

What words can tell: Effects of emotive and vague words on voters' interpretation and evaluation of election campaign proposals

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Abstract

During campaigns, politicians frequently use emotive and vague words such as freedom, change and equality, to attract attention and muster citizen support. We know from numerous studies that creative use of such words can impact voters' evaluation of political information and candidates. However, we know less about the precise mechanisms that are at play when citizens' attitudes change. This paper looks further into one such mechanism, namely that emotive and vague words impact the way voters interpret parties' intentions with campaign proposals. More specifically, the paper addresses the questions of whether emotive and vague words affect voters' interpretation of intentions with campaign policy proposals, and what impact this has on whether they like the proposed policies or not. The paper makes a difference between emotive words that are neutral to ideology, and those that are associated with left or right politics, and compares the effects that these different types of words have on interpretation. Results from experimental analyses indicate that emotive and vague words influence peoples' interpretation of what proposed policies intend to and what outputs they expect, and that this in turn affects whether they like the proposed policies or not.

Keywords: Emotive words, political campaigns, political rhetoric, policy proposals, information processing

“Uttering a word is like striking a note on the keyboard of the imagination.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical investigations*, 1953.

Introduction

What are the effects of emotive and vague words in election campaign proposals, on voters’ interpretation and evaluation of the same? Policy proposals are central as sources of information in elections, and should serve as statements of intents for parties, which can easily be grasped by voters. However, it is not necessarily the case that specific policy proposals are best distributed via equally specific language. In all times, rhetorical strategies have been used to attract attention and interest, and politicians frequently use emotive words such as “democracy” and “freedom” to muster citizen support and make electoral proposals sound more appealing than they actually are.

The point of departure in this paper is that the formulation of electoral campaign policy proposals matter for voters’ possibility to hold parties and governments accountable. If emotive and vague words diffuse voters’ possibilities of distinguishing between parties’ policies, they might in the long-run meet policy outcomes that they were not expecting. Accurate representations of the public will, as well as holding governments accountable for their actions, is less likely if the voters misperceive what the parties actually wish to pursue. Hence, it is motivated to study how different formulations of policy proposals affect voters’ interpretation of the intentions with the proposed policies.

That emotive words affect peoples’ evaluations of proposed policies and the political candidates proposing them, have been shown repeatedly and under various theoretical frameworks (e.g. Brader and Corrigan, 2005; Jerit, 2004; Lakoff and Wehling, 2012; Entman, 1993). At large, two mechanisms have been found that explains why such words matter, namely that they 1) evoke peoples emotions (e.g De Steno et al, 2004; Shah et al, 1996; Shaffner et al, 2010), and 2) serve as informational shortcuts and cues (e.g. Schemer et al, 2011; Keum et al, 2005; Lee et al, 2008). However, research on how emotive and vague words affects interpretation of intentions with proposed policies, and how this in turn affect whether people like them or not, have not yet been investigated. This paper contributes to the scholarly debate by offering and testing the hypothesis that interpretation may serve as a third mechanisms, explaining the effects of emotive words on whether people like proposed policies or not. Precisely, I will argue that emotive and vague words not only influence voters’ evaluation of policy proposals by evoking emotions and serve as informational

shortcuts, but also by 3) affecting their interpretation of what the policies intends to, and ultimately what outputs are to be expected.

The idea is not new; it is profoundly developed in the philosophy of language and linguistic semantic literature (see e.g. Stevenson, 1963a, Walton, 2001; Macagno and Walton, 2010; Aomi, 1985). However, while the theories of effects of such words are comprehensively developed in this literature, there are not yet any empirical studies or tests of the effects of emotive words on interpretation of intentions with policy proposals. Hence, this paper contributes both to the political communication literature by studying an in this context new explanation to why emotive words matter, changing interpretations of intentions with campaign proposals, and also to the philosophy of language field by testing the theoretical assumptions developed in this literature, empirically.

The general hypothesis posed in this paper is that one of the mechanisms that are at play when emotive words affect whether voters like or dislike a campaign proposal, is that it affect their interpretation of the intentions with the same. Basically, the idea is that the emotive words works by shifting focus from what policies or actions that is actually proposed, to the realization of the individuals perception of the emotive words embedded in the proposal. Using data from an experiment conducted in January 2014 at a central train station in Gothenburg, Sweden, the paper investigates effects of including emotive words in election campaign proposals, on 1) Voters description of their interpretation of the intentions of the proposal, and 2) Where voters place the proposal on a political left-right scale. It also investigates whether 3) Voters interpretation of the proposal mediates the effects of emotive and vague words on whether they like the proposal or not. A difference is made between right- and left-laden emotive words, and emotive words that are neutral to left-right politics.

Emotive words and its effects of evaluation of campaign appeals

Today, we know from numerous studies that emotive words can be used to influence attitudes, evaluation of policy proposals and political actors, and ultimately to affect vote choice. (see e.g. Tversky and Kahneman, 1981; Entman, 1993; Iyengar, 2010; Druckamn and Chong, 2007; Nelson et al, 1997) When it comes to effects of words and different formulations of policy proposals in general, several scholars have found significant impact on peoples' support for the policies. (e.g. Tversky and Kahneman, 1981; Entman, 1993; Iyengar, 2010; Druckamn and Chong, 2007; Zaller, 1992). A well-known example is found in Nelson, Oxley and Clawson's study (1997), in which 85% of the respondents said that they supported

a new law to legalize hate groups to hold political rallies, when the question started with “Given the importance of *free speech*.. ”, but only 45% would vote pro the law when the question started with “Given *the risk of violence*.. ”. When scholars try to explain the effects of such words, there are generally two mechanisms in focus. First, that the words evoke peoples’ emotions (1), and secondly that they serve as informational shortcuts and cues (2).

