Globalisation, attitudes towards English and party-political affiliation – The case of Denmark

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Abstract
In this paper, we explore the possibility that attitudes toward the use of English in Denmark vary according to party-political affiliation, and that this in turn can help us understand the meanings and values that are associated with English in Denmark today. Traditionally, attitudes towards English have been thought of in terms of a unidimensional axis in which English as opportunity is seen in opposition to English as threat. Our analysis, which is based on a representative questionnaire survey (n ≈ 850), shows that these two conceptualisations do not in fact form a unidimensional scale, but a two-dimensional space. We analyse the respondents' declared political affiliation in relation to their positioning in this space, and find that attitudes towards English should be thought of in terms of two axes, 'national protectionism' as one and 'support for market economy' as the other.

Keywords: Language attitudes, Language policy, English in Denmark, Political compass, Globalisation, Survey data, Factor analysis, General Linear models.

1. Introduction

Since the end of the Second World War, English has enjoyed a special status among foreign languages in Denmark. As an example, we can look at the curricula for primary schools. Already in 1960, the Teaching Guide for Primary Schools [*Undervisningsvejledning for Folkeskolen*] suggests that "It will probably be appropriate, in accordance with previous practice, to choose English as the compulsory foreign language and German as the second foreign language" (Undervisningsministeriet [The Ministry of

Education] 1960:189, authors' translation). From 2014, the teaching of English was introduced as early as the 1st grade.[1]

Since the end of the Cold War, the growing internationalisation of Danish society – for example in the media landscape – has allowed Danes to follow news from all over the world (often in English). In addition, the increased integration of the European Union (EU) has led to greater worker and student mobility. For example, it is no longer uncommon in major cities for service staff in shops and cafés to speak English instead of Danish. Finally, the development of the internet and related (mobile) technologies has virtually revolutionised the way media is consumed – again often in English (see Lønsmann, Mortensen & Thøgersen 2022 for further discussion).

English is thus not just a foreign language used in conversations with native speakers, or used as a lingua franca when Danish speakers speak to non-Danish speakers; English also plays an important role in the everyday lives of Danes in Denmark. Related to the influence of English on the life of Danes, the influence from English on the Danish language (as opposed to the influence on Danish society) has been investigated in a number of studies. The projects Modern Import Words in the Languages of the Nordic Region [*Moderne Importord i Språka i Norden*] (Selback & Sandøy 2007) and Modern Import Words in Danish [*Moderne Importord i Dansk*] (Heidemann Andersen & Jarvad 2018) have shown that about 2% of the words in Danish newspapers are English borrowings; and in Danish-language TV the figure is somewhat higher (Heidemann Andersen 2020). If you go for a walk in a Danish city, you will likely notice that the proportion of English texts and names visible in public space can be significantly higher still (Heidemann Andersen & Sandst 2022). This has led some researchers to suggest that we should no longer perceive English as a foreign language in Denmark, but rather as a second language that Danes also use in their dealings with each other (see e.g. Gottlieb 2020, Lønsmann, Mortensen & Thøgersen 2022). As the Teaching Guide for English [*Faghæfte Engelsk*] (Børne- og Undervisningsministeriet [The Ministry of Children and Education] 2019) puts it:

> English is a global language, spoken by many people around the world
> as their first language and used as a second language or lingua franca

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[1] https://www.ft.dk/samling/20121/almdel/BUU/bilag/246/1257857/index.htm.

> by even more. The use of English is also widespread in Denmark. English is also to a large extent the common digital language used in social media, games and films. (Børne- og Undervisningsministeriet [Ministry of Children and Education] 2019:37, authors' translation)

It is one thing to observe how much English is used in Denmark. It is another to inquire into the Danes'[2] attitudes to English in their everyday lives, or, to put it another way, what values they attach to the presence of English in their everyday lives.

In the Nordic[3] countries, when dealing with attitudes towards the presence of English in society, the influence of the English language has often been conceptualised either as 'a threat' or as 'an opportunity', borrowing from the title of Höglin (2002): "Engelska språket som hot och tillgång i Norden" [*The English Language as Threat and Opportunity in the Nordic Region*]. On the one hand English is seen as a *threat* to the Nordic languages and societies. It is feared that the process of 'functional elaboration' (to use Haugen's 1966 term) characteristic of national languages will be impaired, preventing the Nordic languages from being "complete, culture-defining languages" [*komplette og samfundsbærende sprog*] (Kulturministeriet [Ministry of Culture] 2003); that this may lead to a loss of cultural distinctiveness and cultural heritage; and that Nordic societies will to some extent submit to the cultural imperialism of English-speaking societies, especially the USA (Haberland et al. 1991).

On the other hand, English is seen as an *opportunity* for Nordic societies and populations. People in the Nordic countries by tradition have had relatively high levels of proficiency in English, considering that English has no official second-language status (Peterson 2022). This is seen as a competitive advantage in trade with the rest of the world. By the same token, proficiency in English represents an expansion of educational and career opportunities for the individual. Because their English competencies

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[2] A note of terminology: We use "Danes" here to refer to people residing in Denmark irrespective of their ethnicity, place of birth or citizenship status.

[3] Another note of terminology: Our study focusses on Denmark and Danes. Results from other Nordic/Scandinavian societies are used only as background. For our purposes, the distinction between *Scandinavia* (i.e. Norway, Sweden, Denmark) vs. *Norden* (those three plus (at least) Iceland and Finland) is not important so we use the two interchangeably. We will not go into the reasons why (for political, historical or linguistic reasons) it may be beneficial to distinguish between the two. For a discussion, see Vikør (2004), Östman & Thøgersen (2010).

are construed as relatively high, residents in the Nordic countries are perceived to have good opportunities for international education and training or for starting an international career. In the words of Peterson (2022:1): "In the Nordic countries, widespread proficiency in English is positioned as a positive and even critical component of overall global competitiveness and competence".

Part of the research into attitudes towards English in Denmark has involved determining which groups were relatively more sceptical of the influence of English (i.e. more likely to see English as 'a threat') and which groups were more positive (more likely to see English as 'an opportunity') (see Preisler 1999, Kristiansen & Vikør 2006, Thøgersen & Preisler 2023). Findings have shown consistently that the young, the highly educated, people in employment and males are relatively more positive; while the elderly, the less educated, the unemployed, retirees and females are more sceptical. Kristiansen (2006a) interprets these differences in terms of perceived positions of strength vs. weakness in a rapidly changing society. The young, affluent, highly educated males who are also the most confident speakers of English view English as a further strengthening of their social position; the older, less well-off, retirees who are less confindent speakers of English view English as an intrusion and a further threat to their already vulnerable position. To Kristiansen (2006a:114) this is "entirely in line with our (common) expectations, and hence there is no reason to use space on painstakingly developing the obvious explanations" (authors' translation). Similar results have been found in other Nordic countries. Leppänen et al. (2011) found that the 'English have-nots' (who "do not know any English; they do not use it and as far as they are concerned they do not need it. Hence, English means very little to them") "consist of the older respondents […], often living in the countryside […] with a low level of education […] and doing mainly manual labour" (Leppänen et al. 2011:165). The 'English have-it-alls', conversely, are younger, urban, mostly university-educated and mostly managers and experts.

In this study, we also look at English as both 'a threat' and an 'opportunity'. But instead of seeing these two understandings of English usage as opposites on a one-dimensional scale, we shall argue for seeing them as a two-dimensional space (more on the reasons for this below). And rather than once again seeking to establish which groups are more English-positive and English-negative, we ask how 'English as threat' and 'English

as opportunity' are related to party-political affiliation. To someone familiar with the Danish political landscape and the policies of the (many) different parties, we believe that this gives us a good illustration of the indexical 'meaning'[4] of English to Danes today. For readers not familiar with the Danish political parties, we provide a primer below.

In addition to examining the perception of 'English as threat' and 'English as opportunity', we also ask about respondents' attitudes towards related topics such as the influence of 'English as a corporate language' and as a 'language of instruction', respondents' attitudes towards financial support for 'Danish-language cultural products', towards 'English language teaching in schools' and their 'norms for English competences' – that is, the level of English competencies that should be expected of (other) Danes.

The overall research question for the article is thus: What values and meanings do the presence of the English language in Denmark hold for Danes today? To address this, a quantitative method is employed using statistical analyses of data representative of the Danish (adult) population, deriving from a large-scale questionnaire survey.

2. Methodology

In the spring of 2022, in collaboration with Statistics Denmark, a questionnaire on English in Denmark was distributed to approximately 2000 randomly selected Danish citizens. The questionnaire as well as the cover letter were written in Danish, and hence respondents who completed the questionnaire will have had at least some receptive competence in Danish. Approx. 5% of respondents indicated a home language different

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[4] C.S. Peirce introduced the distinction between signs as *index*, *icon* and *symbol* in which the *index* has meaning by way of causal connection (e.g. smoke *indexes* fire) and *symbol* has meaning by convention (the letters spelling out "f-i-r-e" *symbolize* the phenomenon fire). When we speak of *index* and *indexical meaning* here, we use the words in the sense introduced by Silverstein (2003) who speaks of 'orders of indexicality'. In this sense *indexes* can point to *indexes* which are themselves *indexes* to the n-th order. For example, speaking English may *index* the speaker's nationality; their nationality may again *index* their economic status and values (they may be e.g. relatively affluent 'first-worlders' from a capitalist society, etc.). In other contexts, speaking English may *index* a particular educational background or career, which may again *index* their status and values, and so forth. When we speak of 'index' and 'indexical meaning' it should be taken in this looser 'post-Peircian' sense, not in a strictly Peircian sense.

from Danish, and a few responses were written in English, suggesting that some respondents preferred writing in English rather than in Danish. Notwithstanding, the majority of respondents will have been native speakers of Danish.

2.1. Respondents

Participants were selected via the 'CPR register' (the Central Citizen Registry), and the invitation to participate in the survey was sent to the participants' electronic mail boxes for mail from the authorities, *eBoks*. Approximately 800 respondents filled in the questionnaire online. In order to increase participation and especially to minimise non-response bias (i.e. the effect of certain groups being more likely than others to choose not to respond to a circulated questionnaire), some of the selected respondents were also contacted by telephone, after which they chose either to respond online or to answer the questions by telephone. This led to a total of approximately 850 (more or less) completed questionnaires. Despite the efforts to minimise non-response bias, this was not always possible. The actual respondents are older than the national average, and so there are more pensioners than might have been expected. In the analyses below, this probably does not matter much because we are not trying to generalise distributions in the sample to distributions in society as a whole. We are not trying to determine, for example, what proportion of the Danish population is 'English positive' or 'English negative' (an extrapolation that would be very sensitive to variations in the representativeness of the sample). Instead, we are analysing how political beliefs may influence attitudes towards the use of English in Denmark. This kind of question makes it less critical if the relative size of a social group exceeds or is slightly smaller than in the population as a whole.

