material are Albanian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Thai and Vietnamese.

Even though the reason for prosecution and the possible sanction was considered as of no interest for the study, all cases viewed concerned common petty offences, e.g. shoplifting, traffic violations or theft. This is to avoid any unintentional identification of defendants due to the nature of the crime or situation.

The dialogue situations studied fall into three categories:

1. Swedish interpreted into a foreign language:
  - a. The sender speaks Swedish, and the addressee speaks some other language (e.g. a prosecutor questions a non-Swedish speaking suspect)
  - b. The sender and the addressee speak Swedish, while some of the hearers is not Swedish-speaking (e.g. a Swedish-speaking witness is questioned and a non-Swedish speaking suspect should be able to understand)
2. Some other language is interpreted into Swedish
3. Swedish is the only language spoken in the courtroom.

As will be shown and discussed, most of the dialogue-related difficulties have other sources than the interpreter, even if he/she often at first glance appears to be part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

## 6.6 Case study

Out of the studied hearings, one was judged as being the most interesting from a dialogue-structure point of view, and viewed more in detail. Examples from the other hearings are found in the discussion section. The suspect in the hearing analyzed here was a Polish citizen with no knowledge of Swedish, accused of shoplifting at a supermarket. Except for the interpreter, no one in the courtroom had any knowledge of Polish, so the dialogue was totally dependent on the interpreter.

The initial stages of the proceedings consisting of formalities such as personal particulars, presentation of the legal staff, and statement of the criminal act charge, are interpreted without any problems. The suspect is then asked to account for his view of the incident at hand. This part of the hearing proves to be the most challenging for all discourse participants. The suspect starts his story by telling about events leading up to the trip to Sweden, what he and his friends brought to sell in Sweden and who was in the car. The interpreter tries to keep up, but the average length of the suspect's utterance batch contains 30 – 40% more words than the Swedish version. After two minutes, the judge points out that the story should *concern the event that is the subject for this hearing, the events at supermarket X and not the background*, and this is explained to the suspect. This is followed by a conversation between the judge, the prosecutor and the interpreter, where the judge says that “as you as an interpreter know, it is important that the court understands what is said, and you must translate everything that is said without asking the suspect any questions” The interpreter agrees (*mmm yes, exactly, and keep to the point, right*), and the interpretation process continues for about three more minutes.

The suspect's story is then interrupted by the judge, and a dialogue between the judge [J] and the interpreter [I] takes place (authors' translation):

[J] *I get the impression that the suspect is telling much more than you are translating. Polish is perhaps a little longer than Swedish, but...*

[I] *Oh, well yes, but you know, he....he....*

[J] *Yes, but we want to hear everything that he....if you say that he...it's what he says that....*

[I] *Yes, but you know he repeats things and....*

[J] *Yes, but then you should really repeat that too.*

[I] *But I can not talk like he does*

[J] *No...*

[I] *You can all hear how he talks!*

[J] *Yes, but we cannot understand anything of it!*

[I] *I can not stutter and (overlapping)* [J] *No no, not stutter, that's not what I'm asking.....*

[I] *It is....well it is him, it is him you know...*

[J] *Well if that is the case it should not be interpreted, but it is important that we get to know also if he is unsure about anything, and hesitating about where he was or such... It is not up to you to make it clearer*

[I] *Yes but I did say that he said that he went past the media department and that he looked at two cans of shaving foam that he did not know if he wanted to take, but I say it fluently, right?*

[J] *Mmm.....hmmm....right....*

After this argument, the interpreter changes his strategy. He goes from a consecutive approach to something in between an accelerated consecutive and a simultaneous interpreting style. The interpretation comes in shorter batches and the whole dialogue is characterized by lots of overlapping speech and incomplete phrases and sentences as the suspect makes no, or just very short pauses in his narrative.

The hearing continues with two witness statements. The witnesses are Swedes employed as shop surveillance personnel. This part of the hearing passes without any disturbances worth mentioning.

A closer look reveals several reasons for the confusion in the initial stages of the hearing. Told by the interpreter to “tell the story from the beginning” the suspect starts out with a long description about buying a certain amount of beer and brandy in Poland to sell in Sweden. His concept of “telling from the beginning” is clearly different from what the court sees as the beginning, namely arriving at the store where the alleged shoplifting incident is claimed to have taken place.

The suspect is probably uncertain about what the hearing really concerns. He is in a foreign country, in a foreign language community, in an authoritarian environment, and he knows that bringing alcoholic beverages into the country to sell is not legal. He starts by spontaneously admitting what he believes is the crime. What the hearing is really about is the shoplifting charge, but this has to be explained to him by the interpreter.

The suspect talks a variant of Polish that signals a rather low level of education. His speech is full of self-corrections and repetitions. He uses, with a very high frequency, Polish demonstrative pronouns and pronominal adverbs (*to, to tego, ten, taki, tam...*), i.e. semantically empty markers that

Polish elementary school pupils are trained to avoid in oral presentations. His speech tempo is fairly high with a high frequency of filled pauses, even to a non-Polish speaker signaling a high stress level. What to the court sounds like a fairly long and extensive piece of information that eventually is translated with *...and then we went from the car to the shop could be something along the lines of ...and well, we sort of well, we went out of the car, and we were in the car and well we ....eh...we left the car and the shop, we went to the shop when we left the car all of us.*

Considering the importance of language and linguistic ability reflected in the “principle of orality”, the suspect is an example of an individual in a double linguistic limbo. His task is to account for a course of events with the limited verbal capabilities he is in possession of, reflected in poor performance of his mother tongue and to do this through an interpreter.

## 6.7 Conclusions and discussion

The sources of communication errors in an interpreted discourse vary, and cannot be ascribed to any single participant. How well trained the interpreter, there is no guaranty for a smooth and well functioning discourse if the other involved parties lack insight in the linguistic and cultural differences. As these factors generally are unknown, or at least not reflected upon by the legal staff, the witnesses, and the suspects, the occurrence of disfluencies in court hearings is unavoidable.

During periods of consecutive interpretation, disfluencies are due to the behaviour of the foreign language (here: not-Swedish) speaking addressor in the following discourse situations:

- a. No, too short or too few pauses in the narrative; this does not give enough time for the interpretation process.
- b. Repetitions, self-corrections, hesitations and incomplete syntactic structures
- c. context insufficient for disambiguation, e.g. in the case of differences in semantic fields between source language and target language. One example observed is a case of describing how toothpaste was wrapped when investigating a case of shoplifting (Swedish – Thai). The interpreter says that *the tubes were packed in a container, or rather a case, or like a box*. It takes some reasoning between the parties before establishing that each tube of toothpaste sits in an individual box, and that these individual boxes were placed in a bigger case, sitting on the store shelf.



When the foreign language speaker is the addressee during consecutive interpretation, other reasons for the disfluencies emanate:

- a. Problems with understanding of “legalese” and culture specific concepts. Legal jargon can prove complicated enough in a monolingual setting, and even more so in a bilingual situation. An example of this is when the prosecutor in a case interpreted between Swedish and Arabic demands that the consequence of a criminal act should be *30 dagsböter* (literally ‘day-fine’, proportional to ones’ daily income) and the accused gets the impression that he has to pay everything he earns in a month.
- b. Problems with understanding particular illocutions, e.g. when the suspect and the judge have different concepts of “the beginning”
- c. Cross-cultural differences in politeness conventions. If a simple “yes” or “no” is expected from one part and the other part feels the need to give the background to an answer, the discourse is bound to collapse. One example of intercultural and sociolinguistic consequences is the gratuitous use of the word “yes” by young aboriginal Australians in answer to any question, this regardless of whether the speaker agrees with the given statement or not (Eades 2002). Other examples of the same phenomenon come from more informal discussions with lawyers during visits to the district court. A speaker of Arabic could reply to a yes/no-question with a long narrative starting with a story about parents and family to indicate the serious approach to answering the question (House 1998).

The disfluencies occurring in simultaneous or close-to-consecutive interpretation when the addressor and addressee are Swedish-speaking are of a different nature:

- a. When addressing another Swedish speaker, the addressor makes no, too short or too few pauses. The most common disturbance here, when interpreting interaction between the legal staff, is uncertainty on where/when to pause for interpretation. This is also evident when the atmosphere gets a bit excited for some reason, and someone is eager to convey a message or a question. Some cases of problems with wording and self corrections are found here, both from the interpreter and from court staff. This causes the interpreter to lag behind in interpreting.
- b. Sudden changes of addressee is another critical factor. It happens that the addressor changes addressee without any notice, e.g. turning from the suspect to address the interpreter with questions or remarks on the interpretation. This leaves the former addressee hanging in mid-air, probably adding to the insecurity.