1) Emotive reactions. When it comes to evoking feelings, a number of scholars have shown that people, even when they are motivated to be unprejudiced and “leave their feelings aside”, appear incapable to view political issues unemotionally (Marcus, 2003; Redlawsk, 2002; McGraw, Lodge, & Jones, 2002; McGraw, Fischle, Stenner, & Lodge, 1996). It has been shown that use of words that are emotive and evoke peoples’ feelings can alter the effectiveness of political appeals on support. (e.g De Steno et al, 2004; Shah et al, 1996; Druckman and Chong, 2010; Shaffner et al, 2010; Hartmann, 1936). Even when emotive words that are obviously semantically unrelated to a certain political object (such as flower or blisters) are embedded in the presentation of the issue or policy, they seem to influence peoples’ evaluation and support for the same. When a political object is associated with congruent emotive words, the effects of the word increase. For persons who dislike the Swedish prime minister for example, they dislike the prime minister even further if she or he is associated with a negative, yet irrelevant, word such as “toothache”, and vice versa. (Lodge et al, 2005).

Words that evoke emotions have also been shown to influence support for political objects, candidates and certain policies, both in a short- and long-term perspective. Despite the fact that many people seem to forget much of the information they receive in campaigns, there are many studies indicating that people can recollect their affective impression of candidates when they, long after exposed to the information, are asked to make political choices (e.g. Kelly and Mirer, 1984; Baumeister, Muraven and Tice, 2000; Marcus, Neuman and MacKuen, 2000; Hastie and Pennington, 1989; Lichtenstein and Srull, 1987; Watts and McGuire, 1964; Anderson and Hubert, 1963; Eysenck and Keane, 1990; Graber, 1987). Lodge, Steenbergen and Brau (1995) for example, have shown that citizens’ are responsive to campaign information in the way that they adjust their long-term evaluation of the candidates in response to their immediate affective evaluation of campaign information. While quickly forgetting the message that initiate the evaluation, the affective impression seem to be stored in their long-term memory. Lodge and Taber (2005) have further shown that most political objectives that are evaluated become affect laden, and that whenever people are asked to evaluate the objectives again, their attitudes are evoked automatically.

Thus, their emotions can be used in the encoding of information, expression of preferences, and ultimately for their vote choice. It has also been shown that emotions can be used to compensate for lack of knowledge, and such shortcuts have been observed among individuals with all kinds of personal traits, (for example it has been observed both among politically sophisticated and people that are less politically informed). (e.g Kroznick and Brannon, 1993; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock, 1991).

2) Ideological cues. Words that evoke emotions are often laden with political, social or normative values. These values can be neutral to political divisions such as left- and right, however they are often laden with a political left-right dimension. It has been shown that linking political positions to words that are laden with values activates people's value orientations. These value orientations serve as heuristic shortcuts, or cues, which can influence peoples' interpretation, evaluation and support for the political objectives associated with the words (e.g. Domke et al, 1998; Shen and Edwards, 2005). Several scholars have found indications that the words, if they congregate with a persons' value orientation (e.g left- and right predispositions), are more likely to affect the individuals' evaluation of political information and objects. (See e.g. Schemer et al, 2011; Domke et al, 1999; Keum et al, 2005; Lee et al, 2008). When serving as informational shortcuts, such emotive and value-laden words can even create new and alternative political positions (e.g Shah et al, 1996; Druckman and Chong, 2010, 2007b; Shaffner et al, 2010; Hartmann, 1936). When political positions are linked to emotive words that reiterate peoples left- and right predispositions, it can sometimes create support for a political position or policy proposal presented by political parties that the person commonly oppose, and ultimately result in change of party support. (See e.g Druckman and Chong, 2007b). Other scholars however stresses that emotive words that are laden with values can have effect on how people talk about a certain political objective, also when the persons have different value orientations. In these cases, the words are perceived and used differently by different persons. Brewer (2002) for example, found effects of emotive words laden with values, used in a text concerning a policy proposal to strengthen rights of homosexuals. What he found was that people that were exposed to information regarding a policy proposal that were linked to certain emotive words associated with values, *equality* or *morality*, they started to use the same words when they later discussed the policy. However, the same words were used both as pro- and con arguments for the policy.

Summary. Taken together, previous research have pointed on two mechanisms that are at play when emotive words affect evaluation of political information, candidates and policies. First, the words evoke immediate and automatic emotional reactions, such as

enthusiasm, anger or anxiety, which influence both the attention a person pay to the information, and whether she like it or not. Secondly, the words serve as informational shortcuts and cues, to compensate for lack of knowledge. To recap, this paper suggests that emotive words also impact the way voters interpret parties' intentions with policy proposals, which in turn mediate the effects of the words on whether people like the proposed policies or not. Before specifying the predications however, we need to know more about such words and the characteristics that make them effective. Next section summarizes the theoretical assumptions that serve as base for the hypotheses posed and tested in the paper.