2.2. Questions

The questions which form the dependent variables in this study are organised into six thematic blocks:

- 'English as threat'
- 'English as opportunity'
- Areas of practice (or 'domains') in which English is used
- Support for Danish-language cultural product

- English in school
- Norms of English competence

These themes are selected because they represent various aspects of the debate about English presented above. This was a debate which was highly active in the 1990s and 2000s, and to some extent, the echoes of which are still felt today (see e.g. Lønsmann, Mortensen & Thøgersen 2022, Mortensen & Haberland 2021). The position of English in Danish society as well as the ideologies surrounding English which are entwined in debates over 'internationalisation' and 'globalisation' are still present (Mortensen forthc.). The themes 'English as threat' and 'as opportunity' are the typical way English has been discussed, and they are themes which are couched in debates about social justice (i.e. positions of strength and weakness) and economy. The theme 'areas of practice' resonates with the fear of 'domain loss' which was hotly debated in the early 2000s and warned against by for example Haberland et al. (1991) as mentioned above. 'Support for Danish-language cultural products' marks the opposite, a deliberately protectionist culture policy in which market forces are being reigned in. The theme 'English in school' highlights the relative position of Danish and English in formal training, and in an indirect way the status of English as a *de facto* second language in Denmark. The same can be said to be the theme of 'norms of English competence' which asks respondents what level of English competence should be demanded of people in Denmark. The questions range from the very general and quite abstract (e.g. "English is a threat to Danish culture") to the more concrete (e.g. on the number of teaching hours allocated to English in relation to Danish).

It is important to bear in mind that all questions are ideological or political questions posed in the abstract. The study is in that sense an opinion poll. No attempt is made to investigate how respondents would actually act in a real-life situation; also no attempt is made to investigate so-called subconscious attitudes with indirect measures (see e.g. Kristiansen 2006b, Thøgersen & Kristiansen 2006). The respondents must have been aware that they were expressing attitudes and opinions, and hence 'social desirability bias' must be taken into account. That is, respondents are affected by their beliefs about what is a desirable (or 'politically correct') response. In this case, we posit that social desirability bias is not a problem. Whether respondents give a certain answer because

they truly, deeply believe it to be the case, or because they are reproducing ideological standpoints they perceive to be socially desirable, they are still expressing certain ideologies that are maintained by different opposing groups and interests in society.

Each theme is examined using a block of 2-4 questions. The internal consistency between questions in each block and between questions in related blocks is examined using Factor Analysis and reliability tests (Cronbach's *alpha*). The reasoning is that responses to a single question are highly sensitive to the specific wording of a question. Some respondents may misinterpret terminology or have strong responses to for example a modal like 'should' or 'must'. If, however, a statistical analysis of responses to several questions shows correlations between responses, that is, a high level of agreement on one question correlates with a high (or for that matter low) level of agreement on other questions which are thematically related, there is a high likelihood that respondents are in fact reacting to the same underlying, latent, construct. This is what is in psychometrics referred to as 'construct validation', and it is indicated by: "evidence that different indicators of theoretically similar or overlapping constructs are strongly interrelated; for example, symptoms purported to be manifestations of a single mental disorder load on the same factor" (Brown 2015:2). According to Brown (2015:1): "CFA [Confirmatory Factor Analysis] is almost always used during the process of scale development to examine the latent structure of a test instrument (e.g. a questionnaire)", and this is also the practice we follow here. A further benefit of Factor Analysis is that it converts a number of ordinal-level scales (e.g. four questions with four levels each) into one more fine-grained ratio scale. The resulting scale is not a true ratio scale (there are still only so many discrete levels on the scale), but it is an approximation, and we use this approximation to conduct parametric statistical analyses (e.g. ANOVA and T-tests).

The question formulations are highly inspired by, and in some cases repeat, the questions asked by Preisler in an earlier study (Preisler 1999). The purpose of this approach was to facilitate a longitudinal study of Danes' attitudes to English, which has been published elsewhere (Thøgersen & Preisler 2023). In the present study, however, we look exclusively at the 2022 survey and in particular at the relationship between attitudes and party-political standpoint - something that was not asked

about in Preisler's original survey. In the following, we describe the question blocks one by one.

2.2.1. 'English as threat' and 'English as opportunity'
The perception of 'English as threat' and as 'opportunity' was investigated by means of a total of six questions which had the following introduction in common: 'To which extent do you agree that the presence of the English language in everyday life...'. Answers were given on a 4-level Likert-type scale with the labels 'strongly agree', 'somewhat agree', 'somewhat disagree' and 'strongly disagree'.

- 'threatens the Danish language?'
- 'threatens Danish culture?'
- 'threatens other foreign languages in Denmark?'
- 'is a practical consequence of greater interaction with the rest of the world?'
- 'makes Danes more competitive internationally?'
- 'broadens the cultural horizon of Danes?'

Here as in other questions, we tried to specify that the questions regarded 'the English language' as opposed to 'English loanwords in Danish'. There were in fact no questions at all in the questionnaire which focused on English words in Danish (as opposed to e.g. Kristiansen & Vikør 2006, Heidemann Andersen & Jarvad 2018). From the free-text responses we received to other questions in the questionnaire, this seems to have been understood by the respondents. Still, we cannot entirely reject the possibility that some respondents have at some point had English loanwords in mind.

A Factor Analysis (see Table 1) shows that the six questions do not form a one-dimensional scale with 'English-positive' at one end and 'English-negative' at the other. In other words, knowing what a person answers to the 'English as threat' questions, does not allow us to predict what she will answer to the 'English as opportunity' questions. This lack of a straightforward relationship is also evident in the analysis of the correlation between the two dimensions. There is only a very weak negative correlation (-.081) between the Factor made up of the first three questions and the Factor made up of the last three questions, despite the

fact that the Factor Analysis was carried out using a rotation method (Direct Oblimin) which does not limit the correlation between factors.

	Factor	
	1 **'Threat'**	**2** **'Opportunity'**
Threatens the Danish language	**.879**	-.047
Threatens Danish culture	**.856**	-.108
Threatens other foreign languages in Denmark	**.740**	.112
Is a practical consequence of greater interaction with the rest of the world	.183	**.754**
Makes Danes more competitive internationally	-.075	**.840**
Broadens the cultural horizons of Danes	-.134	**.738**
Cronbach's *alpha*	.772	.666

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalisation.

Table 1: Factor Analysis of 'threat' and 'opportunity' questions.

Based on these results, we constructed two new scales, 'English as threat' and 'English as opportunity', which are the Factor scores for each of the two Factors for each respondent (we used SPSS version 28's 'Regressions' method). The Factor scores can be thought of as a weighted average of the three questions included in the Factor, that is, an average that takes into account that some questions are closer to describing the underlying attitude than other questions. The Factor scores are constructed so that the average for the whole population always equals 0. For an introduction to Factor Analysis, see Brown (2015); for a hands-on guide to SPSS' implementation of Factor Analysis, see Field (2013, chapter 17). Cronbach's *alpha* reported in the bottom row is a measure of the reliability of the resultant scale. Cronbach introduced the measure in 1951, and there has been and is still intense debate about the relevance of the measure and the appropriate cut-off point. A rule-of-thumb reported for example in Field (2013:709f.), is that an *alpha* of .7 to .8 is an acceptable value.

2.2.2. 'Domains'
The concept of 'domain' is an often used (see e.g. Jarvad 2001, Kulturministeriet [Ministry of Culture] 2003) and often criticised (see e.g. Preisler 2005, 2009, Haberland 2005, 2019) concept in the exploration of the influence of English in the Nordic countries. The domain concept entails that one should not see English loanwords in the Nordic languages

as a threat to those languages. What should be considered a threat is rather the possibility that certain social and communicative 'domains' could be more or less 'taken over' by English. This has been called 'domain loss'. In particular, the 'domain of business' and the 'domain of science' have been referred to as such 'vulnerable' domains under threat from English (Jarvad 2001, Kulturministeriet [Ministry of Culture] 2003:10-11).

The critics of this view point out that 'domain' is used as an undefined, subjective and generalising social category, which is therefore often misleading (see Preisler 2005, 2009, Haberland 2005, 2019). Both 'scientific language' and 'business language' refer to a multiplicity of different *practices* within each 'domain'. Each practice is distinctively defined, for example, by its values, goals, activities, social hierarchies, recipient groups, communication patterns, and *language use*, and when several pratices combine to complement each other within the same social community or structure, for example, a university, a hospital or a business corporation, this enables us to delimit and describe such a community in concrete and objective terms, as an *area of practice.* The use of English in for example science or business has in most cases either a lingua franca function (i.e. English allows communication between colleagues who would otherwise not be able to communicate) or English functions as a symbol of identity and value (e.g. in marketing or in self-presentation). There are very few 'domains' in Denmark which in themselves, by law or convention, dictate the use of English. In fact there are few domains where language is dictated at all; the court of law being one case in which the use of Danish is regulated by law (Karrebæk & Kirilova 2021). When the use of English is functionally and/or individually conditioned, a personal and pragmatic choice, it makes little sense to talk about Danish 'losing domains' to English. This is also to say that when we argue that English has become a 'second language' in Denmark, it has nothing to do with the concept of 'domain loss' (i.e. that Danish should have 'lost domains' to English). Put bluntly, a language does not *possess* domains; language users *choose* a language for the task at hand depending primarily on the interlocutors they are addressing. To quote Preisler (2010:111): "'domain' and 'domain loss' are pseudo terms […]. They have their root in a metaphorical conflation of language and nation and a false perception of linguistic sovereignty which can be violated" (authors' translation).

Still, in spite of our critique of the 'domain' concept, we have opted to use the word 'domain' because 'domain' – as opposed to for example 'area of practice' – is a well-established *informal* term that most people can relate to.

In this study, in addition to (the language of) 'business' and (the language of) 'science', we include a third example of a 'domain', that is, (the language of) 'instruction in primary school'. The topic of 'domain' was operationalised using three questions, one for each of the mentioned 'domains':

- 'In some Danish companies, English has become the working language. What is your opinion on this?'
- 'In some Danish higher education programmes, English has become the language of instruction. What is your opinion on this?'
- 'It has been proposed that pupils in lower secondary school should be taught in English, as the language of instruction, in subjects other than English, such as geography. What is your opinion on this?'

There is a high degree of correlation between the answers to the three questions (Cronbach's *alpha* = .771). Again, we used the Factor score as a measure of the individual respondent's attitude to the domain questions.

2.2.3. Support for Danish-language cultural products
As described above, the perception of 'English as threat' is closely related to a perception of Danish culture being threatened by English-language culture and cultural products. This perceived threat is largely driven by market forces. The Danish-language cultural market is a relatively small one. Marketing English-language cultural products (e.g. books, films, magazines, TV) in English to Danish consumers is economically beneficial. Conversely, corporations producing Danish-language cultural products to a small market do not have the economic potential to compete with 'international' English-language corporations on production value on pure market terms. The upshot is that Danish-language culture (literature, theatre and the film industry)[5] and media (e.g. newspapers, magazines, TV and radio)[6] are state subsidised. The subsidies have traditionally not had

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[5] https://kum.dk/kulturomraader/kultur-og-kunststoette/kunststoette
[6] https://slks.dk/omraader/medier/tilskud-til-medier/

language stipulations, meaning that English-language films produced in Denmark are eligible for subsidies – in other words the subsidies are supporting the film industry rather than any particular language. This policy has been challenged by Dansk Folkeparti[7] [The Danish People's Party] in Parliament debates. The party has suggested subsidising only films in Danish, Faeroese and Greenlandic.[8]

When it comes to written media such as newspapers and magazines, the subsidies are entwined in ideals about public debates and democracy. "The purpose is to contribute to democratic debate, cultural and societal information […]."[9] (authors' translation). No language stipulations are made, but stipulations *could* be made in line with Dansk Folkeparti's [The Danish People's Party] suggestion regarding film subsidies. The questions pertaining to support for Danish-language cultural products pick up on this debate and ask respondents about their support for financial subsidies as well as whether language should be stipulated in the rules. We ask (in two of three questions) about financial funding to 'raise the stakes' for respondents. Asking merely if they support the idea that films should be made in Danish could give very high levels of agreement across all respondents. This would make the question in effect worthless for distinguishing between different (political) groups and ideologies.

