

Influence from English: The Nordic experience and experiment

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Modern loanwords (import words) in the languages of the Nordic countries

The aim

- A. comparative survey of the treatment of modern loanwords (usage and norms)
- B. gain insight into language attitudes



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Modern loanwords (import words) in the languages of the Nordic countries

Project design, topics:

A: the volume of loanwords in the individual languages

B: the frequency and usage of native substitute forms

C: the adaptation of loanwords to the domestic languages w.r.t.
i) morphology, ii) pronunciation and iii) spelling

D: official standardization tradition

E: overt and covert attitudes towards loanwords and substitute forms

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Modern loanwords in the languages of the Nordic countries

<http://folk.uib.no/hnohs/MIN/>

Project design, laboratory:

- Icelandic
- Faroese
- Norwegian
- Danish
- Sweden-Swedish
- Finland-Swedish
- Finnish

(Modern = after 1945)

Initiator: The co-operative body of Nordic language boards

Financed by various Nordic research councils

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Data

A: loanwords from a database of 2,6 mill. textwords from 19 newspapers from 1975 and 2000

B: contrasting frequencies of 40 pairs of loanwords vs. substitute words in already established databases (newspapers from the 1990's)

C: same words as in A

D: historical documents

E: 264 in-depth interviews, 6000 interviews in a Gallup poll, MGT with 4200 respondents

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Studies

- 30 scholars from all Nordic countries
- 8 MA-theses
- 4 doctoral theses

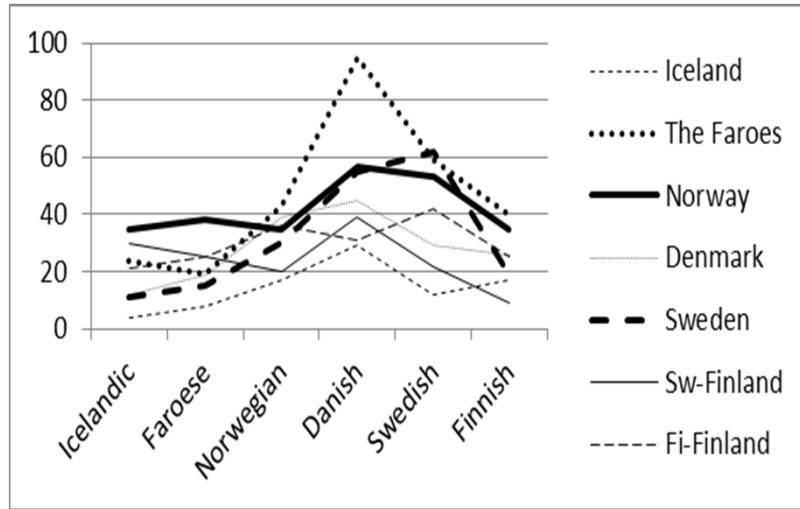
- series of books (13 volumes so far): *Moderne importord i språka i Norden*, Oslo: Novus
- IJSL 204
- Nordic Journal of English Studies 2-2004
- articles

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Nordic stereotypes



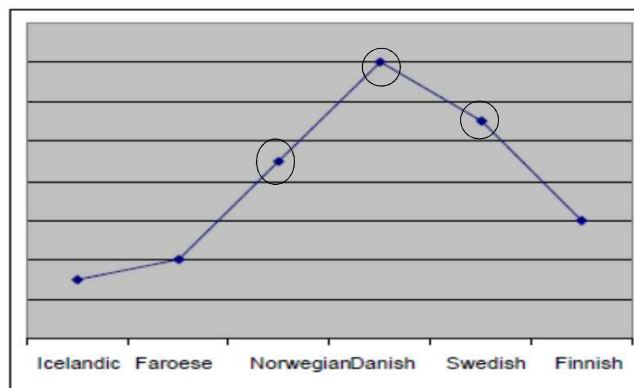
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Common Nordic stereotypes

Average:



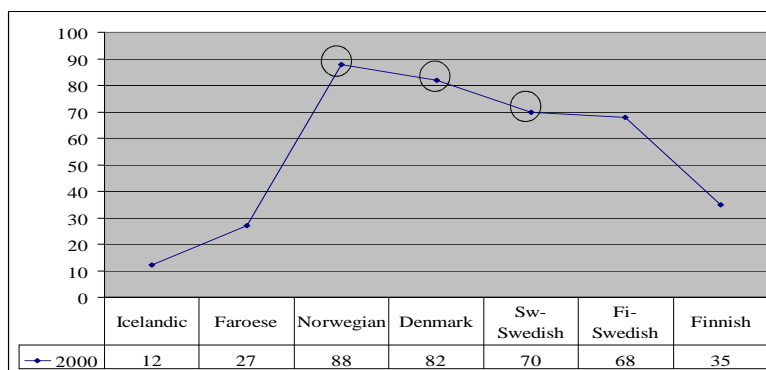
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Frequency of loanwords Newspapers 2000

- Loanwords per 10,000 text words:

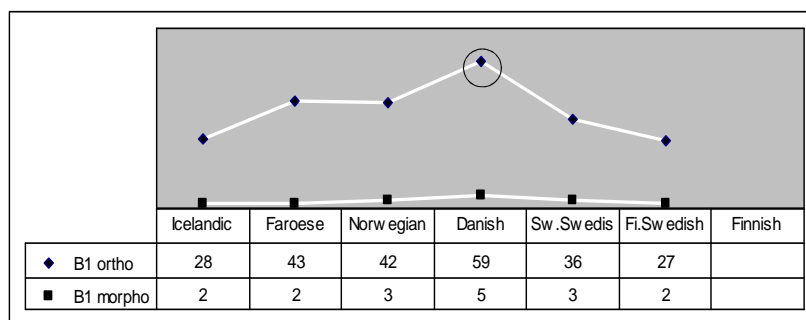


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Purism/openness in written language, spelling and morphology



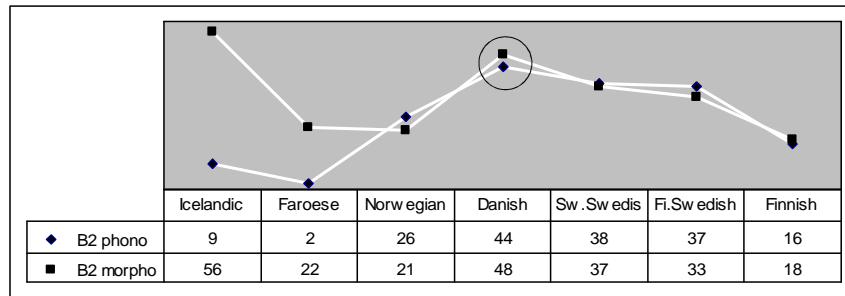
Percentage of non-adapted forms in editorial newspaper texts

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Purism/openness in spoken language, phonology and morphology



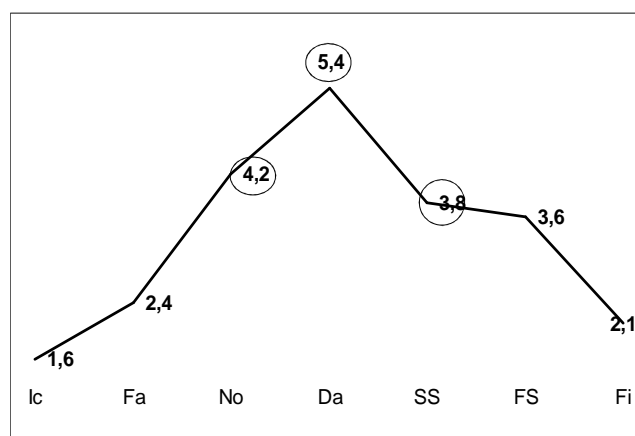
Percentage of non-adapted forms in editorial newspaper texts

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The Nordic profile of openness to influence



Average of rank number in the previous tables

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Purism on different structural levels A typology

	Iceland	Faroe Islands	Norwegian	Denmark	Sweden	Sw-Finland	F-Finland
Morphological							
Spelling							
Phonetic							
Lexical							

Types of exoglotic purism (Shading = purism)

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Language awareness

(overt attitudes in Gallup poll, questions on a general level)