How do words matter? A theoretical approach

This section defines what will henceforth be referred to as emotive and vague or *persuasive* words, by using theories from the research field that is sometimes called philosophy of language and linguistic semantics. This research field provides a theoretical framework for analyses of the mechanisms that makes certain words effective. The theories used in the field apply to ethic communication, such as election campaigns, where the purpose is to change, redirect or in any way affect the opinion of others. The strength of the field, compared to for example researching focusing on effects of framing, is that it provides profound theories of what mechanisms and characteristics that makes words persuasive.

Scholars in philosophy of language and linguistic semantics have long studied the function of words in communicative settings. Focus is on the relation between the speaker and the listener, both on the mind of the one giving information, and the one interpreting it. Some of the literature focuses specifically on language as a tool to persuade. Persuasion refer to attempts to influence listeners, by changing or redirecting attitudes, motivations, beliefs or behavior (Seiter and Gass, 2010), for example with the purpose of selling a product, convincing a jury, or fostering political support (Fautsch, 2007). Schacter, Gilbert and Wegner (2011) distinguish between systematic and heuristic persuasion. Systematic persuasion refers to processes through which attitudes or beliefs are changed by appeals to logic and reason, while heuristic persuasion is the process through which attitudes or beliefs are changed by appeals to emotions (see also for example Larson, 2010; Stevenson, 1963, 1944; Walton; 2001). This paper focuses on the latter, and specifically on use of words to evoke emotional reactions when the listeners are voters, and when the speakers are political actors aiming at attracting interest and gaining support. The following text will be organized following three characteristics of persuasive words that I find crucial in the literature, and that

I use to define the notion of emotive, or *persuasive*, words. The characteristics of the words are that, 1) people automatically respond to them emotionally (they strongly like or dislike them), 2) they denote a social and contextual value, and 3) they are vague and general in the sense that they include a variety of different descriptions and are applicable to a variety of situations, issues and contexts.

1) People respond emotionally to the word, they strongly like or dislike it.

The literature on heuristic persuasion distinguishes between terms descriptive and emotive meaning. The vast majority of words are mostly descriptive and emotionally “neutral”, such as office, trees and shoes. Some words, however, have very strong emotional connotations, where the emotive meaning represents the feelings or attitudes that exposure to the word evokes (Stevenson, 1963a, Walton, 2001p. 117; Macagno and Walton, 2010, 2014). Persuasive terms are those terms that have strong emotive meaning that outperform the descriptive meaning, with other words, terms that people like or dislike regardless of how they are defined (e.g. Walton, 2001, 2003; Stevenson, 1944; 1963; Aomi, 1985). The emotive meaning should also be consistent in a social context, in the sense that the word evokes similar emotions among a majority of the listeners. Examples in kind are “freedom” which is strongly associated with something positive, while “oppression” has negative emotive connotations.

2) The word denotes a social and contextual value. Except for being strongly emotive, persuasive terms often denotes a social or political contextual value (Stevenson, 1963a, 1973; Finlay, 2005; Hare, 1952, 1997). Included in the concept values, is “morals, ethics, preferences, belief systems and world views”, and they are used to identify the norms for individuals, groups and cultures. A distinction has been made by communal values (e.g healthcare, welfare, social security and justice), and individual values (e.g innovation, achievement, choice, merits, self-expression) (See e.g Graves, 1965). If the word are associated with a certain value, the persuasiveness of the words often increase, for example by putting pressure on and appealing to peoples’ self-perception or self-affirmation. Including value-laden words such as democracy can have the effect that it becomes more difficult to oppose a position, argue against would in its extension namely mean argue against democracy. (e.g Dancy, 1993; Gibbard, 1990; Stevenson, 1963, 1944; Schacter, Gilbert and Wegner, 2011; Petty et al, 2009)¹.

¹ For a further discussion about self-affirmation, see Steele, 1988

3) The words are vague and general in the sense that they include a variety of descriptions, and are applicable to many situations, issues and contexts. The third characteristic I include in the definition of emotive and vague, or persuasive words concerns degree of generality. Emotive terms can be vague and general, with a high level of abstraction. They can also be more specific and associated with a certain descriptive meaning. (Stevenson, 1944, 1963). The level of generality is however often diffuse and different terms can be stated on different levels of specificity. They can also differ in degree to which they are situational specific. (Walton and Macagno, 2014; Walton, 2001).

Persuasive words are often found on a rather high level of generality and abstraction, such as democracy, freedom and opportunities. The words can also be slightly less abstract, such as welfare, health or competitive market. Common for these words are that they can be interpreted very differently, and also that they can be applied to many different situations, aspects of life and social phenomenon (e.g. Stevenson, 1944; Walton, 2000). Since changes in the descriptive meaning of the term, redefinitions, is difficult to notice for many listeners, they can easily be used for semantic manipulation (e.g. Aomi, 1985). Walton (2001, p 122) illustrates this with the following example. In an American presidential election campaign, the presidential candidate Ronald Reagan promises a social security fund to provide a “safety net” for the “truly needy”. When he after the election find it necessary to cut the program, he changes the definitions of truly needy and safety net. Because of the terms’ vagueness, many people did not notice the differences. This even though “safety net” and the “truly needy” now in some senses referred to notably different things than in the campaign.