When it comes to TV and radio, Denmark has two national broadcasters, Danish Broadcasting Corporation (DR) and TV2. Both are tax funded. TV2 supplements with commercials, while DR is not allowed to broadcast commercials and is funded exclusively by the state. Both broadcasters have clear stipulations on the use of Danish (though not necessarily Danish exclusively) (Thøgersen 2021). To Danish respondents it would seem obvious that national Danish-language radio and TV can only exist if they are subsidised. That has been the tradition going back to the founding of DR in 1925. Asking whether state-funded broadcasters should broadcast in Danish would only be stating the obvious. This

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[7] When not quoting other sources, we use the Danish names of the parties with official English names in brackets. For historical reasons some parties' names are poor reflections of the current policies of the parties (e.g. Venstre [The Liberal Party] (literally 'the left') is an economically liberal/right-wing party, and Radikale Venstre [The Social Liberals] (literally 'the radical left') is arguably the most center of all parties). This may lead to confusion if we were to use translated names.

[8] https://www.ft.dk/samling/20121/beslutningsforslag/B13/BEH1-29/forhandling.htm

[9] https://slks.dk/omraader/medier/skrevne-medier-trykteweb/bladpuljen

question is therefore posed as a question about the value of Danish radio and TV *per se* and not about whether state-funded radio and TV should have language stipulations. To sum up, we asked about respondents' attitude towards (financial) support for different kinds of Danish-language cultural products. In two of the three questions, financial support was stated explicitly, in the third only indirectly which may make the questions less than ideally comparable. All three questions begin with 'To which extent do you agree that...':

- 'only films in Danish should be eligible for Danish film funding?'
- 'only newspapers and magazines written in Danish should be eligible for media subsidies?'
- 'it is important that there are Danish-language radio and TV channels?'

Again, there is a relatively high degree of correlation between the answers to the questions (Cronbach's *alpha* = .676). The last question, about radio and TV, stands out slightly compared to the others. Its factor loading is in the order of .5, compared to the other two questions which have factor loadings in the order of .9. We can speculate that this is because the two first questions involve direct financial support for Danish-language cultural products, whereas the latter takes a more idealised non-interventionist stance. Without asking respondents about their reasoning, it is hard to know. We could have opted to omit the question or to treat it separately, but chose to keep it in with the other questions related to support for Danish-language cultural products. Again, we used the factor score as a measure of each respondent's attitude.

2.2.4. English in school

One measure of the status of English in Danish society is how important English is considered to be in primary and lower secondary school. Teaching a language mandatorily to all students shows that the language is considered important or being actively promoted to a position of importance. Thus, in the introduction above, we discussed the primary school curriculum as a measure of the role of English. And in the questionnaire, we asked respondents about their attitude by means of two questions, each beginning with 'To which extent do you agree that...':

- 'the subject of English should be given as many teaching hours as Danish in school?'
- 'the subject of English should be given more teaching hours than Danish in school?'

The correlation between the two questions is relatively high (Cronbach's *alpha* = .634), and again we used the Factor score as a measure of the individual respondent's attitude.

2.2.5. Norms of English competence

The last block of questions that we include in this study is closely related to the question of the present and future status of English in Denmark, which we briefly discussed above: whether English is a foreign or second language in Denmark. Here, the questions are about the extent to which respondents believe that (other) Danes should to be competent in English. All four questions begin with 'To which extent do you agree that all adult Danes should be able to...':

- 'speak English without any problems?'
- 'read English without any problems?'
- 'understand spoken English without any problems?'
- 'write English without any problems?'

The correlation between the answers to the four questions is extremely high (Cronbach's *alpha* = .922). So, for respondents, it is effectively the same question asked in four different ways. Again, we used the Factor score to reduce the four questions to a single measure of respondents' attitudes.

2.3. Social variables

As described above, previous studies have shown that attitudes towards English can be related to age and educational attainment in particular. These measures are also included in this study because they are found to be the best predictors of (reported) English competence and attitudes towards English (Thøgersen & Preisler 2023). However, we are particularly interested to know whether respondents' political party affiliation correlates with their answers to the attitude questions when

controlling for other factors such as age and education. We believe that party affiliation can be seen as an index for many of the socio-ideological views that may otherwise be difficult to express. Kristiansen and Vikør (2006) operationalised respondents' socio-ideological stance by asking whether respondents thought that 'solidarity' or 'individual freedom' was the most important social ideal. The underlying idea was that 'solidarity' would be chosen by traditional left-wingers, while 'individual freedom' would be chosen by traditional right-wingers.

The Danish political landscape, like that of Scandinavia in general, is "one of multi-party parliamentary democracy dominated by strong social democratic parties and consensus".[10] Historically, there were three large parties. "[T]he Right [The Conservative Party] represented landed proprietors and civil servants, the United Left [The Liberal Party] represented farmers, and the Social Democrats represented workers".[11] It is fairly easy to establish a new party, as the minimum percentage of votes necessary for a party to be represented in parliament is only 2%,[12] so it is not uncommon for parties to split up or for new parties to emerge and be elected into parliament. For example, several left-wing parties have emerged after various schisms in the traditional Marxist parties: "the Socialist People's Party (now the Green Left) was established after a rift in the Communist Party of Denmark […], the Left Wing Socialists was formed as a splinter group of the Socialist People's Party".[13] And Kristendemokraterne [The Christian Democrats] formed as a single-issue reaction to the lifting on the ban on pornography in the 1970s (Ibid.). In more recent times, several new parties have emerged around the question of immigration and multiculturalism. Dansk Folkeparti [The Danish People's Party] is "focussed on the issue of immigration and on nationalistic appeals" (Bjørklund & Andersen 1999:1). The party states on its website that its core issues are 1) tough immigration policy [stram udlændingepolitik], 2) healthcare, 3) stop for asylum seekers, 4) senior citizens, 5) law and order and 6) animal rights. Dansk Folkeparti [The Danish People's Party] can be seen as a proponent of a broader movement

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[10] https://nordics.info/themes/the-nordic-model

[11] https://www.thedanishparliament.dk/en/political-parties

[12] https://www.thedanishparliament.dk/en/democracy/elections-and-voting#AD497FE3950C4C7E8497E0DC8594CDAB

[13] https://www.thedanishparliament.dk/en/political-parties

of emerging populist anti-immigration parties. When the questionnaire was conducted, Nye Borgerlige [New Right] was the other proponent of anti-immigration policies. Since then Danmarksdemokraterne [The Denmark Democrats] have also emerged. All three of the current parties mention immigration policy as their central focus. The emergence of several anti-immigration parties is an indication of a trend affecting the entire political spectrum. In a survey reported by Bjørklund and Andersen (1999:3-4), the proportion of voters mentioning immigration as the most important issue for their party choice was "4 per cent in 1987, 8 per cent in 1994 and ends with an explosion to 14 per cent in the 1998 election survey when immigration was one of the most important single issues, mentioned by 35 per cent of the respondents as among the two or three most important issues". The 'trend' has been observed by international media as well, for example by Al-Jazeera who in relation to the most recent election in 2022 wrote that: "the governing Social Democratic party has adopted the right's anti-immigration agenda to the extent that its asylum policies have inspired European far-right parties such as Alternative for Germany (AfD) in Germany and the Sweden Democrats in Sweden".[14]
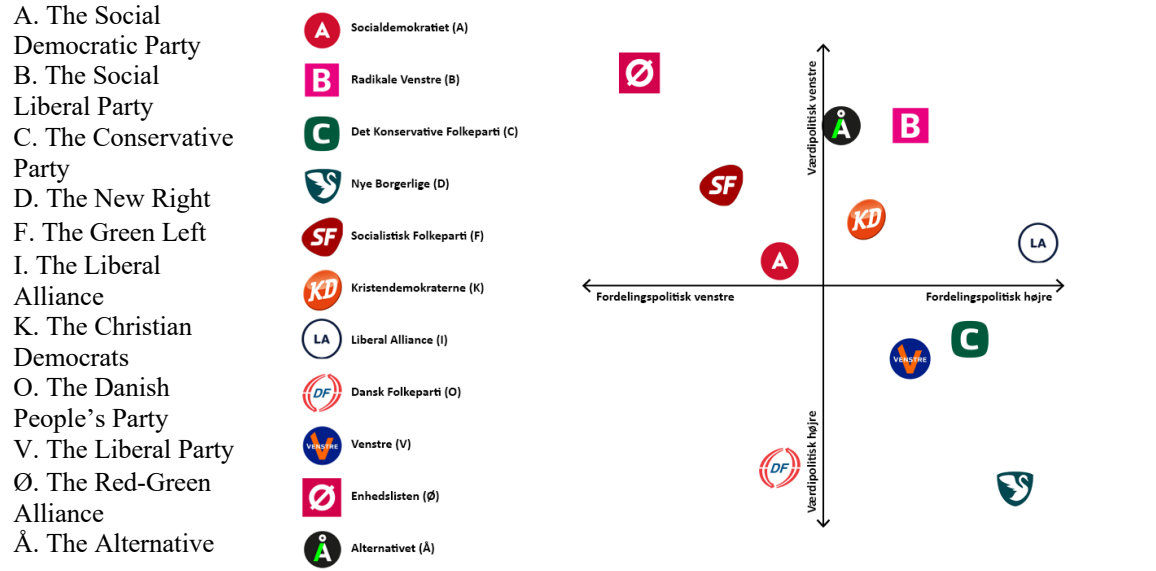
This highlights another characteristic of Danish politics, viz. the tendency for consensus and the dynamic coalitions between parties. Traditional political 'enemies' (such as Venstre [The Liberal Party] and Socialdemokratiet [The Social Democratic Party]) may form coalitions (as they have done from December 2022 and do at the time of writing, April 2024), and it is not unheard of for parties to change alliances during the negotiations following an election. Because of this 'stable instability' of the system in which traditional political enemies may form coalitions in spite of (what one would imagine to be) fundamental ideological disagreements, it can be hard to pin down exactly what a party's political line is. Can Socialdemokratiet [The Social Democratic Party] still be viewed as a social democratic party, and can Venstre [The Liberal Party] still be viewed as proponents of free markets when the two collaborate on economic policies? Additionally, because of the multiplicity of parties, it becomes possible for more complex oppositions than a simple one-dimensional left-right scale to emerge. Some analysts and political commentators have therefore argued that it is no longer meaningful to view

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[14] https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/10/25/denmark-set-to-keep-anti-migrant-policy-regardless-of-vote-result

the Danish parties on a single right–left scale. Skjæveland (2005 referring to Borre 2003) suggests a two-dimensional political space composed of 'old politics' and 'new politics'. "Old politics measures [parties'] attitudes to social reforms, distribution of income, government regulation of corporations and progressive taxation. New politics is measured as attitudes towards immigration, development aid, judicial policy (violent crime) and environmental politics"[15] Skjæveland (2005: 412, authors' translation). A party such as Dansk Folkeparti [Danish People's Party], for example, is best characterised as having a centre-left/social-democratic policy when it comes to economy (or 'old politics'), but a right-wing/nationalist policy in terms of values (or 'new politics'); and a party such as Radikale Venstre [The Social Liberals] is characterised in terms of economy by having a centre-right/social-liberal policy, but a left-wing/liberal policy in terms of values (Skjæveland 2005:418-419). Such analyses have led political commentators such as *altinget.dk*, which is a respected news website reporting on Danish politics independent of party-political affiliation (Altinget 2016), and textbook authors (Andersson 2022) to propose a two-dimensional party-political compass (see Figure 1). Rather than try to explain the history and values of each party, we refer (and will return) to this illustration of the Danish political landscape. In our analyses and discussions below, we use the Danish names for the parties, along with their letter designation, which should make it easy to locate the party in the political spectrum/spectra.