- To what degree do you agree to the following claims:
'People use far too many English words nowadays'
'One ought to create new [national] words to replace the English words that enter our language'
'The best thing should be that English was the common mother-tongue for all human beings'
- What is your attitude to using English as the working-place language in national enterprises.
- + some questions on the usage of some specific words

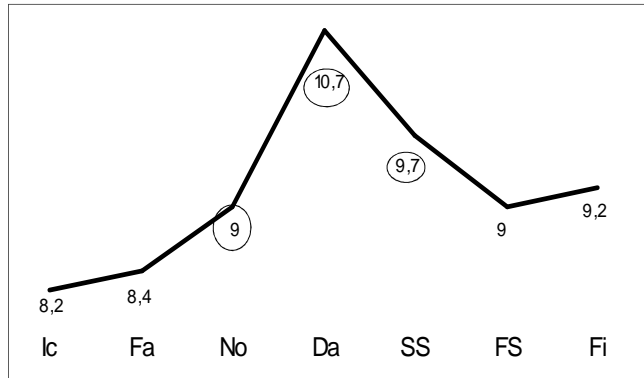
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Language awareness

(Overt attitudes in Gallup poll,
Questions on a general level:



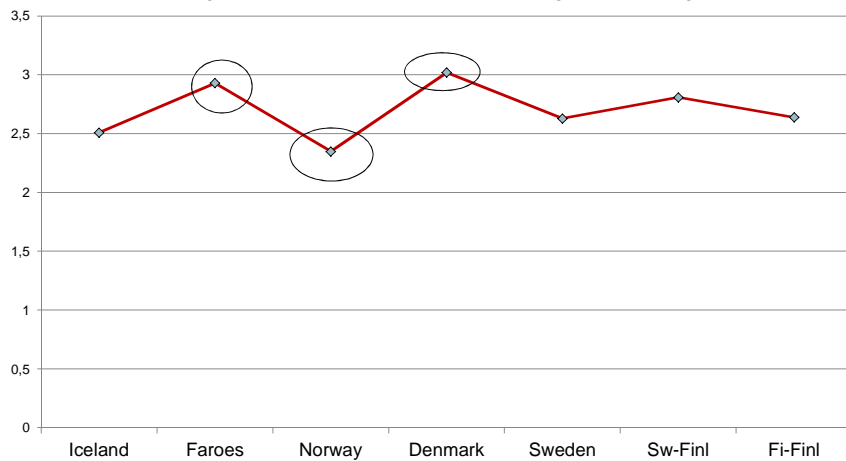
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“Too many English words nowadays.’ To what degree do you agree?” (Gallup poll)

NB: high value = openness towards English = not agree



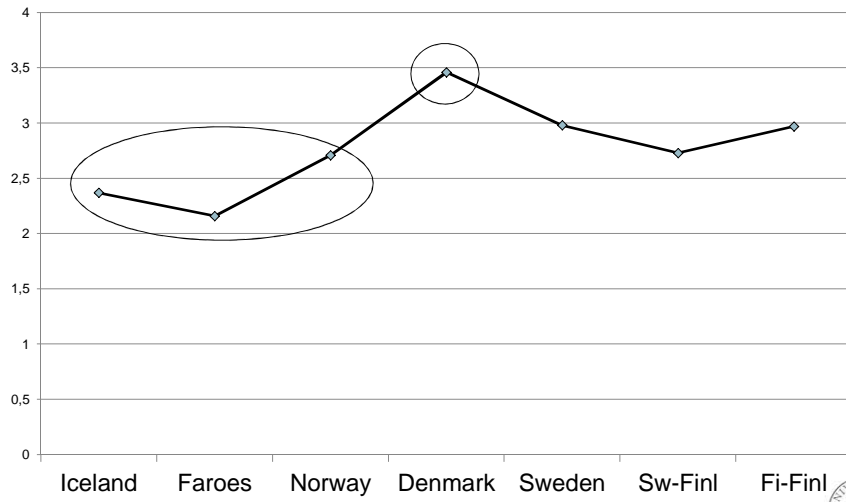
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"Ought to create new words to substitute for the English words" (Gallup poll)

