

SLICE Experimental strand meeting

Copenhagen February 24-25, 2014

Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to strengthen contact and mutual support between SLICE members who are presently carrying out, or preparing for carrying out, 'SLICE experimental studies of language attitudes'.

In the invitation to the meeting, the basic concern of such studies was spelled out as follows:

SLICE experimental studies aim to obtain data which can be compared across communities, built on distinctions concerning the possible existence of...

* two language-ideological systems which may differ largely depending on the **elicitation conditions in terms of levels of awareness or consciousness** (and the further hypothesis that subconscious attitudes are important to language (de)standardization processes in ways that conscious attitudes are not)

* two subconscious evaluative dimensions to do with **social values in terms of 'superiority vs. dynamism'** (a distinction which, hypothetically, emerges from the restructuring of the public sphere – and of the public/private relationship – as the modern media universe is added to the institutions of the traditional establishment).

Thus, the overarching questions which framed the contributions and discussions focused on how to conceptualise and operationalise these basic SLICE distinctions in our different communities:

(1) How do we investigate whether attitudes differ at different **levels of awareness or consciousness** – in order to establish the possible existence of two language-ideological systems with different impact on language variation and change, including (de)standardization processes?

(2) How do we investigate whether subconsciously offered attitudes (if such attitudes can be obtained) differ in terms of **superiority vs. dynamism** values – in order to shed light on the relevance of this value distinction for the study of language variation and change, including (de)standardization processes?

Participants

Quite a few and quite different communities were represented at the meeting, yielding an intriguing pool of experiences to learn from and issues to be solved. Three different 'stages' in the process of establishing and completing SLICE experimental work were represented by the following people, who all had prepared presentations of their ongoing or planned for projects:

(1) People who have had funding for some time and are somewhere in the process of collecting and analyzing data

- **Helge Sandøy**, studies in western Norway.
- **Loreta Vaicekauskienė**, studies all over Lithuania.

(2) People who have recently obtained funding and are somewhere in the process of preparing for collecting and analyzing data

- **Therese Leinonen**, studies in Swedish-language Finland.
- **Benedikte Vardøy**, studies in Russia.

(3) People who have prepared project proposals and are applying for funding

- **Christoph Purschke**, studies in Austria.
- **Lena Wenner**, studies in Sweden.
- **Rosa Doublet**, studies in Eastern Norway

Stefan Grondelaers presented results from his own (with colleagues) efforts to empirically establish the emergence of an evaluative dimension of 'dynamism' in the language-ideological reality of the Lowlands.

In addition, several people in Copenhagen participated with their knowledge about SLICE experimental studies in general, and in Denmark in particular: **Frans Gregersen, Jacob Thøgersen, Marie Maegaard, Nicolai Phrao, Nikolas Coupland**, and **Tore Kristiansen** – including also **Ursula Ritzau**, previously a student of sociolinguistics in Copenhagen, now working in Zürich and planning a language attitudes project there.