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[15] "Gammel politik måles således som holdningen til sociale reformer, indkomstudligning, statsregulering af erhvervslivet og progressiv beskatning. Ny politik måles som holdningen til indvandring, ulandshjælp, retspolitik (voldskriminalitet) og miljøpolitik".

Parties' English names as taken from the English-language website of the Danish parliament, and their official letter designation

A. The Social Democratic Party	
B. The Social Liberal Party	
C. The Conservative Party	
D. The New Right	
F. The Green Left	
I. The Liberal Alliance	
K. The Christian Democrats	
O. The Danish People's Party	
V. The Liberal Party	
Ø. The Red-Green Alliance	
Å. The Alternative	

Legend: X-axis "distributional policy" [economic policy, 'old politics'] left vs. right; Y-axis "value-policy" ['new politics'] left (top) vs. right (bottom)

Figure 1: The party-political compass according to Andersson (2022)[16].

Of course, the precise placement of each party depends to some extent on the issues on which one focuses (e.g. rights for sexual vs. ethnic minorities, economic redistribution to pensioners vs. to students, etc.). Similarly, slightly different positions may emerge depending on whether one focuses on what the parties *say during elections* as opposed what *they do/what proposals they support*. But the distribution shows a landscape where some parties seem to relate to a traditional left-right scale (most pronounced in the cases of Nye Borgerlige and Enhedslisten on opposite wings), while others are at different places on the political spectrum depending on whether focus is on economic policy or cultural/value policy (Dansk

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[16] The illustration is cited from https://portals.clio.me/dk/samfundsfag/emner/politik/det-politiske-landskab/det-nye-politiske-landskab/. We want to express our gratitude to Alinea/Clio for permission to use the illustration.

Folkeparti and Radikale Venstre have already been highlighted as examples of parties with opposing 'mixes' of economic and value policies).

In the questionnaire survey, we asked: 'Regardless of whether you have the right to vote or not, we would like to know who you would vote for if a general election took place today?' Respondents were given the options in Table 2 (= the eligible parties as of spring 2022, listed by party letter).

		N	%	Valid %
A. Socialdemokratiet	A. The Social Democratic Party	197	24.1	34.9
B. Radikale Venstre	B. The Social Liberal Party	37	4.5	6.6
C. Det Konservative Folkeparti	C. The Conservative Party	91	11.1	16.1
D. Nye Borgerlige	D. The New Right	33	4.0	5.9
F. SF - Socialistisk Folkeparti	F. The Green Left	54	6.6	9.6
G. Veganerpartiet	G. The Vegan Party	0	0	
I. Liberal Alliance	I. The Liberal Alliance	16	2.0	2.8
K. Kristendemokraterne	K. The Christian Democrats	12	1.5	2.1
O. Dansk Folkeparti (DF)	O. The Danish People's Party	14	1.7	2.5
Q. Frie Grønne	Q. Free Greens	3	.4	
V. Venstre	V. The Liberal Party	68	8.3	12.1
Ø. Enhedslisten	Ø. The Red-Green Alliance	42	5.1	7.4
Å. Alternativet	Å. The Alternative	1	.1	
En kandidat uden for partierne	A candidate from outside the parties	3	.4	
Et andet parti	Another party	3	.4	
Ville stemme blankt	Would cast a blank vote	16	2.0	
Ville ikke stemme	Would abstain from voting	15	1.8	
Total		605	74.1	n=564
Refused to answer		84	10.3	
Do not know		128	15.7	
Total		212	25.9	
Total		817	100.0	100.0

Table 2: Percentage of supporters for each party in case of a hypothetical general election.

Table 2 shows the political party affiliations in the sample. A few parties have so few 'votes' among the respondents that they are excluded from the

calculations (marked in grey). The same applies to the those who answered that they would cast a blank vote or abstain from voting. Notice also the rather large proportion (10.3%) of respondents who refused to answer the question (i.e., did not simply give a 'don't know' answer). This is probably indicative of the fact that political conviction is a somewhat sensitive topic. Again we want to point out that the responses are influenced by social desirability bias, that is, respondents are not just giving objective, truthful answers about their voting habits, but are affected by considerations about the image their answers project of them. When respondents who gave these answers or answered 'don't know' or refused to answer are excluded, we are left with a sample of 564 respondents who have indicated a party they would vote for.

The majority of the following analyses are based on these 564 respondents, and questions about which party they would vote for are labelled 'Party affiliation n > 10' to indicate that only parties that had at least 10 'supporters' are included.

3. Analyses

In the following, we analyse the various dependent attitudinal Factors as indicators of party affiliation. In other words, we are interested in whether party affiliation can predict attitudes towards English in Denmark as expressed by the six attitudinal dimensions presented above ('English as threat', 'English as opportunity', 'Domains', 'Support for Danish-language cultural products', 'English in school' and 'Norms of English competence'). It is important to bear in mind that our analysis is not based on the political programmes of the parties or on the parties' voting in parliament. The analysis is based solely on correlations between respondents' responses to questions regarding English and their responses about what party they would vote for in a hypothetical general election. It is very possible that respondents will disalign with 'their' party on some questions, and we should not expect that the party programme explicitly states the language political positions that their supporters ascribe to. What we say about the supporters of a given party is based solely on responses in the questionnaire and need not reflect the party's official line.

We first analyse the attitudinal Factors independently of each other, we then examine the relationship between the different Factors, and finally

we discuss how attitudes towards English can be understood in relation to a two-dimensional party-political compass.

3.1. 'English as threat' and 'English as opportunity'

Above we constructed the Factor 'English as threat' based on three questions. Table 3 and Figure 2 show the mean scores for this factor for each party's supporters. The higher the score, the more respondents agree that English is a threat. As can be seen, it is especially respondents who indicate that they would vote for Kristendemokraterne, Dansk Folkeparti and Nye Borgerlige who perceive English as a threat. The overall effect size of political affiliation is small ($\eta^2 = .033$) but significant ($p = .021$) measured by a general linear model (GLM).

Party affiliation n > 10	Mean	N	Std. dev.
F. SF - Socialistisk Folkeparti	-.230	54	.82
Ø. Enhedslisten	-.204	42	1.18
B. Radikale Venstre	-.196	37	.96
I. Liberal Alliance	-.097	16	1.28
V. Venstre	-.043	68	.93
A. Socialdemokratiet	.066	197	.95
C. Det Konservative Folkeparti	.089	91	1.01
K. Kristendemokraterne	.351	12	.84
O. Dansk Folkeparti (DF)	.391	14	1.22
D. Nye Borgerlige	.531	33	1.11
Total	.028	564	1.00

Table 3: Mean scores for the 'English as threat' Factor for supporters of each party.
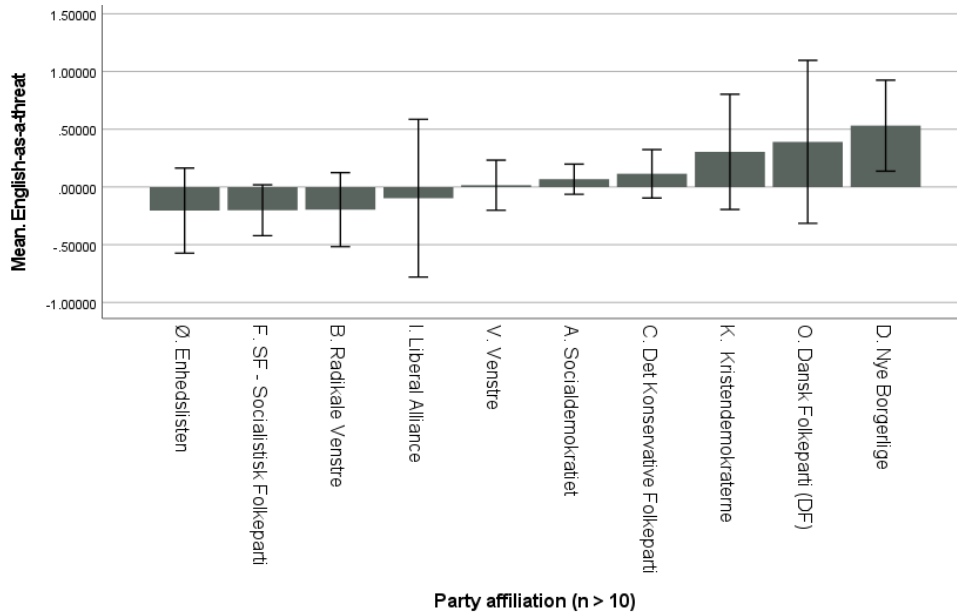
Figure 2: Mean scores for the 'English a threat' Factor for the supporters of each party. The whiskers, I-lines, indicate a 95% confidence interval.

Overall, the differences are statistically significant (ANOVA, p = .015). This can be interpreted to mean that if party affiliation played no role whatsoever, there would only be about a 1.5% chance of getting a distribution with such large between-group differences as these and such small within-group differences. However, this does not mean that all differences between parties are statistically significant. We therefore conducted post hoc T-tests between all combinations of parties to find significant differences between pairs. Table 4 shows which differences between parties (or rather between 'party affiliates') are significant. Respondents who would vote for Nye Borgerlige clearly regard English as a threat, to a much higher degree than those who would vote for any party other than Dansk Folkeparti and Kristendemokraterne. The difference is statistically significant. Apart from this, only the difference between Dansk Folkeparti and SF supporters is significant.

	Ø	B	I	V	A	C	K	O	D
F								*	***
Ø									**
B									**
I									*
V									**
A									*
C									*
K									
O									

* = p<.05; ** = p<.01: *** = p<.001

Table 4. Significant differences between supporters of each party on the 'English as threat Factor'.

Table 5 and Figure 3 show the mean scores of the 'English as opportunity' questions. Again, higher scores indicate higher levels of agreement. Thus, it is respondents who indicate that they would vote for Kristendemokraterne and Liberal Alliance who to the greatest extent see English as a 'practical consequence of greater interaction with the rest of the world'; as something that 'makes Danes more competitive internationally'; and as something that 'broadens Danes' cultural horizons'. Again the effect size of political affiliation as measured by a GLM is small ($\eta^2 = .046$) but highly significant (p = .001).