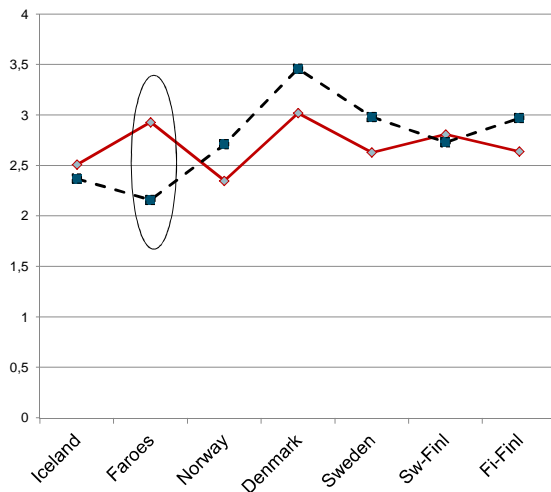
NB: high values = negative to the claim = do not agree



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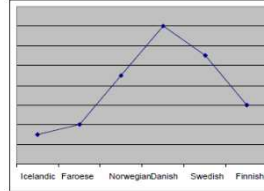


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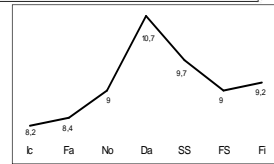


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- Stereotypes:



- General attitudes:



OBS: Neither stereotypes nor attitudes agree to actual language use

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Overt attitudes

When people answer to general questions in a Gallup poll:

- are the answers an echo of official discourse?
- do people demonstrate a self-image?

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Overt attitudes - an echo of official discourse?

- Icelandic language board:
strong purism, language use shall reflect/follow official prescriptive norms
- Faroese language board:
strong purism against Danish words
- Norwegian and Swedish language boards:
clear recommendation of "national" words and spelling, but no consistent purism in official norms
- Danish language board:
very liberal, official norms shall reflect language use

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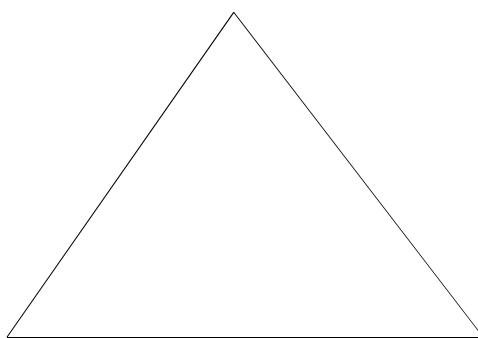


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Language awareness / attitudes

- "Preston's triangle"

language use



overt attitudes/
conscious attitudes

subconscious
attitudes

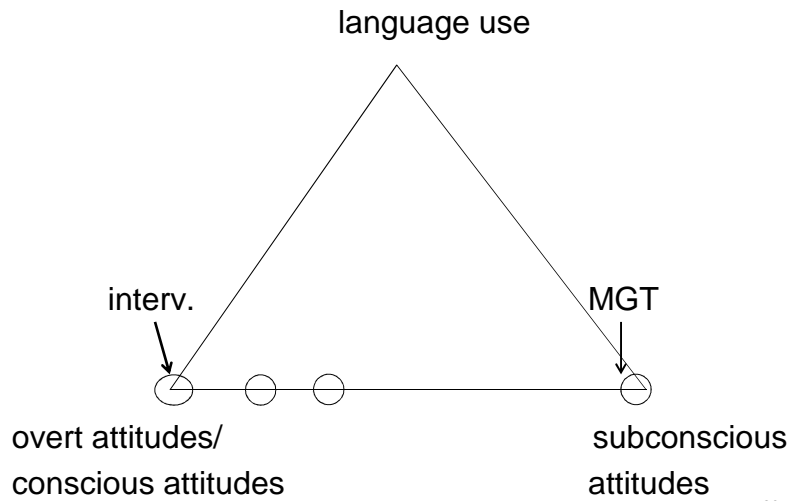
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Language awareness / attitudes

- "Preston's triangle"