Except for the above three characteristics, there are also some minor things that can indicate that a word is used to persuade. First, persuasive words are often preceded by words with enhancing effect, such as “true” and “real”, and the persuasive words are often repeated in the same messages. They are also sometimes associated with “determinism”, in the sense they are followed by sentences such as “...There are no other options”, or “...We cannot wait any longer”. (Stevenson, 1944; Walton, 2001). To concretize: “...in order to provide our youth with the *knowledge* they need for *the future*, we have to take actions that increase teachers authorities in classes. There are *no other options* if we want to have a school system with the capacity to provide students with the *knowledge* they need to *succeed in life*. For the sake of our children, *we cannot wait any longer*.”

In sum, what is here referred to as persuasive words, and what will be the definition of emotive and vague words as used in this paper, are words that are emotive, often associated with social values, is at a high level of generality and abstraction, and that can be

applied to a variety of contexts and issues. Characteristic for these words is that the audience can be expected to interpret them based on their personal preconceptions, at the same time as they respond to it emotionally. Basically, they should enable persuaders to excite their listeners, while without speaking untruth; conceal less positive aspects of the argument.

Predictions and hypotheses

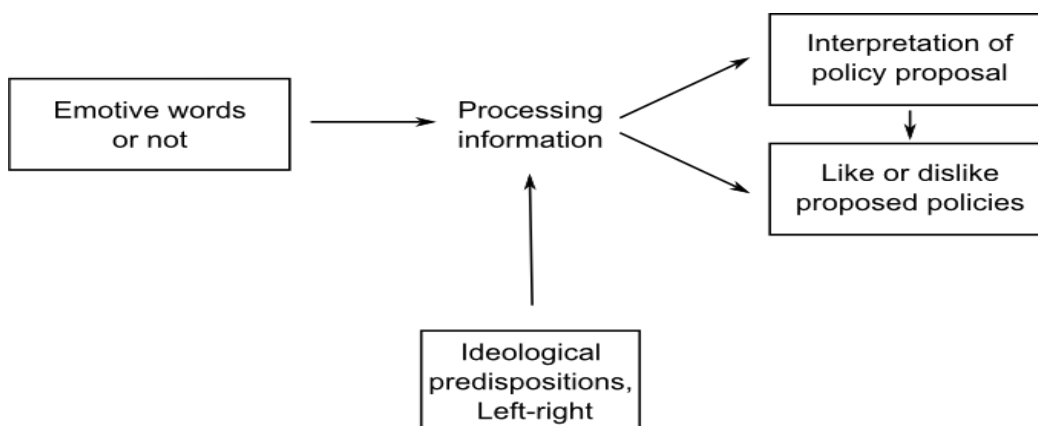
The issue at question in this paper is whether use of emotive words in campaign policy proposals affects voters' interpretation of the intentions with the policies, and whether this in turn affects whether they like the proposed policies or not. As discussed through the previous chapters, empirical findings points out two mechanisms at play when emotive and vague words affect evaluation of political information. First, the words automatically evoke emotive reactions, and secondly they can be used as informational shortcuts and cues when people make political decisions.

Drawing on theories from linguistic semantics, this paper argues that there may be a third important mechanism at play when emotive words affect whether voters like or dislike policy proposals. Since emotive words often occur at a high level of abstraction, there should be room for different alternative interpretations of campaign appeals in which the words are embedded. If voters interpret the intentions with proposed policies differently, it may increase the effect of the words emotive connotations on voters' evaluation of the proposal in the wished for direction. In this sense, it is not only the emotive connotations of the word itself that affect peoples' reactions to and evaluation of the proposals, but that it cause them to interpret the intentions with the proposed policies to be in line with their own preferences. To concretize: ... "A political party proposes a policy to increase gas taxes, and embed in the proposal the words *sustainable development*. Two persons, who both like the idea of sustainable development, but dislike the idea of raised taxes, can react differently to the proposal. One of the persons may interpret the intentions with the policy to create sustainable development, and decreases air pollution and green house effects on the climate. Since she regards sustainable development as truly positive, she likes the policy. The other person may interpret the intentions with the policy to be to raise taxes in order to increase the state budget, not to endorse sustainable development. Thus, even though viewing sustainable development as strongly positive, she disapproves with the policy since she does not associate it with the emotive words.

To summarize, I hypothesize that emotive and vague words affect voters' interpretation of the intentions with policy proposals, and that the interpretation of the intentions affects voters' final evaluation of the proposal, i.e. whether they like the proposed policies or not. The hypothesis specifies as follows, H1) Emotive and vague words affects voters description of their interpretation of the intentions of the proposal, H2) Emotive and vague words affect where voters place the proposal on a political left-right scale, and H3) Voters' interpretation of the proposal mediates the effects of emotive and vague words on whether they like the proposal or not.

The model below illustrates the predicted relationship between the variables that are included in the study. First, emotive and vague words are predicted to affect voters' interpretation of the intentions of the proposal, as well as whether they like the proposed policies or not. Secondly, interpretation is assumed to increase, or mediate the effects of emotive and vague words, on whether voters like or dislike the proposal. Finally, the individuals ideological predispositions in terms of left and right, are expected to moderate the effects of the emotive words on whether they like the proposed policies or not. This variable is expected to moderate the effects, since if the emotive word is associated with left or right politics, it will most likely affect whether persons with different ideological predispositions perceive the word as being positive or negative.