Party affiliation n > 10	Mean	N	Std. dev.
K. Kristendemokraterne	.408	12	.72
I. Liberal Alliance	.404	16	.85
B. Radikale Venstre	.365	37	.85
V. Venstre	.295	68	.77
C. Det Konservative Folkeparti	.098	91	1.02
A. Socialdemokratiet	.011	197	1.01
F. SF - Socialistisk Folkeparti	-.035	54	.88
Ø. Enhedslisten	-.116	42	.91
O. Dansk Folkeparti (DF)	-.390	14	1.09
D. Nye Borgerlige	-.521	33	1.15
Total	.047	564	.98

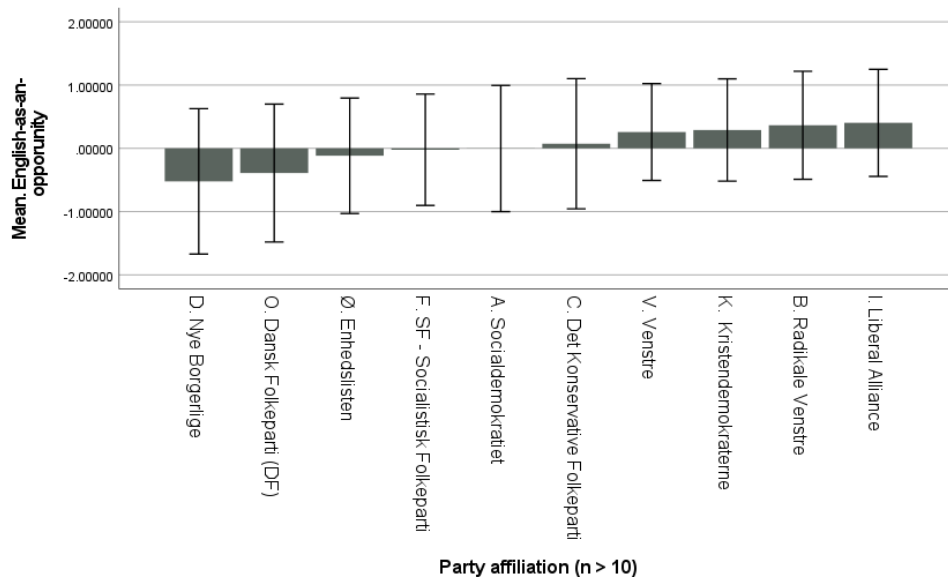*Table 5: Mean scores for the English as opportunity Factor for supporters of each party.*

Figure 3: Mean scores for the English as opportunity Factor for the supporters of each party. The whiskers, I-lines, indicate a 95% confidence interval.

Again, the overall differences are statistically significant (ANOVA, p < .001), and again the differences are mainly between those who indicate that they would vote for Nye Borgerlige and (to a lesser extent) Dansk Folkeparti, and those who indicate that they would support one of the other

parties. However, there are also differences between the supporters of Radikale Venstre and Venstre on the one hand and Socialdemokratiet and Enhedslisten on the other.

	I	B	V	C	A	F	Ø	O	D
K									*
I								*	**
B					*		*	*	***
V					*		*	*	***
C									**
A									**
F									*
Ø									
O									

* = p<.05; ** = p<.01: *** = p<.001

Table 6: Significant differences between supporters of each party on the 'English as opportunity' Factor.

Perhaps the most interesting result is that we do not find the same distribution of parties on the 'English as threat' questions and on the 'English as opportunity' questions. As shown earlier, there is very little correlation between the two blocks of questions. The analysis shows that this is also true when looking at groups of respondents, and not only when looking at the whole sample.

Inspired by the two-dimensional party-political compass presented in Figure 1, we have plotted the location of the responses in a two-dimensional coordinate system, presented here in Figure 4. Responses to the 'English as opportunity' questions are presented along the X-axis, responses to the 'English as threat' questions are presented on the Y-axis.
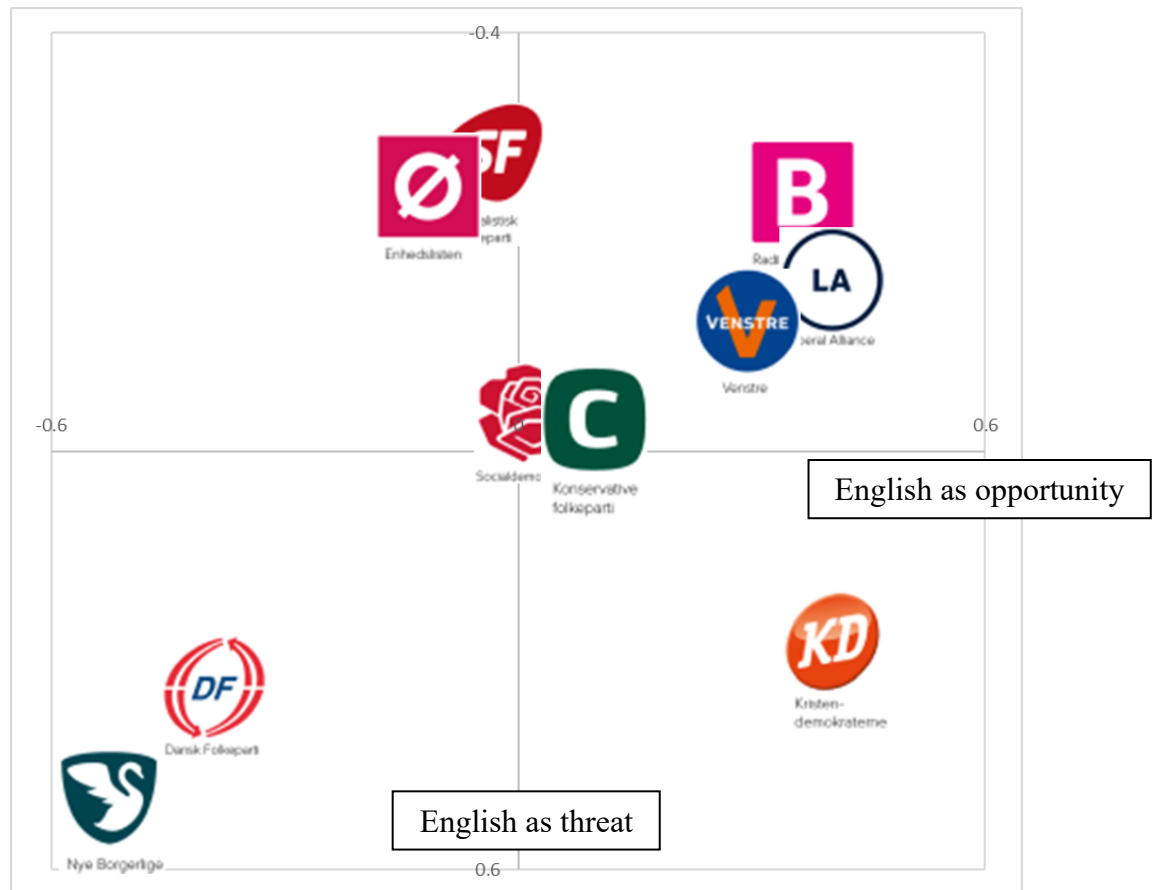
Figure 4: The party-political compass of English attitudes.

The figure shows respondents who would vote for (the anti-immigration party) Nye Borgerlige to be those who, to the greatest extent, see English as a threat, and, to the least extent, as an opportunity. What is even more interesting is that the parties are not aligned along a single line: the model is clearly two-dimensional. Thus, respondents who would vote for (the Marxist) Enhedslisten or SF do not see English as a 'threat', but they also do not see English as an 'opportunity' to any great extent. On the other hand, respondents who would vote for Kristendemokraterne see English as both a 'threat' *and* an 'opportunity'. When looking at the positioning of the parties, if one is familiar with the Danish party-political landscape, it is tempting to think of the Y-axis in terms of a 'value-political axis' (or

Skjæveland's 2005 'new politics') similar to the Y-axis in Figure 1; that is, an axis in which primarily immigration and international relations are the relevant topics. Nye Borgerlige and Dansk Folkeparti define themselves largely as anti-immigration parties; however, we interpret the placement of SF and Enhedslisten to mean that to their voters, nationalism rings too much of chauvinism, and internationalism is a core value in Marxism in which SF and Enhedslisten have their roots. We could say, then, that the Y-axis indicates 'protectionism'. On the other hand, it is tempting to interpret the X-axis in terms of a 'distributional policy or market economy axis' (Skjæveland's 'old politics') similar to the X-axis in Figure 1. In particular, it is the respondents who would vote for the economically liberal parties, Venstre, Radikale Venstre and Liberal Alliance, and those who would vote for Kristendemokraterne, who see English as an 'opportunity'. At the other end of the axis we find the traditional left-wing parties (in terms of economy) such as Enhedslisten, SF and Dansk Folkeparti. The positioning of Nye Borgerlige is puzzling. Considering Figure 1 above, where Nye Borgerlige was defined as the party with the most right-wing economic policy, one would expect to find them alongside the other economically liberal parties. We could speculate that the position here is an expression of the fact that the X-axis is not only about the market economy. Perhaps it is an expression of the fact that Nye Borgerlige is first and foremost a party of values. Their economic liberal policies are not what attract their voters - or at least not the 33 in the sample here who said they would vote for Nye Borgerlige.

In the centre of the figure are Socialdemokratiet and Konservative, who are at the middle of both the protectionist and the market economy axes.

3.2. Does party affiliation add anything extra?
An obvious objection at this point is that party affiliation is to a large extent an expression of some of the social variables that we already know the effect of. We know that the core voters of Dansk Folkeparti have little education and a higher than average age profile (Professor Kasper Møller Hansen for Altinget.dk 2023[17]). We also know that they tend to live outside the major urban areas. With respect to the general election in 2019, Statistics Denmark reported that Dansk Folkeparti "had relatively more

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[17] https://www.altinget.dk/christiansborg/artikel/moed-partiernes-typiske-vaelgere

votes in the municipalities in Southern Jutland and in Mid and West Zealand" (authors' translation) and the lowest proportion of the votes in the major cities of Copenhagen and Aarhus[18]. Conversely, Enhedslisten was "over twice as big in Copenhagen as in the country in general" (Ibid.). Since we also know that the elderly and the less educated are the most sceptical in terms of the presence of English (see references to Kristiansen 2006a and Preisler 1999 above), it is hardly surprising that respondents who say they would vote for Dansk Folkeparti are also among the most sceptical with regard to the use of English. It is worth investigating whether the question of party affiliation provides something new, or whether it is just measuring the same bio-social factors with a different operationalisation.

To answer this, we first look at whether our assumptions about the demographics of the different parties fit our sample, and then at whether party affiliation is still significant when controlling for other social variables.

Figures 5, 6 and 7 show the average age, average population of respondents' hometowns and average educational level of the supporters of each party. Of course, there is no reason to assume that a simple statistics of the population size of one's hometown bears any direct correlation with one's political affiliation. The connection is at best indirect in that larger cities and their suburbs tend to attract more educated, career-oriented and internationally minded residents because there are opportunities for specialist jobs. Additionally, larger cities tend to be more expensive places to live, further skewing the demographics towards the more educated and affluent.