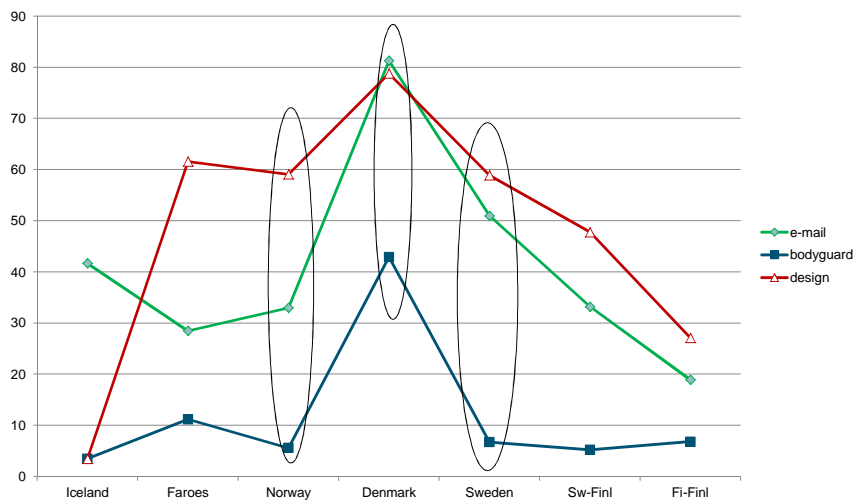
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Questions on concrete words: Do you use

....?



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Linguists' self-image

Olle Josephson's test (1999):

	«Too many foreign words in Swedish» - agree	Container - acceptable	Tejp/tape - acceptable	Juice - acceptable	Mejla/mail - acceptable	Nerd/nörd - acceptable
Laymen	67	91	96	96	21	30
Linguists	25	89	99	93	71	84

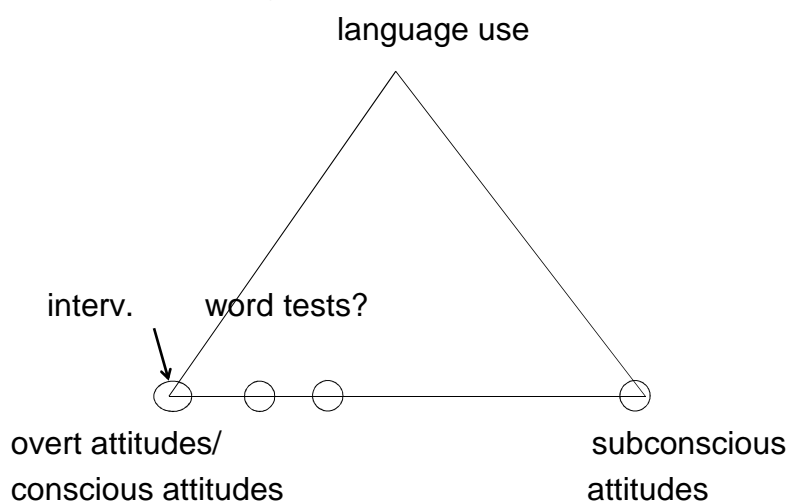
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Language awareness / attitudes

- "Preston's triangle"



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- To what extent are language attitudes a product of language practice? And not the other way around!

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Arguments

- Icelanders: important to create an Icelandic technical terminology as well as an Icelandic general vocabulary (Has a democratic effect) (OBS: Tradition of translating terminology since about 1920.)
- Faroese: important to create Faroese words generally, however, equally important not to have a Faroese terminology in technical/special language. (Leads to isolation) (OBS: No tradition of or capacity to translate terminology.)

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Degree of use and of acceptance on various domains

Reported in interviews

- "What is the use of loan words in the following domains?" (Scale 1-5)
- "What do you think about the use of loan words on these domains?" (Scale: bad= 1, good = 5)