Model 1: Predicted effects of emotive and vague words in election campaign proposals, on voters' interpretation of the intentions with the proposal, as well as whether they like it or not.



Research design

The paper takes an experimental approach, and the final article will be based on a large N online-survey in Sweden, conducted during spring/summer 2014. The analyses in this paper will however be based on the results of a pilot experiment. The pilot experiment was executed in January 2014, on a diverse sample of 320 adults recruited at the central station in Gothenburg, Sweden's second largest city. The results from the pilot serve as an initial test of the hypotheses, as well as test of stimuli design and questionnaire for the forthcoming survey experiment. Power calculations using effect sizes from the data, will also be used to calculate a suitable number of respondents for the survey experiment. The design of the forthcoming experiment will be based on the pilot design, with similar outline, stimuli and questionnaires. The rest of this section will discuss the operationalization of variables and the design of the treatments for the pilot, as it is this experiment that is the basis for the analyses in this version of the paper.

Operationalization of variables

Independent variable. The independent variable in the study is whether emotive and vague words are embedded in policy proposals, or not. In both the empirical and theoretical literature that inspired this study, a difference is made between emotive words that are neutral to ideology, and those that are associated with ideological values. The empirical research shows that, in cases when the word denote a value that are associated with political left- and right politics, it will have different impact on people depending on their ideological predispositions. Thus, the paper makes a difference between, and tests the effects of emotive words that are ideologically neutral, to those that are associated with left and right politics. In order to find appropriate words that are emotive in a Swedish political context, as well as make a difference between left, right and ideologically neutral words, two explorative pre-analyses were conducted before finalizing the design of the experimental treatments.

The first analyses served as a pre-test of a list of political words that can be considered emotive in a Swedish context. The test was conducted on 80 participants recruited at the Central station in Gothenburg, Sweden. The test included a questionnaire with a list of words, and the respondents were asked to rate how much they liked or disliked each of the words on a scale ranging from 1 "strongly dislike", to 5 "strongly" like. In order to find words that people strongly like independent of whether they affiliate with the political left or right,

the respondents were, before they were asked to evaluate the concepts, asked to place themselves on a political left-right scale.

Bivariate regression analyses were conducted on the data, to find words that were strongly liked by the respondents' independent of their left-right predispositions, as well as words that were strongly liked only by respondents with left- or right predispositions, respectively. Words that scored a high mean on the dislike- like scale, and for which there were no significant differences between left and right respondents in terms of whether they liked the word or not, were regarded as emotive words that are neutral to ideology in terms of left and right. Freedom, development and change are examples in kind. Words that were strongly liked only by the respondents with left predispositions, e.g equality, solidarity and welfare, were regarded as emotive words associated with political left, and words that were strongly liked only by respondents with right predispositions, e.g privatization, freedom of choice and economic growth, were regarded as emotive words associated with political right. (Please see appendix 1 table 4, for a summary of the results).

The second analyses that were conducted to find appropriate words to use in the experimental treatments involved a search for emotive words used in election manifestoes, from all parliamentary parties in Sweden that participated in the election campaigns 2006 and 2010. These analyses aimed at finding words that are realistic in the sense that Swedish political parties use them in statements they make in an electoral context. Emotive words that appeared several times in many of the manifestoes from both left and right parties, e.g. *opportunities* and *development*, were regarded as emotive words that are neutral to left-right politics. Emotive words that appeared several times in the manifestoes from the Left parties but not in the manifestoes from the Right parties, e.g *gender equality* and *solidarity*, were regarded as emotive words associated with left politics. Emotive words that were used in the manifestoes from the Right parties but not in the manifestoes from the Left parties, e.g. *freedom of choice* and *economic growth*, were regarded as emotive words associated with political right. (Please see appendix 2 table 5-9, for a summary of the results). The results from these two analyses were used as inspiration when the decision was made about which words to include in the experimental treatments.

Dependent variables. The experiment included three dependent variables. The first dependent variable concerned the respondents description of the interpretation of the intentions with the proposed policies (1), the second variable concerned the interpretation of the proposed policies in terms of left and right (2), and the third dependent variable concerned whether the respondents liked the proposed policies or not (3). These variables were

operationalized in the following way. After reading the stimuli, the respondents were asked to rate a policy proposal about the Swedish school system by placing it on a like-dislike scale ranging from 0-10, to place the proposal on a political left-right scale ranging from 0-10, and to describe their interpretation of the intentions with the proposed policies with their own words.

Control variables. Apart from the independent variable, whether a policy proposal includes emotive terms or not, the study also included a number of control variables that can be expected to affect whether voters' like or dislike policy proposals. The control variables included were gender, age, political interest and level of education. Since the study includes both emotive words that are neutral to left-right ideology, and emotive words that are associated with left-right politics, the study also included a question concerning a variable that can be expected to moderate the effects of the emotive words; the respondents' ideological predispositions in terms of left and right.