Education was measured on a 6-level scale, 'primary school', 'lower secondary', 'upper secondary/vocational', '2-year tertiary', 'bachelor's degree', 'master's degree'[19]. It could be argued that average educational attainment is at best an 'ordinal' measure and cannot meaningfully be measured on a 'ratio' scale. In other words, it might be more meaningful to operate with the proportions of respondents who have different educational

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[18] https://www.dst.dk/da/Statistik/nyheder-analyser-publ/bagtal/2019/2019-02-20-landkort-viser-forskelle-i-partiernes-stemmeandele

[19] Grundskole 7./8. kl., Grundskole 9./10. klasse, Ungdomsuddannelse (Gymasial, Erhvervsfaglig), Kort videregående uddannelse, Mellemlang videregående uddannelse, Lang videregående uddannelse.

levels rather than a *mean* value. However, as a rough estimate of educational attainment, we believe that a numerical mean is still indicative of the educational differences between groups.
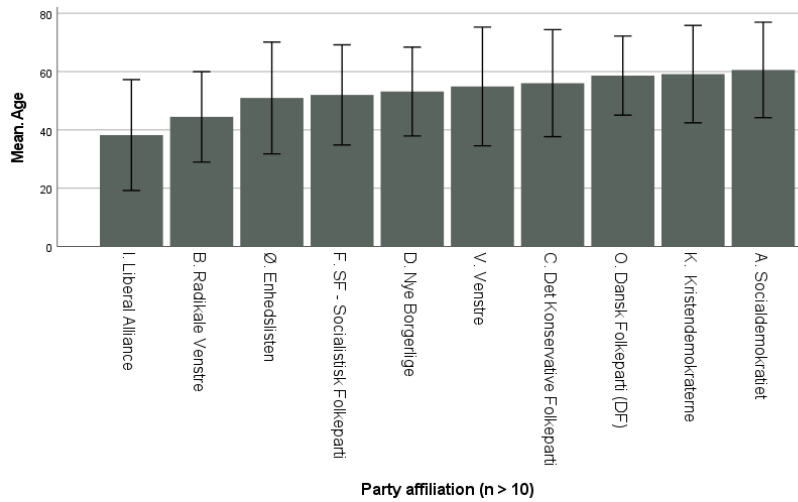

Figure 5: Mean age of the supporters of each party. The whiskers, I lines, indicate a 95% confidence interval.
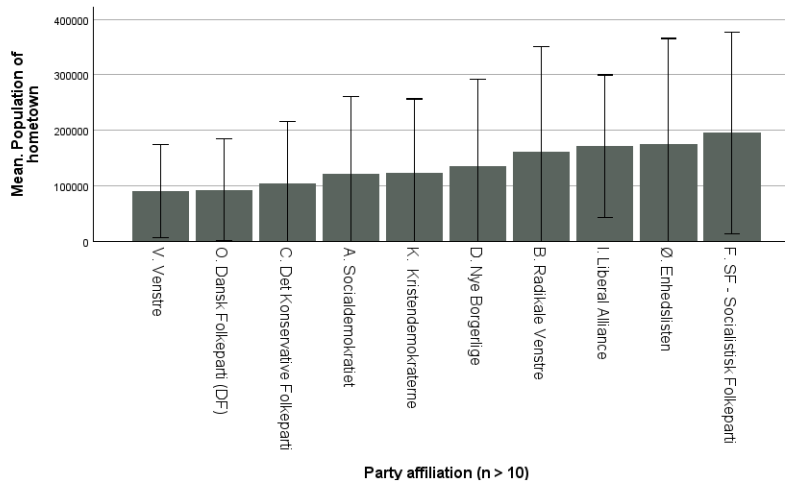

Figure 6: Mean population of hometown of supporters of each party. The whiskers, I lines, indicate a 95% confidence interval. [20]

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[20] Respondents were asked to indicate the postcode in which they live. This allows us to calculate the population of their hometown. Larger urban areas such as Aarhus, Odense,
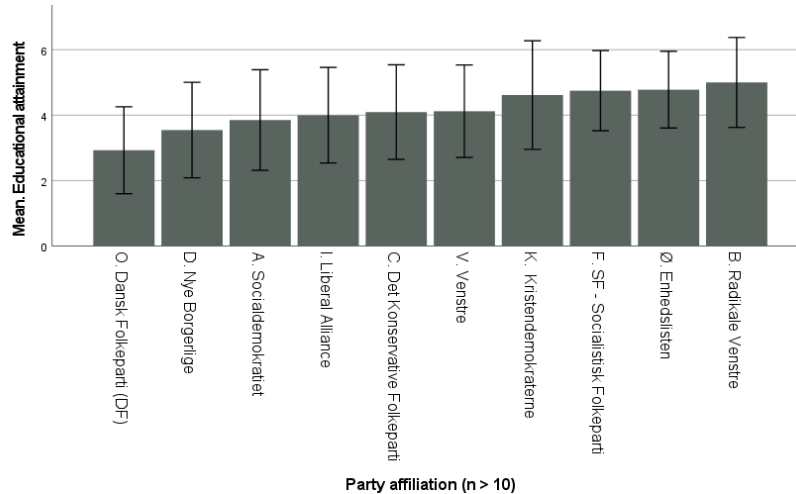
Figure 7: Mean educational attainment of the supporters of each party. The whiskers, I lines, indicate a 95% confidence interval.

The demography of the sample corresponds roughly to our preconceptions. Respondents who would vote for Dansk Folkeparti live in the smallest towns, are less educated and, together with those who would vote for Socialdemokratiet and Kristendemokraterne, are the oldest respondents. Respondents who would vote for the 'value-liberal' parties Enhedslisten, SF and Radikale Venstre live in larger cities and have a higher educational level, and, together with those who would vote for Liberal Alliance, are on average the youngest respondents.

To investigate whether party affiliation is in fact just another measure of age, education and 'urbanicity', we conducted a Multiple Regression Analysis (General Linear Model) with the two Factor scores as dependent variables, party affiliation as the independent factor, and age, education and urbanicity (in terms of the size of the population defined by the postcode) as covariates. In other words, we ask whether party affiliation predicts attitudes towards English even after taking into account the

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Aalborg and Copenhagen/Frederiksberg have been merged so that, for example, the postcodes 8000, 8100, 8200 and 8210 are counted as one area with a total population of about 108,000. The boundaries were drawn according to whether the postcode contained the name of the city, so that 8210 Aarhus V is considered part of Aarhus, while 8220 Brabrand is not.

respondent's age, education and the size of the town they live in. The outcome is given in Tables 7 and 8.

	Type III Sum of Squares	Partial η^2	df	Sig.
Corrected Model	56,528	0.097	12	<0.001
Intercept	14.167	0.026	1	0.000
Party affiliation (n > 10)	14.998	0.028	9	0.064
Age	37.743	0.067	1	<0.001
Population of hometown	1.302	0.002	1	0.235
Education	0.058	0.000	1	0.801
Error	524.119		569	
Total	581.861		582	
Corrected Total	580.647		581	

Table 7: General linear model for the 'English as threat' Factor.

	Type III Sum of Squares	Partial η^2	df	Sig.
Corrected Model	42,385	0.078	12	<0.001
Intercept	0.282	0.001	1	0.572
Party affiliation (n > 10)	19.074	0.037	9	0.011
Age	4.819	0.010	1	0.020
Population of hometown	0.116	0.000	1	0.717
Education	12.925	0.025	1	<0.001
Error	502.367		569	
Total	545.688		582	
Corrected Total	544.752		581	

Table 8: General linear model for the 'English as opportunity' Factor.

For the 'English as threat' questions, party affiliation is almost statistically significant (p = .064) when controlling for age (p < .001), education and town size (n.s.). For the 'English as opportunity' questions, party affiliation is statistically significant (p = .011) also when controlling for age (p = .02), education (p < .001) and town size (n.s.). In other words, party affiliation *does* add something extra, in particular for the 'opportunity' questions. The effect sizes as indicated by η^2 are again small, on the order of .03–.04 It is also interesting to see that attitudes to 'English as threat' are best predicted by age, whereas attitudes to 'English as opportunity' is best predicted by education.

3.3. Other attitudinal factors

The analysis so far has shown that attitudes towards English in Denmark today can be conceptualised along (at least) two orthogonal dimensions. Skjæveland (2005) uses the terms 'old politics' and 'new politics', Andersson (2022) and Altinget (2016) use the terms 'distributional policy' and 'value policy'. Our interpretation of these scales in relation to English influence is that they could tentatively be called 'position on cultural protectionism' and 'position on market economy'. We have also shown that questions about party affiliation add an extra ideological dimension that cannot be found simply by asking about respondents' age, education and place of residence.

As presented in the methodology section, we also asked a number of other attitudinal questions that to a greater or lesser extent are related to economic and value politics. In the following, we present them before finally looking at the correlation between the different blocks of questions.

3.3.1. Areas of practice/'domains'

Table 9 and Figure 8 show the correlation between party political affiliation and responses to the questions on 'domains', that is, 'English as a business language' and as a language of instruction in primary and higher education.

Party affiliation n > 10	Mean	N	Std. dev.
I. Liberal Alliance	.656	14	.71
B. Radikale Venstre	.411	34	.86
V. Venstre	.267	65	.98
F. SF - Socialistisk Folkeparti	.073	49	.80
C. Det Konservative Folkeparti	.065	88	1.03
K. Kristendemokraterne	-.025	10	.68
A. Socialdemokratiet	-.131	167	1.02
Ø. Enhedslisten	-.261	38	.92
O. Dansk Folkeparti (DF)	-.263	12	1.36
D. Nye Borgerlige	-.632	32	.93
Total	-.011	509	1.00

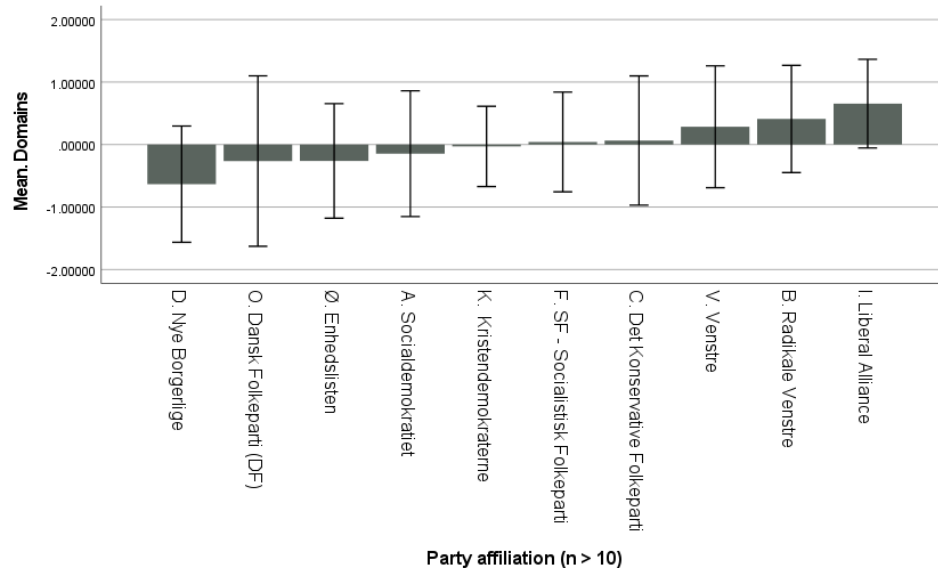*Table 9: Mean scores on the Domain Factor for supporters of each party.*

Figure 8: Mean scores on the Domain Factor for supporters of each party. The whiskers, I lines, indicate a 95% confidence interval.

The distribution is statistically significant (p < .001), and there are statistically significant differences at both the upper and lower ends of the scale. Supporters of Nye Borgerlige are significantly more negative than all but Enhedslisten and Dansk Folkeparti, and supporters of Liberal Alliance are significantly more positive than all but Radikale Venstre, Venstre and Kristendemokraterne. The distribution of parties is quite similar to the distribution of 'English as opportunity'. The only major difference is that supporters of Kristendemokraterne are less positive about English in business and education than they were about 'English as opportunity'.