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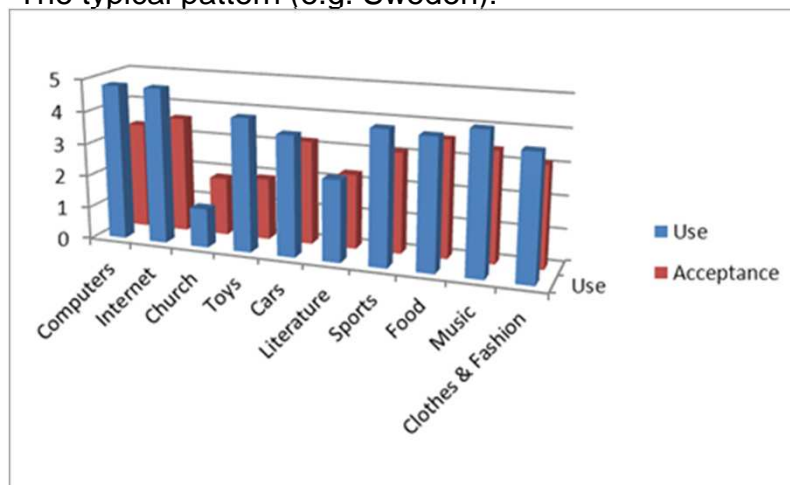


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Degree of use and of acceptance on various domains

Reported in interviews

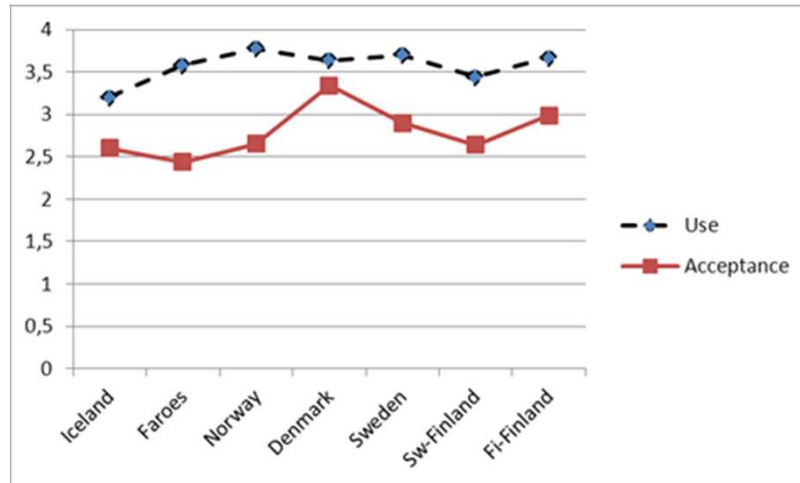
- The typical pattern (e.g. Sweden):



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Averages (of all domains): Use and acceptance

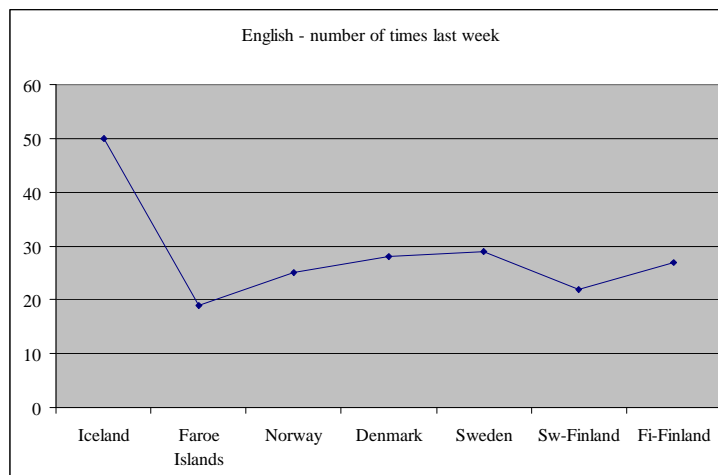


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An effect of contact with English?



Frequency of English use last week

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Social background / 'Too many Engl. words'

	Iceland	Faroes	Norway	Denmark	Sweden	Sw-Finl	Fi-Finl
Age	Y>M>E	Y>M>E	Y>M>E	Y>M>E	Y>M>E	Y>E	Y>M>E
Gender	M > W	M > W	M > W	M > W		M > W	
Income	H>M>L	H>M>L	H>M>L	H>M>L	H>M>L		
Education	H>M*>L	H>M>L	H>M>L	H>M>L	H>M>L		
Ideology	I>S		I>S	I>S	I>S	I>S	I>S

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