Stimuli design

The experimental stimuli were designed as a fictive election campaign proposal involving specific policies concerning the Swedish school system. The school system is a currently debated issue in Sweden, and the policies described in the stimuli are similar to policies that have been proposed previously, both by political right- and political left-wing parties. This will make the proposal sound realistic, at the same time as it is diffuse in terms of left and right. All versions of the stimuli started by informing that the knowledge of Swedish students drops in international comparisons, and that more and more students find it harder to meet the qualification requirements for senior high school. The pledge continued by proposing investments in Elementary school with four billion, and that the money should be used to develop a more detailed school plan, implement mandatory summer school for students who do not meet the qualification requirements for senior high school, and expanded resources for teacher training.

The stimuli came in four different versions. What differed between the versions was that three of the proposals included additional sentences with emotive and vague words. The first version aimed at measuring effects of ideologically neutral emotive words, and included words such as "we need *changes..*", and that the school should provide "*fair conditions* for all students". The second version included emotive words associated with the political left, such as *equality* and *responsibility*. The third version included emotive and

vague words associated with the political right, such as *individualism* and *freedom*. The fourth version served as control, and emotive words were therefore not included. (Please see appendix 4, for the full versions of the stimuli translated to English).

Design and procedure. The pilot experiment had a 1x4 factorial only-after design, and each respondent were randomly assigned to one of four different experimental conditions. The experimental procedure was as follows. During four days, all people waiting on the benches at the Central station in Gothenburg were asked one by one if they wanted to participate. Those who agreed to participate were then informed of the conditions for their participation.² The information was that the questionnaire concerned a study on voters' opinion regarding a policy proposal about the Swedish school system, and that the survey was a part of a dissertation project in political science at University of Gothenburg, Sweden. The participants were also informed that their participation was voluntary, and that all answers were going to be treated anonymously.

The experiment started with some questions aiming at measuring control variables. To rule out alternative explanations from the analyses, checks were later done on the randomization of these variables between the experiment groups. One-way ANOVA analyses revealed no significant differences between the groups, and variation in the dependent variables can therefore be considered to be due to the stimuli. (Please see table 4 in appendices for results of the checks for randomization). The initial questions were followed by the treatments. After reading the stimuli, the respondents were asked to evaluate the policy proposal concerning the Swedish school system by placing it on a like-dislike scale ranging from 0-10, to rate the pledge on a political left-right scale ranging from 0-10, and to describe their interpretation of the intentions with the pledge with their own words.

Results

The results from the experiment are divided in two sections. The first section presents the results concerning three of the hypotheses, that emotive and vague words affects voters' interpretation of the pledge in terms of left and right (2), that emotive and vague words affects whether voters' like or dislike the proposed policies (3). It also presents results from analyses of whether interpretation of the policy in terms of left-and right increases or mediates the

² Persons that were below 18 or those who by other reasons did not have the right to vote in Sweden this year, 2014, were kindly told that the conditions for participation were that they were allowed to vote in the forthcoming elections.

effects of emotive and vague terms, on whether they like the proposed policies or not. The second section presents findings concerning the hypothesis that emotive and vague words affect voters' interpretation of the intentions with proposed policies. These results are based on the coding of the respondents answers to the open-ended question "Please describe briefly and in your own words what you perceive that the politicians want to achieve with the proposed school policies".

Section 1

This section presents the results from ANOVA analyses of effects of emotive and vague words on the respondents' interpretation of the school pledge in terms of left and right, and whether the respondents like the proposed policies or not. It also examines whether the interpretation of the proposal in terms of left- and right increases or mediates the effects of emotive and vague words, as well as the direct effects of interpretation in terms of left and right, on whether the respondents like or dislike the proposed policies.

Effects of emotive and vague words on respondents' interpretation of the proposed policies, in terms of left and right.

Table 1 shows the different treatment groups mean scores on left-and right interpretation of the proposed school policies. As we can see in the table, all groups mean scores stay near the middle. However, the respondents that were exposed to emotive words associated with political left, place the pledge furthest to the left, and those who were exposed to the right-laden words place it furthest to the right. To see whether the differences between some of the groups were significant, one-way anova analyses were conducted. These analyses showed that the mean scores differed significantly between some of the groups on a 5% significance level ($F(3,301) = 2.979, p .032$). A post-hoc Tukey pairwise comparison test revealed that the significant differences ($p .028$) occurred between the group that were exposed to left-laden emotive words and the group that were exposed to right-laden emotive words, the groups which observed mean scores also was furthest away from each other. No other differences were significant.

These results indicate that the emotive and vague words associated with political left-right ideology influence the interpretation in terms of left-and right. In terms of the theory, these results do not seem too surprising. Words that are associated with left and right should reasonably evoke left- and right associations. However, the results are important in the

respect that they indicate that the words that were used to measure emotive and vague words associated with left and right politics, worked as intended.

That the mean scores for the control group and the group that were exposed to emotive and vague words that are neutral to left-right ideology and, fall in the middle of the scale, with no significant differences to the other groups, do also seem reasonable. Interesting results here would be if the within-group deviation from each groups' grand mean scores, would differ. If the variation around the mean are larger in the group exposed to emotive and vague words than in the control group, it would indicate that such words diffuses the respondents' ability to distinguish the policy from left-and right ideology. Looking at the standard deviations, we see that the variation within the groups are slightly larger in the groups that were exposed to the emotive and left-right neutral words (2.21) and those that were exposed to the right-laden emotive words (2.29), than in the other two groups, left (2.07) and control (1.96). The differences are however marginal.