During periods of simultaneous interpretation, e.g. when a Swedish-speaking witness is questioned, yet other types occur:

- a. Situations like this are interpreted simultaneously in a low or whispered voice. This causes the interpretation process to be “forgotten” unless someone points out that the interpreter needs time to perform his task.
- b. Other disfluencies in this modus are to be seen as channel-related. When a witness is heard over a telephone line, he/she does not have access to the visual cues of turn taking normally used in dialogues. As the telephone witness can not see, and in many cases not even hear the interpreter, it is not surprising that the interpretation process is forgotten from time to time and pauses do not occur as frequently as necessary. An interpreter has, by definition, a “third-part” function in a conversation. The interpreter’s task in these situations is very much dependent on how the dialogue is structured. It is very important that the accused understands what a witness claims to have seen or heard. It is however not uncommon that as a dialogue between a witness and the prosecutor or judge evolves, the interpreter is forgotten or overlooked, leaving him/her with too little time to perform the translation task.

Other problems, not really disfluencies but still with a negative impact on the discourse are observed in the hearings as well. These include:

- a. Slips of the tongue. The only purely interpreter-related problems are at the same time the hardest to spot. This concerns misinterpretations and interpretation errors, impossible to detect without knowledge of both languages. It is not obvious how common such mistakes are, but in one of the hearings used for this paper two such errors were detected. In one case, the interpreter translates the phrase *...and I turned left* as *...and I turned right*. The other mistake is when the suspect describes a person as blonde, and the interpretation is *dark-haired*. In this particular shoplifting case, the misinterpretations did not have any significance for the outcome, but it is still an alarming fact that such things pass unnoticed. It does not take too much effort to imagine scenarios where misinterpreted words could mean all the difference to a suspect’s story.
- b. Lexical and grammatical interference. An illustrative example is a Polish interpreter using the Swedish *mobil* (‘mobile phone’, ‘cell phone’) instead of the Polish *komórka* (‘cell’) when interpreting a question to a Polish suspect.

A case where the lack of basic linguistic knowledge has had severe consequences for an individual is described by Rodman (2002). A suspect was accused of, and convicted for a serious drug-related crime based on a surreptitious recording of a drug deal. The suspect's accent was, compared to the accent spoken in the recording, of such different nature that it, according to the author, could not possibly be the same speaker. He argues that if the court had possessed some basic linguistic training, the conviction of a man innocent of the crime at hand could have been avoided, and the search for the actual perpetrator could have continued.

Agreeing with Rodman (2002) that some sort of basic linguistic knowledge should be administered to court personnel and, ideally, to other people appearing in courts. Examples of such are for instance shop surveillance personnel, security- and police officers and other occupational branches that can be expected to appear in court settings as part of, or consequence of, their work. If some basic knowledge about communication through an interpreter was delivered to both witnesses and suspects, many of the smaller but still at best annoying disturbances should be avoided. Even though the examples in this paper are not of such dramatic scale as the aforementioned, they still point out the importance of the oral communication and the significance of the interpretation process.

Yet another fact to bear in mind at the end of this discussion is the debate on attitudes towards accented speech. Previous research suggests a correlation between foreign accented speech and negative evaluation, preconceived notions and stereotypical attributions on factors like credibility, perceived guilt etc. (Cunningham-Andersson & Engstrand 1988b, 1989; Doleman 1998; Abelin & Boyd 2000; Bayard et al. 2001) This has been shown to have impact e.g. on judgement in court hearings (Rodman 2002) and witness statements (McAllister 2000). A research question to investigate is whether the same attitudes occur when someone is interviewed or interrogated using an interpreter. In a vast majority of interpreted court hearings, the interpreter is a native speaker of the same language as the suspect and thus speaks the target language in a more or less accented way. This could imply that an individual appearing in court without knowledge of the language spoken has a disadvantage from the start. This is said keeping in mind that in most cases the interpreter has an accent, too. We leave to the reader to consider how a "dynamic" or "communicative" interpretation of hesitation markers and low-education markers could affect the professional career of the interpreter.

## **Chapter 7: Case study 5: What's in the court interpreter's interpretation?**

### **7.1 Introduction**

In Sweden, as in many other countries, anyone lacking knowledge of the national language is entitled to have an interpreter present during contacts with the police, the medical- or judicial system. The issues surrounding language, the right to interpretation and their importance for a fair trial are highlighted in Brown-Blake (2006), and Brown-Blake and Chambers (2007). This case study focuses on the interpreting process during court hearings and how the interpreter and legal staff perceive this process. A fair trial is impossible without an interpreter when anyone taking part in the court proceedings does not know the national language, yet how does the use of an interpreter affect the judging of an immigrant and their right to a fair trial?

The interpretation of dialogue as a monologising practice has been studied by among others Wadensjö (2004), and courtroom dialogue and interpretation has been studied by, for example, Angermeyer (2006), Berk-Seligson (1999), Russel (2000), Filipovic (2007), and Wennerstrom (2008), and Case Study 4 showed that from time to time court-room conversation using an interpreter gets confusing, disfluent, interrupted, and can even break down.

### **7.2 Background**

One out of ten court hearings in Swedish district courts are conducted with the aid of an interpreter. In these court hearings at least one of the involved parties speaks no Swedish, or only elementary Swedish. In the ideal situation, the court interpreter is certified by Kammarkollegiet (The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency) and appointed by an agency for interpreters. There is, however, no legal requirement that an interpreter taking part in a court hearing is certified. Anyone judged to have adequate knowledge of the source language can be summoned to function as an interpreter. The Kammarkollegiet (2004b) has set of rules and guidelines for interpreters that clearly state the manner in which the (certified) interpreter should relate to the task of interpreting. This is meant to ensure that the rule of law is upheld and that the trial is fair, as far as the interpretation process is concerned.

The interpreter fulfils a role in the court proceedings and the certified interpreter aims to follow the rules and guidelines of the Kammarkollegiet (2004b). The court interacts with the interpreter and is neither trained in how to communicate with a witness or the accused through an interpreter, nor in bilingual communication. This lack of training could result in different understandings and expectations about the role of the interpreter and what interpretation is, and possibly contribute to the breakdown in communication in the bilingual courtroom.

Differences in the understanding of terminology could be a source of the possible different understanding and expectations. Morris (1995) discussed how the use of the term interpretation is not without problems as the term has other implications in a judicial setting. Within the linguistic community, the term refers to the process of transferring meaning between spoken utterances in two languages<sup>6</sup>, whereas within the legal community, interpretation is an activity associated with the use and manipulation of language reserved for the legally trained staff in the courts, for example, lawyers and judges. As a result of the situation, Morris emphasized the importance of clearly defining the terminology to reduce the risk of misunderstandings and to enable a common view of what interpretation entails. This included making clear the distinction between interpretation as an intralingual process (as in the interpretation of a legal text) and interpretation as an interlingual process (as when conveying the meaning of an utterance from one language to another).

Another aspect that could contribute to the breakdown in communication in the bilingual courtroom is the legal community's attitudes towards court interpreters and court interpreting. A study by Morris in 1993 revealed that the legal community holds a primarily negative view of both the interpretation process and the interpreters performing the task. Further, the prevailing opinion among legal staff was that court interpreters should perform a verbatim translation of what is said in one language into another language. Morris pertinently summarized the situation as follows:

*The activity of interpretation, as distinct from translation, is held by the law to be desirable and acceptable for jurists, but utterly inappropriate and prohibited for court interpreters (p. 26)*

Using qualitative semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1997) with an experienced lay-judge and an experienced certified interpreter, this case study investigates the interpreted court dialogue, the problems the interpreter faces, and the views held by the interpreter and the court

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<sup>6</sup> In the linguistic community the distinction is made between interpretation and translation. Translation is the process of transferring meaning between written text in two languages

personnel about the nature of the commission as interpreter. Together the interview data on these topics of investigations will provide a snapshot of the feelings, attitudes, and observations about the use of interpretation in court proceedings from these two perspectives and possibly indicate the frequency with which the court dialogue is interrupted due to differences in the expectations of the interpreter's role in the court.