	B	V	F	C	K	A	Ø	O	D
I			*	*		**	**	*	***
B						**	**	*	***
V						**	**		***
F									**
C									***
K									
A									**
Ø									
O									

* = p<.05; ** = p<.01: *** = p<.001

Table 10: Significant differences between supporters of each party on the 'Domain' Factor.

	Type III Sum of Squares	Partial η^2	df	Sig.
Corrected Model	42,373a	0.082	12	<0.001
Intercept	1.024	0.002	1	0.295
Party affiliation (n > 10)	32.915	0.065	9	<0.001
Age	4.008	0.008	1	0.039
Population of hometown	0.005	0.000	1	0.944
Education	0.339	0.001	1	0.547
Error	473.992		509	
Total	516.478		522	
Corrected total	516.365		521	

Table 11: General linear model for the 'Domain' Factor.

Party affiliation is a significant predictor of attitude towards the Domain Factor (p < .001), also when controlling for age (p = .039), education and town size (n.s.).

3.3.2. English in school

The distribution of responses on the teaching of English in primary school is non-significant overall (p = .111). In other words, there is about an 11%

chance of finding the same distribution if respondents were divided into random groups. However, there are significant differences between respondents who would vote for Liberal Alliance on the one hand, and respondents who would vote for Dansk Folkeparti and Venstre on the other hand.

Party affiliation n > 10	Mean	N	Std. dev.
O. Dansk Folkeparti (DF)	.418	14	1.44
V. Venstre	.237	68	1.02
C. Det Konservative Folkeparti	.049	91	1.09
B. Radikale Venstre	.046	37	.98
A. Socialdemokratiet	-.031	197	.98
K. Kristendemokraterne	-.057	12	.85
F. SF - Socialistisk Folkeparti	-.153	54	.89
D. Nye Borgerlige	-.190	33	1.04
Ø. Enhedslisten	-.275	42	.88
I. Liberal Alliance	-.370	16	.73
Total	-.019	564	1.00

Table 12: Mean scores for the 'English in school' Factor for supporters of each party.
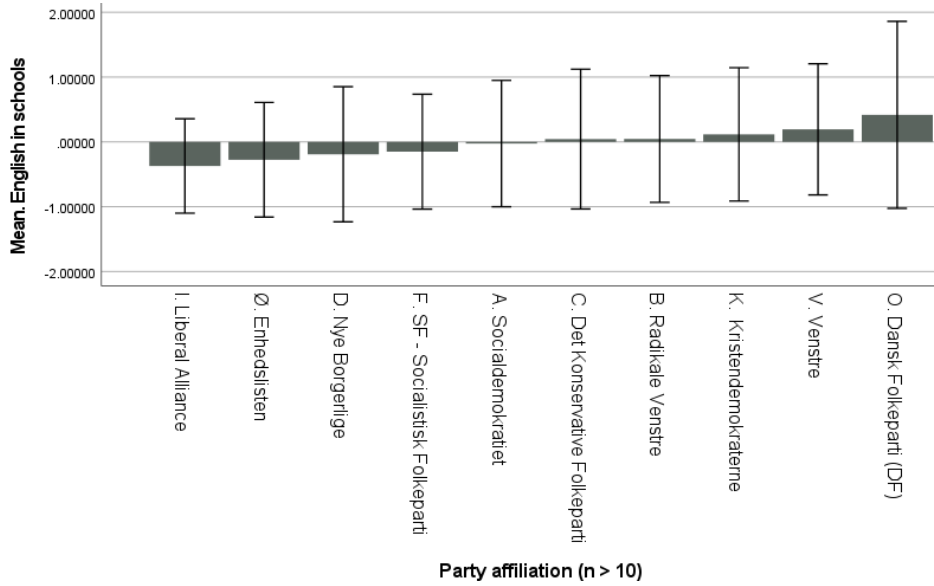
Figure 9: Mean scores for the 'English in school' Factor for the supporters of each party. The whiskers, I lines, indicate a 95% confidence interval.

	V	C	B	A	K	F	D	Ø	I
O									*
V									*
C									
B									
A									
K									
F									
D									
Ø									

* = p<.05; ** = p<.01: *** = p<.001

Table 13: Significant differences between supporters of each party on the 'English in school' Factor.

The distribution of the three parties is puzzling. Whereas the other questions have shown Dansk Folkeparti among the most English-sceptical

and Liberal Alliance among the most English-positive, the picture here is the opposite. Respondents who would vote for Dansk Folkeparti most strongly believe that more English should be taught in primary school, while respondents who would vote for Liberal Alliance most strongly disagree with this. Our best guess is that this reflects personal experiences among the respondents. Remember that Dansk Folkeparti's supporters are typically older, with less formal education, whereas supporters of Liberal Alliance are typically younger. It may be that the older people who support Dansk Folkeparti have personal experience of not being able to speak English, and would have liked to learn more – and for future generations to learn more – whereas the younger Liberal Alliance supporters regard English as easily acquired, even outside of school.

As mentioned above, the overall distribution is not significant – nor even when controlling for age, education and town size (p = .134). In other words, it is difficult to interpret the ranking of the other parties. It seems more or less random. Perhaps this is an indication that parties' position on English in school are not as central as e.g. their position on threats to Danish culture or to economic globalisation. Notice also the quite large standard deviations which indicate high disagreement within each group of party supporters.

3.3.3. Support for Danish-language cultural products

The penultimate block of questions is about financial support for Danish-language cultural products, that is, whether there should be language stipulations for films and magazines receiving state funding and whether radio and TV should continue to be subsidised. Overall, the distribution is statistically significant (p < .001).

Party affiliation n > 10	Mean	N	Std. dev.
B. Radikale Venstre	-.548	37	.74
I. Liberal Alliance	-.323	16	1.19
Ø. Enhedslisten	-.274	42	.99
F. SF - Socialistisk Folkeparti	-.086	54	.95
V. Venstre	-.029	68	.95
A. Socialdemokratiet	.056	197	1.00
C. Det Konservative Folkeparti	.149	91	1.00
K. Kristendemokraterne	.213	12	1.15
D. Nye Borgerlige	.412	33	.73
O. Dansk Folkeparti (DF)	.527	14	.98
Total	.008	564	.99

Table 14: Mean scores for the 'Support for Danish-language cultural products' Factor for the supporters of each party.
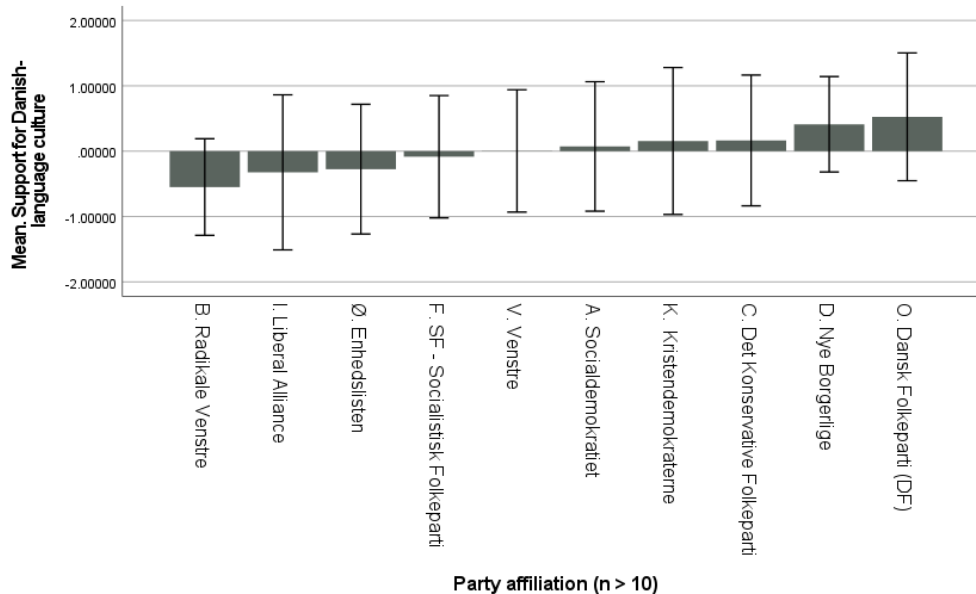
Figure 10: Mean scores for the 'Support for Danish-language cultural products' Factor for the supporters of each party. The whiskers, I lines, indicate a 95% confidence interval.

	I	Ø	F	V	A	C	K	D	O
B			*	**	***	***	*	***	***
I								*	*
Ø					*	*		**	**
F								*	*
V								*	
A									
C									
K									
D									

* = p<.05; ** = p<.01: *** = p<.001

Table 15: Significant differences between supporters of each party for the 'Support for Danish-language cultural products' Factor.

There are statistically significant differences between, in particular, Nye Borgerlige and Dansk Folkeparti at one end, and Radikale Venstre, Enhedslisten and Liberal Alliance at the other. The positioning of the parties is very similar to the positioning on the 'English as threat' questions, or, in other words, the value-policy axis. It is especially the supporters of the 'anti-immigration' parties who support Danish-language cultural products, while the supporters of the internationally-oriented parties do not see language requirements as a prerequisite to the same extent. The difference is statistically significant (p = .023) also when controlling for age (p < .001), education and population of the hometown (n.s.) (see Table 16).

	Type III Sum of Squares	Partial η²	df	Sig.
Corrected Model	47,877	0.085	12	<0.001
Intercept	2.085	0.004	1	0.129
Party affiliation (n > 10)	17.500	0.033	9	0.023
Age	14.910	0.028	1	<0.001
Population of hometown	0.001	0.000	1	0.974
Education	2.822	0.005	1	0.077
Error	512.495		569	
Total	560.650		582	
Corrected Total	560.372		581	

Table 16: General linear model for the 'Support for Danish-language cultural products' Factor.

3.3.4. Norms of English competence

The last block of questions is, as mentioned earlier, qualitatively slightly different from the others. The question here is not of grand socio-political ideals, but of what linguistic expectations one can have of others and of oneself, that is, 'all Danes *should* be able to speak/understand/read/write English'. Or as we argued above, the perception of English as a second (vs. foreign) language for Danes.

The difference is far from being statistically significant ($p = .747$), especially when taking into account age ($p < .001$), education and urbanity (n.s.).