Table 1. Effects of emotive and vague words, on interpretation of the proposed policies in terms of left- and right.

<i>IV: Emotive and vague words (four conditions)</i>						
<i>DV: Interpretation proposal, left - right</i>	Grp1: universal	Grp2: left	Grp3: right	Grp4: control	Total	F-test (sig.)
Mean	5.9	5.12	6.09	5.81	5.74	2.972 *
Std.	2.21	2.07	2.29	1.96	2.159	
Number of respondents	78	75	76	73	302	

Comments. Method: one-way ANOVA. * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001. The independent variable is treatment group, this consist of four categories: Emotive and vague terms (universal); Emotive and vague terms (left); Emotive and vague terms (right); No emotive and vague terms. The dependent variable is left-right interpretation of the school pledge, deriving from the question "It is sometimes said that policy proposals can be placed on a left-right scale. Where would you like to place the proposed school policies on a political left-right scale? The scale ranges from 0 to 10, were 0 denotes "far to the left" and 10 denotes "far to the right".

Effects of emotive and vague words on whether the respondents like the proposed policies or not, and whether the effects interacts with interpretation in terms of left-right.

The treatment effects on whether the respondents like the proposed policies or not, will reasonably vary between respondents with political left predispositions, and respondents with political right predispositions. Thus, these analyses will be conducted on left and right respondents separately. The variables included in the analyses are whether emotive and vague words are included or not (four conditions), interpretation of pledge in terms of left and right,

and whether the respondents like the proposed policies or not. Table 2 shows the mean scores for each treatment group on whether the respondents like the proposed policies or not. The table presents the results for respondents with ideological left and ideological right predispositions, separately.

The upper part of table 2 shows the mean scores on the like-dislike scale for the different treatment groups, including only respondents with political left predispositions. The mean score for all participants was 6.23, pretty much in the middle on a scale from 0-10. In accordance with the expectations, the group that was exposed to the left-laden words scored highest on like-dislike (Group mean 6.92), while the group that was exposed to the right-laden words scored lowest (Group mean 5.5). However, and in opposite to what was expected, the control group received higher mean score than the group exposed to the emotive and politically neutral manipulation. One-way anova analyses showed that whether the respondents like or dislike the proposal, differs significantly on a 10% level between some of the groups ($F(3, 172) = 2.353, p .074$). A post-hoc Tukey test reveals that the differences are significant on a 10% level ($p .069$) between the group that was exposed to left-laden emotive words, and the group that was exposed to right-laden emotive words. The test showed no significant differences between any of the other groups.

In order to study interaction effects between emotive words and left-right interpretation (still only for the sample including voters that placed themselves to the left on a political left-right scale) in whether they liked the proposed policies or not, a two-way Anova test was executed. In this test, the variable interpretation of the proposal in terms of left- and right was included, as well as an interaction variable $\text{treatment} * \text{interpretation}(\text{left-right})$. The analyses shows that, when including interpretation of the pledge in terms of left-right, the effects of the treatments on whether the respondents like the proposed policies or not, become insignificant ($F(3, 168) = 1.334, p .266$). The size of the treatment effect is also very small in terms of partial eta square ($\eta^2 = .03$). The analyses do neither show any significant interaction effects between left-right interpretation and the treatments ($F(27, 168) = 1,076, p .378, \eta^2 = .19$). However, the single effects of left-right interpretation of the pledge on evaluation turned out to be significant on a 1% level ($F(10, 168) = 6.926, p .000$) and the sizes of the effects of interpretation in terms of left and right can according to Cohen's (1992) standard critical values³ be regarded as large ($\eta^2 = .35$).

³ Cohen's (1992) standard critical values for effect sizes for f in ANOVA analyses, is 0.1 for small effect, 0.25 for medium effect and 0.4 for large effects.

Together, these analyses reveal an appeared effect of emotive words that are associated with left-right ideology on whether the respondents liked the proposed policies or not, when the sample included only respondents with political left predispositions. The effect however, becomes insignificant when left-right interpretation is included in the analyses. Since the effects of interpretation of the pledge in terms of left-right are stronger while there are no interaction effects between interpretation and the treatment, the results indicate that emotive and vague words only have *indirect* effects on whether the respondents like the proposal or not. What actually seem to affect whether the respondents like the proposal or not, is how they interpret the proposal in terms of left and right.

When looking at the lower part of the table 2, which show the mean scores for the respondents with political right predispositions, we see that the control group and the group exposed to ideologically neutral emotive words receive the highest mean scores, not the group exposed to the right-laden words as we would expect. The differences are small and all group means are close to the Grand mean score, 6.75. One-way Anova analyses revealed no significant differences between the groups on whether they like the proposed policies or not ($F(3,123) = 0.652$, $p .583$). A two-way Anova test including interpretation of the pledge in terms of left-right did, as for the sample with respondents with left predispositions, not show any increased effects of the treatment $F(3,121) = 1.064$, $p .368$, $\eta^2 = .03$). It did neither show any significant interaction effects between emotive words and left-right interpretation ($F(12,121) = 1.235$, $p .270$, $\eta^2 = .13$). The analyses on respondents with ideological right predispositions did neither show any significant effects of interpretation of the proposal in terms of left and right, on whether they liked the proposed policies or not ($F(4,121) = 0.722$, $p .579$, $\eta^2 = .03$). Hence, for the respondents with political right predispositions, neither emotive words nor interpretation, seem to have any effects on whether they liked the proposed policies or not.