This case initially looks at the authorization of interpreters, the rules and guidelines for legal interpretation, and the interpreter's role and dilemmas. Thereafter the case turns to the interview study and the discussion of the interviewees' opinions and observations.

### **7.3 Authorization of interpreters**

The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency is responsible for the authorization of interpreters and translators in Sweden. Applicants for authorization undergo tests and a proficiency examination at the Agency. The successful candidate interpreter is certified for a period of five years and authorized to interpret between Swedish, and one or more other languages. An authorized interpreter can specialize and be authorized as a court interpreter and/or medical interpreter after further examination. The specialization authorization tests, among other things, knowledge of legal and/or medical terms in both Swedish and the interpretation language(s), and fundamental legal and/or medical knowledge. The applicants also undergo oral tests in simulated court- and/or medical care situations in a role-play setting.

Every five years the authorized interpreter is required to undergo re-testing to retain their accreditation as a general and a specialized interpreter. This process is designed to ensure that the interpretation produced by the interpreter is both competent and reliable. This is an important feature that is designed to overcome the paradox that most often the only person able to judge the quality of the interpretation in a court setting is the interpreter themselves. Only infrequently are there other people in the court with advanced knowledge of both the source and the target languages. In Sweden, the rules and guidelines published by The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency work to create a frame for dealing with this paradox.

### **7.4 The set of rules**

The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency's rules and guidelines for interpreters are collected in the documents "God tolksed" (Kammarkollegiet 2004a) and "Kammarkollegiets tolkföreskrifter" (Kammarkollegiet 2004b). Further rules are found in the Swedish law, for

example in the Code of Judicial Procedure, the Administrative Judicial Procedure Act (1971:291) and in the Official Secrets Act (1980:100). The aim of these rules and guidelines is to ensure that interpreter follows a legally and ethically well-formed practice.

The directions from The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency state, "During interpretation, the authorized interpreter shall reproduce all information as faithfully as possible" (Kammarkollegiets tolkföreskrifter 14 §). This has implications for the manner of interpretation beyond the pure linguistic. The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency recognize this fact and write, as a comment to the statement, that "...terms and expressions as far as possible should be reproduced correspondingly. Cursing, emotional expressions or body language should not be diminished." Thus, if a suspect, or witness, answers a question with hesitation or in anger, this must come through in the interpretation as it could prove of importance for court's deliberations.

Similar rules and guidelines for interpreters can be found in other countries including Denmark, the USA and South Africa. In Denmark, as discussed in Jacobsen (2002), the guidelines are laid down by the National Commissioner of the Danish Police (Rigspolitichefen) in a similar way to Sweden. In the USA, the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibilities is issued by the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators (NAJIT) (NAJIT 2008) and follows the four cornerstones for interpretation: Accuracy and Completeness, Impartiality, Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest. In the USA, the need for legal interpreters has resulted in graduate programmes in legal interpreting. The need is however far greater than the education system can provide; in 1999 Benmaman pointed out that the general impression was one of too little, too late as only two graduate programmes existed at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to meet the USA's total demand for qualified legal interpreters.

In South Africa there is a long tradition of interpreted communication and modern, post-apartheid has 11 national or official languages, with the associated need for interpreted communication. The South African constitution stipulates that, in order to get a fair trial, a person is entitled to an interpreter if he or she does not understand the language of the court. This means that the demand for court interpreters is high. However, as pointed out e.g. by Moeketsi (2000), the quality of the interpretation has historically often been low with inconsistencies, irregularities and inaccuracy. To raise the standard of court interpretation and to ensure the quality of the interpreters a university programme leading to a BA in court interpreting has been established in South Africa (Moeketsi & Wallmach 2005; Moeketsi & Mollema 2006) that follows the standards for legal interpreters follow the NAJIT (2008) guidelines.

These and other national rules and guidelines create a frame for legal translation, yet there still remain many issues surrounding the interpreter's role in the court room, the nature of the interpretation process and its dilemmas, and how these are understood by the various parties involved in the legal process.

## **7.5 The interpreter's role and dilemma**

The interpreter's main task in always is to convey the linguistic message between people who do not share a common language. This is, in many cases, the only important task. In some cases however, for example, in a court hearing, the linguistic message alone is not always sufficient. The manner in which something is said can have consequences for the judgement of the trustworthiness of a statement. The interpretation should, therefore, also convey feelings like excitement and hesitation, and, ideally, a broader picture of the client than can be gained from an emotion-free verbatim translation.

It would be natural to think that the greatest difficulties in legal interpreting arise when translating legal terminology between two languages. This can certainly pose a problem, but it is a fairly minor one once the terminology has been learnt. Far more problematic for the interpreter are the differences in pragmatic aspects such as illocutionary equivalence between the two languages of interpretation. Hale (1999) studied the consecutive courtroom interpretation of discourse markers between English and Spanish and found that discourse markers were often overlooked. Overlooking these markers considerably changes the illocutionary force and the way an utterance is understood. Incorrectly interpreted fillers such as conjunctions, interjections and particles, alter the force of an utterance and make it hard for a listener to determine, for example, the degree of hesitation, politeness or determination with which an utterance is made.

Hale (1999) furthermore found that some fillers were frequently omitted in the translation, thereby retaining the illocutionary point but changing the illocutionary force. Hale studied the English discourse markers "well", "see" and "now" in interpreted hearings, and how these were interpreted into Spanish. He found that the interpreters omitted the markers systematically. The resulting interpretations "...alter the force or strength with which the illocutionary point is presented, such as the difference between 'I suggest' and 'I insist'" (Hale 1999:80). The main reason for this seems to be that translation equivalents are difficult to find in the short time available to the interpreter.

That the lack of time available to the interpreter can result in, among other things, shifts in illocutionary force illustrates the need to see interpretation more as building a bridge between people and cultures that



comprises more than the verbal manifestation of language. Moreover, as pointed out by, for example, Chesterman (2001), translation and interpreting involve an extensive ethical dimension that defines the basic attitude to the translation or interpretation task, and adds a further dimension to the dilemmas of cross-linguistic communication.

Chesterman (2001) argued that there are four partly incompatible models that describe the ethics of the translation and interpretation process: ethics of representation, ethics of service, ethics of communication and the ethics of norms. The first model, ethics of representation, focuses on the source, without adding, omitting or changing anything. In this respect, the model is similar to what Nida (1964) defined as formal equivalence and what Newmark (1988) classified as semantic translation. See Chapter 7 (Case study 4) for a more detailed discussion of issues of representation. The second model, ethics of service, focuses on translation as a service performed for a client. The ethic goals for this model have their focus on the client, and the translator's main virtue is loyalty to the client. In this sense, it resembles Nida's (1964) dynamic equivalence.

The third model, ethics of communication, represents a shift in focus from representation to communication with others. The goal is to facilitate intercultural communication even if this is at the expense of faithfulness to the source and the target. Chesterman stressed understanding as paramount for this model, and defined this as: *"Understanding a translation means arriving at an interpretation that is compatible with the communicative intention of the author and the translator (and in some cases also the client) to a degree sufficient for a given purpose"* (Chesterman 2001:141). In this respect, the model has points in common with Newmark's (1988) communicative translation with its focus on the cultural aspects of the message.

The fourth model, ethics of norms, strives to uphold the norms regarding the way a translation is supposed to be in the target language culture at the time that translation is made. The key word for this model is trust, and by conforming to predictable norms, and not surprising anyone, the translator gains trust for him- or herself and thereby for the profession.

The complexities of interpretation and the dimensions of the associated ethical dilemma feed into the different views of interpretation that members of the legal profession may hold. To explore these issues and others that may help explain why communication in the bilingual courtroom collapses and possibly impact on how an immigrant is judged, two semi-structured interviews were conducted. These interviews have the function of providing a first insight into the explored issues and provide a basis for future interviews with court employees. The interviewed interpreter and lay judge were selected, therefore, due to their ability to analyze linguistic and narrative situations

## 7.6 The Interviewees

Both interviewees have extensive experience of working in Swedish District Courts. The Swedish District Courts deal with criminal cases, contentious cases (civil law disputes) between private persons, for example family cases, and various other matters such as adoption (District Court – Sveriges Domstolar, 2009, September 30). Judgements are made by a legally trained judge together with three lay judges. The lay judges non-legally trained and are appointed by the municipal assembly for a period of four years that coincides with municipal assembly elections. The recruiting of the lay judges is run via the political parties. Recently it has become important to broaden recruitment for lay judge positions to include those who are not member of political parties. In the court deliberations the lay judge's vote has the same value as the legally trained judge's vote. Lay judges come from many walks of life, have no legal training and very few have formal insights into multilingual communication or translation theory.