Party affiliation n > 10	Mean	N	Std. dev.
I. Liberal Alliance	.389	16	.79
V. Venstre	.287	68	.91
B. Radikale Venstre	.173	37	1.10
C. Det Konservative Folkeparti	.173	91	1.02
F. SF - Socialistisk Folkeparti	.142	54	.81
K. Kristendemokraterne	.022	12	1.15
Ø. Enhedslisten	.021	42	.96
D. Nye Borgerlige	-.012	33	.97
A. Socialdemokratiet	-.050	197	1.01
O. Dansk Folkeparti (DF)	-.275	14	1.15
Total	.075	564	.99

Table 17: Mean scores for the 'Norms of English competence' Factor for the supporters of each party.
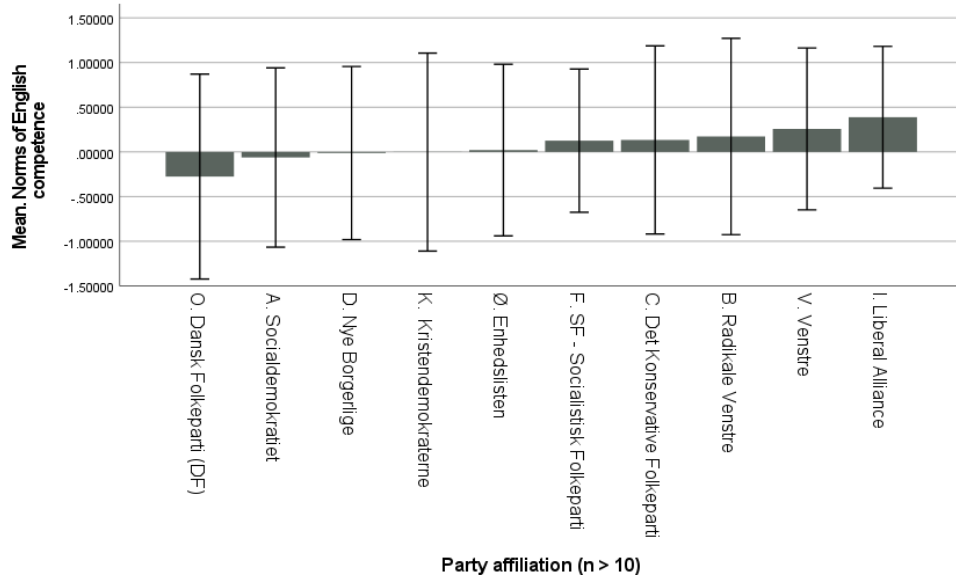
Figure 11: Mean scores for the 'Norms of English competence' Factor for the supporters of each party. The whiskers, I lines, indicate a 95% confidence interval.

	V	B	C	F	K	Ø	D	A	O
I									
V								*	
B									
C									
F									
K									
Ø									
D									
A									

* = p<.05; ** = p<.01: *** = p<.001

Table 18: Significant differences between supporters of each party for the 'Norms of English competence' Factor.

Only one difference is statistically significant, namely between the two current government parties. Respondents who would vote for Socialdemokratiet to a lesser degree believe that all Danes should be competent in English, and respondents who would vote for Venstre believe that all Danes *should* be competent in English. Otherwise, the results show a relatively high degree of agreement between supporters of all the parties – that is, no major differences between respondents who would vote for different parties – and on the other hand relatively large disagreement within each of the parties, as can be seen from the very wide confidence intervals. So here is a question that is only to a very small extent related to party-political conviction.

3.4. Correlation between factors

The analysis so far seems to show that some blocks of questions have a similar distribution, while others (e.g. 'English as threat' and 'English as opportunity') are only very weakly correlated. As a final step in the analysis, we now look at the correlation between the different question blocks. For this analysis, we compare the entire set of respondents who answered the attitudes questions. As will be recalled, above we excluded about 25% of respondents because they provided no valid response to the question about party affliation (because they responded for instance that they did not know which party they would vote for or they refused to answer the question about political affiliation). We see no reason to think that the attitudes towards English should be composed differently between respondents who stated which party they would support, and those who preferred to keep their political convictions secret or who had not decided on a party. The supporters of different parties may have *quantitatively* different attitudes (i.e. some are more positive than others), but there is no reason to think that they would disagree on the internal structure of the attitudes. For example, we argued above that 'English as threat' and 'English as opportunity', which have previously been seen as opposing sides of the same argument, are in fact two orthogonal attitudinal dimensions. Different respondents position themselves differently in the space, but they share the perception that there is a two-dimensional space to place oneself in. We see no reason why this would not also be the case for respondents who did not state their political affiliation. Therefore, we

include all respondents in the analysis of the internal composition of attitudes.

Table 19 shows the correlation between the different question blocks for all approx. 850 respondents who answered the attitude questions. We also tried to conduct the analysis with only the 564 respondents who stated their political affiliation. The differences between the two analyses are negligible and would not change the interpretation below.

Many of the correlations are significant. This is probably mainly due to the large number of respondents. A correlation does not have to be strong to be significant as long as it is systematic. In other words, the correlation will come out statistically significant if there is predictable connection between the two blocks of questions, even if the connection is rather weak.

		English as an opportunity	Domains	English in school	Support for Danish-language cultural products	Norms of English competence
English as threat	Pearson corr.	-.079*	-.292**	-.157**	**.326****	-.126**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	<.001	<.001	**<.001**	<.001
	N	817	719	817	**817**	817
English as opportunity	Pearson corr.		**.371****	.215**	-.079*	**.327****
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**<.001**	<.001	.024	**<.001**
	N		**719**	817	817	**817**
Domains	Pearson corr.			**.377****	-.273**	**.308****
	Sig. (2-tailed)			**<.001**	<.001	**<.001**
	N			**719**	719	**719**
English in school	Pearson corr.				-.133**	**.379****
	Sig. (2-tailed)				<.001	**<.001**
	N				817	**817**
Support for Danish-language cultural products	Pearson corr.					-.144**
	Sig. (2-tailed)					<.001
	N					817

Table 19: Correlation between the different attitude Factors.

A common interpretation of the Pearson correlation measure (*r*) is that correlations below .3 are considered 'weak' and correlations between .3 and .5 are considered 'medium effects' (Field 2013:267). By this measure, the majority of the correlations are 'weak', but some (highlighted in bold font) are 'medium'. In other words, there is a relatively low degree of correlation between the different blocks of questions, all of which are

supposedly about 'attitudes to English in Denmark'. If Danes thought of English usage as one 'thing', we would expect to see high correlation between the question blocks. Or, in other words, we would expect that one's attitude as expressed in one set of questions would be highly predictable when we know the attitude as expressed in another block of questions. That is not what we find. Instead, we find that respondents may be English-positive under one set of perspectives, but negative or indifferent under another set of perspectives. One must conclude that 'attitudes to English' are anything but one-dimensional. The respondents' attitudes seem very dependent on the perspective that each block of questions has.

To understand this complexity of (opposite) attitudes, we need to think of Danes' attitudes to English in a larger theoretical frame. We propose that the complex attitudes are related to the various processes refered to under the heading of *globalisation* and to 'the sociolinguistics of globalization' (Blommaert 2010). The period since the collapse of the Eastern European Communist bloc has been described as 'the end of history' (Fukuyama 1989), a period in which there is (or was) no world-spanning competition between 'great ideologies' over the best way to design society. In the past, Communism and Liberalism fought for hegemony, but now (alledgedly) political liberalism and market capitalism has triumphed and stand uncontested. And, crucially for this study, English is the language of this 'new world order' of global trade, global communication and global competition. 'English the language' (or rather the 'English the *word*' because there are of course many Englishes in the world today, Bolton forthc.), come to stand for these various processes. But more than that, the opposition to globalisation is also a global movement with English as its medium of communication. Whether this opposition to global capitalism comes from an environmental perspective (e.g. Extinction Rebellion), from a feminist perspective (e.g. #METOO) or from Marxist perspectives (e.g. Occupy Wall Street see also Burbach, Nunez & Kagarlitsky 1996), it is involved in and dependent on a global media environment in which English is the medium of communication. 'English' (the language and the name of the language) can therefore stand as symbol of both late stage capitalism and its opposition, for global competition and global collaboration, for multinational corporations and for grassroot movements and so forth. And the negation of English – in this case Danish

(the language and the name of the language) therefore come to stand for the symbolic negation of these symbols: Social justice in the face of globalisation's social injustices, and also national narrow-mindedness as opposed to globalisation's all-encompassing scope.

It is therefore not surprising that some question blocks are more interrelated than others – highlighted in bold face in Table 19: 'English as opportunity' is related to 'domain' (English as a corporate and business language) and to 'norms of English competence' (English as an expected competence among Danes). 'English as threat' is related to 'support for Danish-language culture'. Finally, the questions on 'English in school' are related to expected 'norms for English', although this was only to a small extent reflected in the analysis of party-political affiliation. As suggested earlier, it is tempting to view these relationships as a 'market'- or 'competition-orientated' view of English influence versus a 'cultural protectionist' or 'nationalist' one. What is most striking about the analysis here, however, is that one of the weakest correlation between any question blocks is that between 'English as threat' and 'English as opportunity'. Whereas in the past the two positions have tended to be seen as extremes on the same axis, this analysis shows emphatically that they are not.

4. Conclusion

In this article, we have analysed the relationship between attitudes to the use of English in Denmark, as expressed in responses to 18 questions posed in a nationwide survey questionnaire, on the one hand, and declared party-political affiliation, that is, answers to the question of how one would vote in a hypothetical general election, on the other.

The analysis proposes two central conclusions:

(1) Only with strong reservations can 'attitudes to the use of English' be described in dichotomous terms: it is not the case that Danes view the use of English as *either* a 'threat to Danish culture' *or* as an opportunity to 'expand their cultural horizon' or 'make Danes more competitive internationally'. English can easily index both of these meanings – and others. If we want to describe what English means to Danes in the 2020s, English must be contextualised. In other words, we need to ask: 'what frame do you have in mind in which English should be viewed?' or 'in what context should I understand the question?'. It is quite obvious that there is a need for further and more qualitative, emic studies of

different contextualisations and practices in which the use of English takes on values and meanings as for example a threat and an opportunity. Preisler (1999) attempted to do so for the contextualisations of English in the 1990s; Lønsmann et al. (forthc.) attempt to do so for the 2020s.

(2) We have also seen for the majority of the questions that there is a correlation between party-political affiliation and attitudes to English in Denmark. In a 'rich' party-political landscape such as the Danish, it is to be expected that there are blocks of like-minded parties that share attitudes to the use of English, while the attitudes of other blocks are different. As an example of this, we saw how the supporters of the 'anti-immigration parties' (Dansk Folkeparti and Nye Borgerlige) are often aligned, and so are the supporters of the traditional Marxist parties (Enhedslisten and SF); while supporters of the largest parties (Socialdemokratiet and Konservative) are usually found together around the middle of the scale. Thinking of attitudes to English in terms of a two-dimensional space and against the backdrop of English as a symbol of globalisation helps us understand why the supporters of the different parties position themselves as they do, and also brings depth to the meaning and values English has in Scandinavia today. English is a symbol of market capitalism, and questions which frame English in this light are supported by economically liberal parties and opposed by socialist parties. English is at the same time a symbol of global exchange, communication and migration and questions which frame English in that light are supported by value-liberal parties (which may or may not be economically liberal parties) and opposed by value-conservative parties (which may or may not be economically liberal).

As we have stated, attitudes towards the use of English are not one thing; the attitude depends on the specific contextualisation or framing of the issue. In other words, 'what kinds of values does the influence of English hold in this particular question?'. Is English for example conceptualised as an index of 'internationalism' or of 'late-stage capitalism'? In this light, it would also be wrong to talk about 'English-positive' vs. 'English-negative' parties, because, as we have seen, the supporters of one party may be the most 'English-positive' on one set of issues, but the most 'English-negative' on others. It is more illuminating to understand the 'presence of English in Denmark' as a sign embedded in a multidimensional political space. In this space, English indexes on the one hand something 'international' as opposed to something 'national(ist)', and

on the other hand something 'economically liberal' as opposed to something 'economically socialist'. In this way, English can at the same time index both co-operation and competition, community and elitism, and so forth. Again, more in-depth qualitative analyses of Danes' understanding of the phenomenon of English in Denmark are needed to really understand what is going on.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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