The interviewed interpreter was a 32-year old certified interpreter with French as her first language. She has lived in Sweden for over 10 years and has extensive experience of medical and legal interpreting in a range of situations. She is fluent in Swedish at a near-native level with a moderate French accent, holds a PhD from a Swedish university and at the time of the interview held an academic post at a Swedish university.

The interviewed lay judge was a 54-year old Swedish native speaker who has several years of experience of judging in the District Court, and has attended many hearings with interpreters present. She holds a PhD, speaks English and French at near-native level, and at the time of the interview held an academic post at a Swedish university.

## 7.7 The Interviews

The interviews were semi-structured, with open questions allowing for the posing of follow-up questions to obtain further data (Williamson 2002). The interviews were held in Swedish and lasted approximately 40 minutes. The length of the interviews was not set in advance to allow the respondents to reflect and expand their answers as they wished. The interviews were conducted on separate occasions and recorded in a studio to allow further analysis of the answers and to prevent note taking disturbing the conversation. After the interviews had been transcribed the transcriptions were sent to the interviewees for approval. This ensured the correctness of the transcription, allowed for correction of misunderstandings and answers that the interviewees felt gave incorrect impressions and allowed the interviewees to remove anything they felt could point to a specific case. The questions and the collected data were discussed in depth with colleagues in

the field to ensure the internal validity of the material and analysis. In the following presentations the core findings of the interviews are presented.

### **7.7.1 Interview I – the interpreter.**

Asked if the legal staff show an understanding for the interpreter's work, and an awareness of what it means, that is if they realize it takes time, the interpreter reported that it varies between different courts and different settings.

*In some places they know exactly how things should be. They have planned for the extra time and they inform all involved that an interpreter is present and that they should not talk too long and that the interpreter may interrupt. Other times I come to places where they obviously have not used an interpreter before, so they go about it as usual and that makes things a little more difficult.<sup>7</sup>*

One situation described by the interpreter as frequently difficult was the questioning of witnesses since

*...witnesses often are a bit stressed and not really comfortable with the situation and often not used to be in a courtroom at all. It is maybe their first time there, and they want to answer the questions really quickly and that makes things a little more difficult.*

A further complicating factor is that the interviewee brought up is when a witness is questioned over the telephone. These witnesses do not have the visual clues about what is going on in the courtroom and are easily forget that an interpreter is present. Normally the court clerk will inform a telephone witness that an interpreter is present. However, it is not uncommon, in the interviewee's opinion, that this information has to be repeated during longer sessions, as what is not seen tends to be forgotten. The interviewee, however, feels that these situations are recognized by the legal staff as potentially problematic, and they most often have strategies for alleviating them.

Greater challenges exist for the court interpreter who is obliged to translate everything that is said by a client, in the same manner and style that it is said. It is not uncommon that the defendant, who might be tense and nervous, speaks incoherently with many self-corrections, hesitations and empty phrases. This poses a challenge to the interpreter as the tension, nervousness and hesitation shall be reproduced in the target language. As the manner of answering can be of significance for the judgement of a witness's truthfulness, it is important that these aspects are also conveyed in the interpretation. The interviewed interpreter admitted that this is a

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<sup>7</sup> The interview quotes are translated by the author.

challenge, but one that is possible to overcome. If the person talks, but really does not say very much, for instance if the witness begins with self-corrections and empty phrases like *mmm, well, maybe, I don't remember, I don't know if...* the interpreter cannot interrupt and translate these self-corrections and empty phrases to the court but has to wait until a sentence has been spoken. About the phrases, the interviewed interpreter said:

*I think that it is evident, but as an interpreter I have to do it.*

This suggests that the court may also think the self-corrections and empty phrases are evident, and their translation could irritate the court.

The interviewed interpreter pointed out that causes for confusion are not always easily recognized, as these may not primarily concern the purely linguistic aspects of the communication, but rather relate to cultural dimensions. In the case of interviewed interpreter, who interprets between French and Swedish, the majority of her clients are not immigrants from France, but rather immigrant and refugees from Africa. She estimated that 90% of her clients are from Africa. These clients often speak French as this is the language of the authorities and of the education system of their home country and not because it is their first language. The interpreter explained the cultural aspects of how questions are answered in the following way:

*Things are very formal within the political system and the school system, so it is common with very long expositions where the speaker starts to argue for a cause. That depends of course on which country they come from, but in the majority of cases I have had to interrupt when the presiding judge is irritated because he wants an answer. You ask a question and you get an answer. But this has really nothing to do with the language but more with the manner of arguing or debating that is learned.*

This illustrates one of the central dilemmas with interpretation, namely that it is not merely a question of translating words but rather also a way of translating culture. The interviewed interpreter saw this situation as one of the major obstacles with the profession when all focus lies on the linguistic aspect rather than the broader communicative aspect and suggests that education is needed for everyone in the court to understand this:

*The point of us being there is to help everyone communicate, and the rest is really nothing we can do much about. One can only hope that everyone in the room or the involved parties can understand what can be related to cultural differences, and that is where I think there is a lack of education. This goes for lay judges as well as other involved, and it is the same story in health care and when interpreting in different contexts. Many people get irritated and interrupt the interpreter as well saying "I'm not asking you – I want an answer" and that makes the situation difficult because as interpreter I have to interpret everything that is being said. And then suddenly you are faced with a couple of utterances that you don't have the time to interpret because of this... so I'm being blamed when the other person is doing the talking...*

Similar situations can occur when translating proverbs and metaphorical or lexicalized expressions, as these are often culturally dependent and have no corresponding expression in the target language. The interpreter deals with this either by using a similar expression in the target language or, if no such expression exists, by explaining that "...this is a saying or proverb meaning..." This more practical or pragmatic view on interpreting is investigated in Jacobsen (2002) who found that using explanations is a common practice among interpreters. The principle of *reproducing all information as faithfully as possible* is thus broken in favour of the goal to convey the meaning as clearly as possible.

### **7.7.2 Interview II – the lay judge.**

When asked if hearings with an interpreter are generally seen as more troublesome than hearings only in Swedish the interviewed lay judge answered that this was indeed that case. She thought that one reason for this was that people do not know who they should address:

*It is impolite not to look at the one you are talking to, and that leads to that you in a way get stuck in the interpreter. That way you talk to the interpreter, not to the addressee*

The interviewed lay judge also saw the client as being, in some way, alienated by the presence of an interpreter and believes that in some way the client is perceived as more of a stranger by the court than it they were Swedish speaking.

On the other hand, the lay judge saw having an interpreter by ones' side as possibly beneficial for the client. The interpreter can, as well as translating, explain terminology and make sure that the client properly understands and follows the court proceedings in a way that is often not available for a Swedish speaker:

*Because the language used in courts can be quite complicated even for a native Swedish speaker, but the client has such a relation to the interpreter that he asks and makes sure he has understood everything. A speaker of Swedish might not always do that.*

If this is the case, someone using an interpreter gets more support, morally and perhaps also judicially, than a person without an interpreter. The lay judge continued:

*I think that it may be easier for someone who has an interpreter than for a native speaker because you may have things explained in a more informal way instead of the usual legalese jargon. The translation is more ordinary in a way... And you also get the feeling that it is a bit more 'we two' so you can have things explained... so in that way it is an advantage to have an interpreter. It is a bit like having a person to support you.*

When discussing what gets translated and whether everything that the client says actually gets translated, the lay judge's feeling based on her court experience was that parts of the conversation sometimes are not translated by the interpreter. Earlier field studies of court hearings have revealed that this is not uncommon view (e.g. see Case study 4). The lay judge also reported that the interpreter at times interacts with the client to explain or make something clear, and these pieces of conversation take place without translation into Swedish.

## 7.8 Summary of opinions

The interviews revealed a number of potentially problematic situations in the bilingual courtroom when an interpreter is present. It also became clear that the interpreter and the lay judge held different views.

The situations that are identified as problematic by the interpreter can be summarized as:

- Lack of experience of an interpreter being present complicates the task
- Witness hearings with stressed witnesses
- Telephone hearings
- Incoherent dialogue from the client
- Cultural differences in dialogue strategies

The situations that are identified as problematic by the lay judge can be summarized as

- Uncertainty as to whom to address – the interpreter or the addressee
- The interpreter is perceived to more on the non-native speaker's side and rather than neutral
- Interpretation is time consuming
- It is not clear whether everything is translated?
- Even if translated – is the full message conveyed?

## 7.9 Discussion

The interpreter's mission and function in a legal setting is clearly defined, both by the rules and guidelines for court interpreters and by the National Courts Administration. There is, however, a discrepancy in the views held by the interviewees as to how this functions between interpreters and legal staff. For someone primarily concerned with the dispensing of justice, the focus of the interpretation lies in the linguistic aspects, such as the translation of words in another language into Swedish. For an interpreter, often with deep knowledge not only of the language being translated but also of the cultural context and cultural differences, it is also necessary to, and impossible not to, include this cultural dimension in the interpretation process.

Some of the difficulties and problematic situations are known and recognized by the involved parties, and can thus be resolved without too much concern. This includes the plan for working with an interpreter; this includes making everyone aware of the fact that an interpreter is present. Some short instructions given to the court about the basics of working with interpreters and about giving sufficient time for interpreting is often enough. In the case of a witness being interviewed over a telephone line, this information needs at times to be repeated, to compensate for the lack of visual information that there is an interpreter present in the courtroom. Problems of this nature are, in other words, possible to eliminate with a minimum of effort and planning.

Greater challenges arise when the reasons for the problematic situations are unclear, or not known. These include the situations that originate in differences in expectations of the interpretation process in the court context, and areas of knowledge that are not shared by the legal staff, the interpreter and the interpreter's client. An example is when a client starts a narrative in a very hesitating and incoherent style, leaving the interpreter with words but without meaning. The interpreter's normal strategy is, rather than a verbatim word-to-word translation, to convey the meaning of an utterance to the court. This is clearly not an achievable goal if there is no meaning to convey. As a result, the impression of the court is that not everything that is said is translated.

When evaluating the interpreter's and the lay judge's interviews, it is apparent that both identify situations that are experienced as cumbersome or problematic. Strikingly, these situations are not experienced in the same way; something mentioned as being experienced as awkward by one of them was not reported as being experienced as awkward by the other. One explanation for this, offered by Jacobsen (2002), concerns the interpreter's focus on conveying a speaker's meaning rather than a verbatim translation. Jacobsen argued that the experienced interpreter's goal of successful interaction between the interactants presupposes more than literal translation. A common strategy is to include additions to the translation when necessary to compensate for the receiver's lack of background- or cultural knowledge. This view is not explicitly shared by the interpreter interviewed in this study, but similar ways of reasoning can be seen in the interview.

The three situations most likely to cause problems during a hearing, according to the interviewed interpreter are, one, witness hearings and witnesses heard over the telephone in particular. Witnesses are often stressed, anxious about being in the court setting and not familiar with the situation. A witness heard over the telephone is furthermore likely to forget about the interpreter as he or she does not have any visual or audio reminder that there is an interpreter at work. This also makes it more difficult for the

interpreter to interrupt or be an active part of the conversation. The telephone interview sound quality has an impact as well, as difficulties in perceiving the witness often makes simultaneous interpretation impossible and the interpretation has to be conducted consecutively.

Two, the underlying meaning can easily be lost when translating proverbs, lexicalized expressions and idiomatic expressions. The interpreter is obliged to interpret everything that is said but cannot, strictly speaking, add or explain anything to make a statement clearer. It is however a known that these kinds utterances do not often translate into another language because of their cultural origin. The pragmatic way of avoiding misunderstandings in situations like this is for the interpreter to simply say something like "...and that is a proverb meaning...". Even though this procedure does not follow the rules and guidelines for interpreters, it is praxis for many interpreters. The interviewed interpreter said that her strategy is to use a corresponding proverb if one such exists, and when this is not the case to explicitly explain the meaning of the utterance.

Three, an incoherent client is always an obstacle for successful interpretation, and a reason for misunderstandings. Educating about how dialogues work and what interpreting entails could considerably reduce the uncertainty in such situations. The incoherence of the statement can have many reasons: stress, uncertainty as to what the question concerns, uncertainty about what to answer, uncertainty about in what manner to answer and being unwilling to answer. These reasons can often easily be exposed if they are expressed in a language and cultural code shared by the questioned and questioner. However, when an interpreter is being used in the questioning, the shared cultural code can be weak making resolution of the incoherence difficult and something that rests to a large degree with the interpreter. This task would be less complicated if some knowledge about the interpretation process had been given to all the participants in the court case beforehand.

The lay judge pointed out that she had observed differences in the verbal behaviour of prosecutors and barristers when questioning occurs via a translator rather than directly in Swedish in monolingual hearings. This observation is based on informal observations of the same people from a number of hearings. It seems that many lawyers over time develop a personal style of running a case or questioning.

*This may be from watching TV, because at times you get the feeling that they sort of play a role in a way. They have their own styles, and a certain way of asking questions switching between rubbing someone the right way and then sting a bit harder. So, they have their attitudes, their body language and their voice and all of that falls absolutely flat when interpreted. It is a lot of acting from their side that is all in vain. You can tell that this is disturbing to them, when it more comes down to just reading their lines instead of acting them, as they usually do.*



This observation underlines that more than the language differentiates a monolingual from a bilingual hearing. The presence of an interpreter affects both what is said and the manner in which it is said.

A more serious reflection made by the lay judge concerns the right of law based on the doubts about whether everything really comes through in the interpretation process. At times there seems to be a lurking feeling among the legal staff that everything said in a conversation is not translated. Furthermore, doubts can arise about whether the meaning of what is said and translated really comes through, or if some things are lost in the translation. This may have its ground in the incoherence-problem. If someone is speaking incoherently, or nonsensically, in a language that is not understood by the listeners and an extended passage of speech is translated to a few short sentences, the listener has a feeling of translation incompleteness.

The interviewed lay judge reported occasionally experiencing doubts about translation incompleteness both into Swedish and from Swedish. She also pointed out that when something is translated it is not possible to know how much of what is being said is understood by the translator or the witness. This is however a factor, that is not limited to bi- or multilingual dialogue situations; these contexts however make it more difficult to notice that the witness is not, for example, understanding the questions, or the court, not understanding the answers to the questions.

Chesterman (2001) proposed a fifth model of translation; an ethics of professional commitment. Chesterman's considered the desire to be a good translator who makes the right decisions when translating as the primary motivating factor for a translator. For a translator to be able to do this, Chesterman stressed the need for language skills and cultural knowledge. The knowledge of culture and cultural difference is necessary to make translation decisions and to anticipate the effect of different choices. As part of his proposed model, Chesterman proposed the development of an official oath, the Hieronymic Oath, for all translators that would underline the importance of the work. The suggested Hieronymic Oath could, if it became widely known outside the translators' guild, have a positive impact on the view of the process of translation and interpretation, and thus also on the quality of the justice in the bilingual courtroom.

## **7.10 Conclusions**

From the two interviews, the one with the interpreter and the one with the lay judge, a degree of mutual mistrust can be detected with feelings of not knowing what is being interpreted and what not, and what is being understood and what is not penetrating the courtroom. Yet, in spite of this, a feeling that the bilingual communication in the courts works reasonably well

most of the time also came through in the interviews. Situations where communicative disturbances could impact upon the court process and ultimately jeopardize the dispensing of justice or the rule of law were acknowledged. One way of reducing the impact of these could be to create an awareness of these problematic situations; the introduction of a Hieronymic Oath as proposed by Chesterman (2001) could be one action that could help creating this awareness. Another action could be the introduction of training about the interpretation process for those who work in the legal system; such a training programme would hopefully facilitate the process for all involved in bilingual hearings, and aid in the dispensing of justice. The situation, expressed by the interviewed interpreter in the following way:

*This is really the problem – you engage an interpreter to understand another person, but only to understand in the linguistic sense. Communication reaches far beyond linguistics, and that is the main concern. It is possible to be in command over two languages, but still not manage to mediate this!*

illustrates the need for all members of the court to have a knowledge of multilingual, multicultural, and interpreted communication. An improvement in this competence would be beneficial for non-native speakers, for the ease of court proceedings and, ultimately, for the legal rights of the individual. This is particularly central when the accused is an immigrant, or visitor, who knows little or no Swedish; the divergent views of what interpretation is, and gives a case, need to be reduced to increase fairness in court judgements and legal security.

## Chapter 8: Conclusions

This dissertation has investigated ways in which immigrants to Sweden are judged by native Swedish speakers based on their foreign accented Swedish and how the need for an interpreter in court can pose challenges to the legal system and the judgements it passes down. The following five questions were posed and examined in five case studies to examine how immigrants are judged: i.) What are the general attitudes held by Swedes to immigrants and immigration? ii.) What awareness of foreign accented Swedish do native Swedish speakers have? iii.) What attitudes do Swedes hold towards different foreign accented Swedishes? iv.) Where and why do disfluencies occur in courtroom interpretation? and, v.) Do the court interpreter and other legal staff have different views on the role and task of interpretation?

The first case study in this dissertation used a questionnaire to assess self-reported attitudes towards immigration. The study found that the general attitude towards immigrants and immigration is positive and more so that in most counties. Moreover, Swedish students are more positive towards immigrants and immigration than the Swedish population in general. The respondents did not see immigrants as rivals for their jobs and saw immigration as a bringer of new ideas and culture to Sweden. The picture changes when the attitudes towards immigrants and criminality are examined. Only 19% of the Swedish student group of respondents did not view immigrants as a root of increased crime. Thus, when considering the findings of the case studies 3–4 it needs to be remembered that the issues considered and their impact upon immigrants are most likely less in Sweden than in other countries. It should also be borne in mind that the findings of this case study are based on self-reported attitudes and may not reflect subconscious attitudes, perhaps due to the tradition of citizenship education in Sweden. The third case used an established methodology that required the respondents to rate each foreign accented-Swedish speaker and their voice on semantic differential scales that are less easily manipulated by the respondent who believes that there is an appropriate or correct way to answer. It therefore provided detail to the broad-brush result provided by the methodology of Case Study 1.

The second case study was conducted to assess whether Swedish listeners have a cognitive prototype of British English accented Swedish. Without a demonstrated awareness of the phonetic and phonological markers of a foreign accented Swedish the Case Study 3 would have a lower validity. Case Study two explored the Swede's awareness of the phonetic features separating native Swedish speech from a British English accented Swedish through an imitation task. The case study found that speakers captured many of the prominent segmental and suprasegmental features of the target

accent. Comparisons between the individual speakers reveal a high degree of similarity in the imitation strategies, suggesting the existence of a shared cognitive prototype of the necessary features of the target accent. Neuhauser's (2008) study of Germans imitating French accented German supports the existence of common prototypes for foreign varieties of a language. These findings provide justification and validity for the third case study.

The third case study found that in spite of Swedish listeners having a self-reported pro-immigration attitude, the listeners differentiate between foreign accented Swedes. Those with (perceived) similar value systems are preferred to those whose value systems are (perceived) to be different. The study found that foreign accented Swedes from Muslim populations and those associated with religious or national conflicts were the least liked. A stereotype bias analysis conducted on incorrect country of speaker origin guesses confirmed this picture. Western Christian country guesses were associated with positive attributes than predominately Muslim or Eastern European country guesses. An unacknowledged social desirability effect is triggered by foreign accented Swedes with negative consequences for immigrants from some regions of the world.

Taken together the first three case studies that form the first part of this dissertation shed light on underlying attitudes towards immigrants that Swedes in their daily lives do not acknowledge. They report a positive view towards both immigrants and immigration, yet when asked to report their attitudes towards different foreign accented Swedes a clear preference based on stereotyping and social desirability appears. The only clue to this in Case Study 1 is the low percentage of respondents who reject a link between crime and immigration. Combining this with the unacknowledged social desirability effect seen in the data of Case Study 3, the platform of the right wing Swedish Democratic party can be detected. The studies in Part 1 were conducted with university students and it could be the case that the social desirability effect would have been clearer if the respondents for Case Study 3 had been a cross-section of Swedish society. In the legal context, this unacknowledged social desirability effect could affect how a witness is perceived and how an accused is judged. This perception based on a foreign-accented Swedish accent can also exist when an interpreter is used in court proceedings; these most frequently have a foreign accented Swedish. An interpreter alters the dynamics of the courtroom and Part 2 of this dissertation examined the disfluencies of courtroom bilingual dialogue and how actors in the courtroom understand the work of the interpreter. Both the attitude to foreign accented Swedish and attitude to the shift in courtroom dynamics due to the presence of an interpreter affect how immigrants are judged.

The fourth case study explored the situation where disfluencies occur in interpreted courtroom dialogues, and attempted to uncover the underlying reasons for these disfluencies. The study found that the disfluent situations can be categorized based on the dialogue situation, and that the reasons for the disfluencies is most frequently to be found elsewhere than in the interpreter's role in the dialogue. This refutes the widely held opinion that the interpreter is most often the one at fault when an interpreted discourse fails to work. Case Study 4 suggests that the reasons for communication breakdown are found in two factors; one, the differences in opinion on what an interpreter's task entails, and two, a general lack of knowledge about communication strategies and communication through an interpreter. This leads not only to difficulties in the communication, but also to a lingering feeling of distrust between the participants as to whether the interpretation is correct or not. In order to throw more detail on this feeling of distrust and to approach the disfluent bilingual courtroom from another angle, an interview study with a court interpreter and a lay judge was conducted as the fifth case study.

The fifth case study considered the different expectations court interpreters and legal staff hold of the interpretation task in the courtroom setting. The interviews were placed in the context of the rules and guidelines for legal interpretation and discuss the interpreter's role in a courtroom setting. The two interviews serve as a starting point for a discussion of situations that are experienced as problematic in a bilingual context. Both interviewees reported experiences of situations where communicative disturbances have impacted on the court process, identified and described situations likely to cause problems in the communication, and the analysis of the interviews supports the idea that different views of the interpreter's role and a lack of knowledge about the interpretation process is an underlying factor for many of the interpretation-related disturbances.

Taken together Case Studies 4 and 5 point to disfluencies in bilingual communication in the court creating difficulties and irritations that can affect the judgement not being a result of the translator nor the process of translation, but rather due to those present in the courtroom having different expectations of what the translator can and should do, and due to a lack of understanding of how communication in bilingual translated dialogues functions. These studies point to what should be included in an educational programme about bilingual and translated communication for those working in, or affected by, the legal system. A higher level of knowledge about multilingual, multicultural and interpreted communication would facilitate these kinds of communication, have positive consequences for the running of court proceedings, for the court staff, the non-native speaker and, most importantly, for the legal rights of the individual, including the legal rights of the immigrant. However, even with such an educational programme, there

will still be social desirability effects that will mean that some immigrant groups will be at a double legal disadvantage when being judged as their case will be heard through a translator who most lightly will speak with foreign accented Swedish.

## **8.1 Suggested areas for further investigation**

Each of the five case studies presents opportunities for further investigation. Case Studies 1 and 3 could be replicated on professional groups, such as the police, lawyers and lay judges to investigate whether there are differences in attitudes towards immigrants between these groups and between the self-reported detailed attitudes accessed via responses to foreign accented Swedes. As the economic situation changes over time it is possible that attitudes change, and replicating the studies among Swedish students today in the middle of the current economic crisis would give an indication of the stability of the attitudes reported in this dissertation.

Case Study 3 did not include a native Swedish voice against which to baseline the responses to the attitudes to the foreign accented Swedes, neither was it balanced for gender in the way Bayard et al. (2001) balanced their study of attitudes to varieties of English. Both of these options help validate or negate the findings presented in this thesis. The inclusion of a native Swedish voice and balancing for gender would, however, create a more demanding experimental set-up for the respondents; there would be a need to reduce the number of foreign accented Swedes presented to each group of respondents. The same material could also be used to examine the impact of pre-knowledge on how the respondents ascribe personality traits speakers. For example, the same set of voices could be presented after different background information about each speaker is given; this could reveal how attitudes to foreign accented Swedes can be biased by verbal, and/or visual information.

Case Study 2 could be repeated with a larger number of imitators and foreign accented Swedes. The outcomes of such an extended study would complement the case study presented in this dissertation and the work of, for example, Neuhauser (2008). An extended study is of interest to the field of Forensic Linguistics.

Case Study 4 looked at one bilingual Swedish court case. With improved recording technology being installed in Swedish courtrooms, the possibility for being able to clearly hear what happened in the court will improve. It will also provide a greater range of possibilities for analysing the disfluencies of bilingual courtroom dialogue. With a larger sample of authentic cases the ability to understanding of the issues and problematic contexts will improve.

Case Study 5 can be extended with further interviews with employees in the judicial area and police force. This would be beneficial for achieving a

deeper knowledge on how to identify and resolve language-related problems in judicial contexts. The general insights from the results could be used to develop and make more appropriate material for distribution to those in the legal setting who will come into contact with interpreters and interpreted hearings.

## **8.2 Summary**

In sum, the major contribution of this dissertation has been to show that, although Sweden is a country where there is a highly positive view of immigration and immigrants, immigrant groups in Sweden are judged differently based on their foreign accented Swedish voices, that some immigrants are more welcome than others, and that the legal system is affected by the use of translators. It is possible that this places some immigrants at a double legal disadvantage.

An increased awareness about these processes, among the general public, members of the police force, the judicial system and participants in court hearings, could have a positive effect on the legal rights of the immigrant. A native or non-native Swedish accent is not an indicator of guilt, intelligence, or other personality traits, and ought to have nothing to do with the outcome of any legal proceedings. Similarly a disfluent bilingual courtroom presence ought not to result in the lay judges questioning the evidence and / or the quality of the interpretation provided by a foreign accented Swedish speaker. Here, the findings of this dissertation suggest that many of the problems could be avoided by increasing the court's awareness of the underlying causes. Educating court personnel, lawyers, representatives from the police and security companies about the interpretation process, about differences in dialogue strategies and about cultural differences regarding the court room setting is one way of raising awareness. An education programme could help avoid many of the sources of courtroom irritation when an interpreter is present. Further brief information to the witnesses, the defendant and plaintiff would also facilitate the proceedings. Together this could reduce the impact of lack of linguistic understanding on the outcomes of court proceedings.

The findings of the thesis also speak to the current political climate with the rise of the right across Europe, including Sweden with its Swedish Democrats. Judgements and personality traits are ascribed to immigrants based on collective stereotypes that are vaguely associated with nationalities, faiths and regions. The attitudes accessed in Case Study 3 relate only to those ascribed to the foreign accented Swedish without seeing the immigrant. Even so, Case Study 3 found a social desirability effect that corresponded well with the views held by the Swedish Democrats. The respondents in Case Study 3 were University Students and as Case Study 1 showed, this group is more

positive to immigration and immigrants than Swedes in general. It is thus likely that the social desirability effect found among students is stronger among Swedes in general and this needs to be better understood if xenophobic tendencies in society are to be reduced.



## Svensk sammanfattning

Denna avhandling studerar hur invandrare till Sverige bedöms i olika situationer utifrån sin utländska brytning eller avsaknad av svenska. Talat språk är en form av kommunikation som rymmer mycket mer information än det lingvistiska budskapet som sådant. Det är ofta det första sätt på vilket vi interagerar med en annan människa. Baserat på hur någon talar skapar vi som lyssnare en mental bild av talaren som person, dennes bakgrund, ursprung och personliga egenskaper. Denna avhandlings fem studier belyser hur invandrare bedöms utifrån sin brytning eller sin talade kommunikation på ett annat språk än svenska.

Arbetet är strukturerat kring fem huvudsakliga forskningsfrågor; 1- Vilka är de generella attityderna bland svenskar gentemot invandring och invandrare? 2- Vilken är graden av språkmedvetenhet rörande utländsk brytning? 3- Vilken är infödda talares attityd till utländska brytningar? 4- Vilka är konsekvenserna av utländsk brytning eller att använda ett annat språk i rättegångssituationer? 5- Vilka olika synsätt finns rörande domstolstolkars uppdrag.

Avhandlingens första studie undersöker generella attityder till invandring och invandrare i Sverige för att kunna jämföra med attityder till invandring i andra länder. Studien replikerar Simon & Sikich (2007) arbete rörande attityder till invandring och invandrare i sju länder. De utvalda länderna inkluderade dels länder med en tradition av immigration, såsom USA, Kanada och Australien, dels länder med en mer ambivalent inställning till invandring, Storbritannien, Frankrike och Tyskland, samt slutligen Japan som är ett land där invandring som begrepp är närmast icke-existerande. De fem frågor som ställdes i studien rörde invandringens omfattning, invandrarnas påverkan på ekonomin, huruvida invandrare tar arbetstillfällen från övriga invånare, invandringens påverkan på kriminaliteten och om invandringens bidrag till nya idéer och kultur. Simon & Sikich fann att även om invandring i de flesta länder sågs som positivt för ekonomin så var den vanliga uppfattningen att invandrare hade en negativ effekt på kriminaliteten i de mottagande länderna.

För att kunna jämföra de sju länderna med svenska förhållanden användes samma frågor som i Simon & Sikich-studien för att undersöka svenskars attityder. Den undersökta populationen består av 142 heltidsstudenter vid svenska universitet, jämt fördelat mellan män och kvinnor och i åldersspannet 18 – 39 år. De övergripande resultaten visar att de svenska respondenterna har en positiv, eller mycket positiv, attityd till invandring jämfört med de sju av Simon & Sikich undersökta länderna. De svenska respondenterna ansåg också att invandring i mycket hög grad berikade landet med kultur och nya idéer. Den enda negativa synpunkten

från de svenska respondenterna gällde invandringens påverkan på brottsligheten, där ett negativt samband återfanns.

En förutsättning för att kunna upptäcka en brytning eller accent, utländsk eller dialektal, är en stark medvetenhet om skillnader mellan variteter med och utan brytningar eller accenter. För att undersöka denna språkmedvetenhet på den fonetiska nivån utfördes en imitationsuppgift som studie två i denna avhandling. Infödda talare av svenska gavs uppgiften att imitera den varietet av svenska som talas av brittiska invandrare med engelska som modersmål. Studien är, som Neuhauser & Simpson (2007:133) påpekar, "en av de få studier som fokuserar på talarens strategier vid imitation av en utländsk brytning" (min översättning). Resultaten från denna andra studie stödjer tanken att talare har någon sorts prototyp för de särskiljande dragen i en speciell utländsk brytning. Denna prototyp är komponerad av ett antal nödvändiga drag i brytningen, kompletterad med ytterligare ett antal optionella drag. Studien visar också att talarnas förmåga att imitera den aktuella brytningen kunde förbättras med hjälp av studier av en inspelad autentisk brytning.

Studien utfördes som ett experiment där infödda svenska talare ombads att läsa en svensk text som de normalt skulle göra vid högläsning. Direkt efter denna genomläsning ombads talarna att oförberett läsa samma text ytterligare en gång, men nu med en brittisk engelsk brytning som om syftet var att övertyga en lyssnare om att de var brittiska andraspråkstalare av svenska. Deltagarna fick därefter en inspelning av texten uppläst av en britt med svenska som andraspråk. Efter en vecka, då deltagarna uppmanats att lyssna på inspelningen vid upprepade tillfällen, återvände talarna till studion för ytterligare en inspelning av sin imiterade brytning. Akustiska och auditiva analyser av det inspelade materialet genomfördes för att jämföra och kontrastera talarnas imitationsstrategier. Jämförelser mellan talarnas första och andra inspelning visade på en inlärningseffekt som antogs härröra från det inspelade instuderingsmaterialet. Jämförelser mellan de olika talarnas imitationsstrategier visade liknande drag för att imitera den utländska brytningen. Korrespondensen mellan dessa drag var tillräckligt hög för att det skall vara motiverat att tala om en gemensam kognitiv prototyp för den aktuella brytningen.

Den tredje studien undersöker om den positiva bild gentemot invandring och invandrare som framträtt i studie ett reflekteras i lyssnares bedömning av talare av svenska med utländsk brytning. Bedöms talare från olika invandrargrupper på olika sätt gällande personliga egenskaper och förmågor beroende på vilket förstaspråk som påverkar deras brytning? Studien genomfördes i form av en deskriptiv undersökning, med en enkätundersökning för datainsamling. Utformningen av enkäten följer, med vissa förändringar, den som användes i den studie Bayard et al. (2001) genomförde för att undersöka attityder till olika variteter av engelska. De

förändringar som gjordes var för att anpassa datainhämtningen till svenska förhållanden, och redovisas närmare i studien. Försöksdeltagarna utgjordes av heltidsstudenter vid Umeå Universitet och Högskolan i Skövde. Ingen av deltagarna hade någon utbildning inom lingvistik eller sociologi.

Nio inspelningar av talare med utländsk brytning, amerikansk engelsk, arabisk, finsk, tysk, ungersk, polsk, serbo-kroatisk, spansk och turkisk, valdes ut från *Brytningsarkivet* (Bannert 1980) och användes som stimuli i undersökningen. Replikerande metodologin i studien av Bayard et al. (2001) presenterades dessa nio stimuli för försöksdeltagarna, som använde en tredelad enkät för att registrera sina svar. Del ett i enkäten samlade in demografisk data bland annat om varje respondents födelseort och språkliga bakgrund. I del två samlades åsikter rörande de som stimuli presenterade rösternas personliga kvaliteter och egenskaper in. Detta gjordes via sexgradiga semantiska differentialskalor med ändlägena "inte alls" och "våldigt mycket". Exempel på egenskaper som bedömdes i denna del är pålitlighet, kompetens, vänlighet och intelligens. Del två i undersökningen inkluderade även fem frågor angående varje röst, och i vilken grad rösterna uppfattades som trevliga, tilltalande, kraftfulla, starka och utbildade. Den tredje delen av enkäten registrerade information om upplevda sociala faktorer såsom talarens utbildningsnivå, yrkesområde, förstaspråk och hemland.

Resultaten visar i korthet att lyssnargruppen i relativt låg grad lyckades identifiera talarnas modersmål och hemland. Undantaget var den amerikanska, den finska och den tyska rösten. Resultaten visar vidare att trots den tidigare positiva inställningen till invandrare så bedöms en talare i väsentlig grad utifrån stereotyper kring den nationalitet han eller hon upplevs ha.

I avhandlingens fjärde studie placeras den utlandsfödde talaren i en rättslig kontext genom en fallstudie av en tvåspråkig tingsrättsförhandling med en tolk närvarande. Förhandlingar med tolk är allt vanligare i svenska domstolar och rättstolken har en central roll för kommunikationen mellan de inblandade parterna. Det är i dessa sammanhang inte ovanligt att den tolkade diskursen stundtals blir förvirrad eller helt avstannar. Syftet med studien var att identifiera och analysera i vilka dialogsituationer sådana störningar uppträder och att finna de bakomliggande orsakerna till disfluenserna. Studien är baserad på tingsrättens inspelning av en förhandling i ett brottmål där dialogen är tolkad mellan svenska och polska.

De situationer då disfluenser uppstod analyserades och befanns ha gemensamma nämnare, vilket gjorde det möjligt att kategorisera situationerna. De olika typerna av störningar i diskursen befanns dessutom emanera från samtliga inblandade diskursdeltagare och inte, som uppfattningen ofta är, främst från tolken. Frånsett något enstaka fall av ren felöversättning befanns en gemensam nämnare vara en brist på kunskap och

förståelse kring flerspråklig kommunikation och kulturella skillnader i kommunikationsstrategi. En ökad insikt i tolkningsprocessen bland tolkanvändarna skulle bidra till att minska förekomsten av de vanligaste disfluenta situationerna. Detta skulle i sin tur vara gynnsamt för den juridiska processen i stort, för individen och, i slutändan, för den icke svensktalandes rättssäkerhet.

Den sista studien fokuserar på rättstolkens roll. Informella samtal och observationer på plats i tingsrätter tyder på att det finns en brist på samstämmighet mellan tolkar, domare och övrig rättspersonal rörande vad tolkens uppdrag egentligen innefattar. Två semi-strukturerade intervjuer, en med en rättstolk och en med en nämndeman, genomfördes för att undersöka detta fenomen närmare. En tolk är ofta, ur icke-tolkens synvinkel, att betrakta som ett levande lexikon eller en översättningsmaskin som skall rendera ordagranna översättningar av vad som sägs i rättssalen. Trots att tolkens uppdrag är klart definierat och reglerat från myndigheternas sida hamnar tolken ofta i situationer där den andra parten inte har någon kunskap kring dessa direktiv. Detta bekräftades i intervjuerna, både av tolken och av nämndemannen.

Det är vidare också fallet att en underliggande känsla av misstro emellanåt uppstår i rättssalen under tolkade förhandlingar. Det faktum att tolken är den ende i dialogsituationen som förstår det som sägs på båda språken tjänar som grogrund för denna känsla. Den kan komma till uttryck i så motto att tolken kan få en känsla av osäkerhet då tolkningen påverkas negativt av faktorer utanför dennes kontroll, såsom när en klient är oförmögen att uttrycka sig verbalt och det egentligen inte finns något att tolka. Tolken är då den som oförskyllt blir ifrågasatt gällande sin yrkeskompetens, när orsaken egentligen står att finna hos tolkens klient.

Andra deltagare i den kommunikativa situationen kan tidvis uppleva tvivel rörande huruvida allting som sägs verkligen översätts. Tvivel finns också emellanåt om innebörden i det översatta verkligen går fram. Svårigheten med ett sådant tvivlets dödläge är att den ende som har den fullständiga bilden av vad som faktiskt sägs är tolken.

Det är heller inte ovanligt att tolken, som ofta har samma språkliga och kulturella bakgrund som sin klient, kommer att betraktas som stående mera på klientens sida än på rättens. Detta är, ur rationell och logisk synvinkel, inte fallet, men det kan vara svårt att bortse från det band den språkliga gemenskapen skänker.

De generella slutsatser som kan dras utifrån de studier som presenterats i denna avhandling målar en bild av hur utlandsfödda i Sverige bedöms, både i vardagssituationer men i synnerhet i rättssammanhang. Trots den i grunden positiva inställningen till invandring och invandrare blir en person som inte pratar flytande svenska bedömd utifrån sin brytning. Även om en sådan bedömning inte per automatik innebär ett negativt utfall för den

bedömde så är en brytning både moraliskt, etiskt och logiskt sett en minst sagt tvivelaktig grund för personlighetsbedömningar. En ökad insikt i de processer som ligger bakom bedömningar av den typ som diskuteras här, både för en bred allmänhet men framförallt för personer inom rättssystemet, skulle kunna ha effekter på rättssäkerheten för utlandsfödda. Huruvida talet har utländsk brytning eller inte skall alltså inte ha någon betydelse för utredningen av en skuldfråga eller för bedömningen av denna.

Andra slutsatser rör tolkningsprocessen, och då speciellt satt i ett rättssammanhang. Många av de observerade och i avhandlingen diskuterade problematiska dialogsituationerna skulle vara möjliga att undvika genom att sprida kunskap kring de bakomliggande orsakerna. Att sprida kunskap kring tolkningsprocessen som sådan, kring skillnader mellan olika dialogstrategier och kring kulturella skillnader i synen på rättsskipning är ett framkomligt sätt att öka medvetenheten och underlätta situationen i rättssalen. Om domstolspersonal, jurister, representanter från polis och vaktbolag fick denna kunskap skulle många av de irritationsmoment som uppstår kunna undvikas. En kort genomgång kring ämnet riktad till andra inblandade, såsom vittnen, målsägande och tilltalad skulle också underlätta förhandlingsprocessen.

Studierna visar också att trots att vi som lyssnare presterar dåligt gällande att identifiera en utlandsfödd talares förstaspråk, och därmed geografiskt ursprung, så gör vi fortfarande bedömningar av talarens personliga egenskaper och kvalitéer baserade på talarens brytning. Dessa uppfattningar baseras i allt väsentligt på de kollektiva stereotyper rörande karaktärsdrag som associeras med vissa nationaliteter. Den allmänna bristen på kunskap rörande kulturella skillnader i dialogstrategier skapar komplikationer, kan ha betydelse för hur den utlandsfödde talaren blir bedömd och kan därmed i förlängningen också äventyra rättssäkerheten. Eftersom tolken dessutom i de allra flesta fall har svenska som andraspråk kan perceptionen av dennes utländska brytning ytterligare bidra till hur den tolkade blir bedömd. Detta kan ytterligare bidra till att sätta vissa invandrargrupper i en dubbelt ofördelaktig situation i en rättslig kontext.

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