Table 2. Effects of emotive and vague words, on whether the respondents' like the proposed school policies or not. Results for respondents with left and right predispositions are presented separately.

<i>IV: Emotive and vague words (four conditions)</i>						
<i>Respondents Left</i>						
<i>Like/dislike school</i>	<i>Grp1: universal</i>	<i>Grp2: left</i>	<i>Grp3: right</i>	<i>Grp4: control</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>F-test (sig.)</i>
Mean	5.91	6.92	5.5	6.41	6.23	2.353 *
Std.	2.52	2.61	2.9	2.48	2.65	
Number of respondents	47	49	36	41	173	
<i>Respondents Right</i>						
<i>Like/dislike school</i>	<i>Grp1: universal</i>	<i>Grp2: left</i>	<i>Grp3: right</i>	<i>Grp4: control</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>F-test (sig.)</i>
Mean	6.93	6.43	6.53	7.17	6.75	.652
Std.	1.9	2.25	2.56	2.57	2.35	
Number of respondents	28	28	38	30	124	

Comments. Method: one-way ANOVA. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. The table shows the mean score on evaluation of the school pledge, for each treatment group. The dependent variable is whether the respondents like the proposal or not. This variable is measured by the question "What do you think about the pledge concerning school policies? The Scale ranges from 0 to 10, where 0 denotes strongly dislike and 10 denotes strongly like.

Direct effects of interpretation of the policy proposal in terms of left and right, on whether the respondents like the proposed policies or not.

In the previous analyses that included both the treatment variable and interpretation in terms of left and right, we found some significant effects of interpretation in terms of left and right on whether the respondents' liked the proposal or not. These results were found for the sample including only respondents with political left predispositions, however not for respondents with political right predispositions. This section shows the results from one-way Anova analyses of effects of interpretation in terms of left and right on whether the respondents like the proposal or not, without including the treatment variable. Since also these analyses involve the dependent variable whether the respondents like the proposal or not, they are, as in the previous ones, conducted on the respondents with ideological left and ideological right predispositions, separately. The independent variable is in these analyses interpretation of the pledge in terms of left and right. This variable have been recoded into five categories: 1=far left, 2=left, 3=centre, 4=right, and 5=far right.

Table 3 shows results of one-way Anova analyses of the effects of respondents' interpretation of the proposal in terms of left-right, on whether they like the proposed policies

or not. The upper part of the table shows that the mean scores on like/dislike for respondents with political left predispositions decreases for each step from left to right (the further to the right they place the pledge, the less do they like it). The differences in mean scores from the respondents that placed the pledge “far left”, and those that placed it “far right”, are almost three steps on the evaluation scale (were 1=strongly dislike, and 5=strongly like). As in the previous analyses on effects of interpretation, we find that the single effects of left-right interpretation of the pledge are significant on a 1% level ($F(4, 168) = 11.839, p .000$). A post hoc Tukey test reveal between which categories the mean scores differ significantly. The differences are significant on a 1% level between those respondents placing the pledge “far right” and those that, 1: placing it “far left” ($p .000$), 2: placing it “left” ($p .000$) and 3: placing it “centre” ($p .000$). The test also show significant differences on a 5% level between those placing the pledge “right” and those that 1: placing it “far left” ($p .022$), and 2: placing it “far right” ($p .014$). These results indicate that, for respondents with political left predispositions, interpretation of the proposal in terms of left and right are an important explanation to why they like the proposed policies or not.

When looking at the lower part of table 3, which shows mean scores for the respondents with political right predispositions, the pattern is less clear between interpretation in terms of left and right, and whether the respondents’ like the proposal or not. One-way Anova analyses did not show any significant effects of where the respondents placed the proposal on a political left-right scale ($F(4,121) = 1.076, p .372$). A notable problem is that the respondents that placed the pledge “far to the right” only observe a number of four, which makes it inapplicable to statistical tests. However, the results are consistent with the previous results on respondents with political right predispositions. The interpretation of the pledge in terms of left and right do not seem to affect whether these respondents like the proposed policies about the Swedish school, or not.

To summarize, the results of the analyses of effects of interpretation of the school proposal in terms of left and right, indicates that the more to the left a respondent with ideological left predispositions place the proposal, the more will she or he like it. This is in line with what we would expect from the theory. However, the results do not apply to the respondents with political right predispositions. For this sample the analyses showed no systematic or significant results.

Table 3. Effects of interpretation of the school proposal in terms of left and right, on whether the respondents like the proposed policies or not. The results for respondents with left and right predispositions are presented separately.

<i>IV: Interpretation, left-right</i>							
Like/dislike school	Far left	Respondents Left				Total	F-test (sig.)
		Left	Centre	Right	Far Right		
Mean	7.94	7.26	6.72	5.84	4.11	6.16	11.839 ***
Std.	2.54	2.03	2.08	2.296	2.836	2.638	
Number of respondents	17	27	50	38	37	169	
Like/dislike school	Far left	Respondents Right				Total	F-test (sig.)
		Left	Centre	Right	Far right		
Mean	7.25	6.57	5.96	7	7.09	6.74	1.076
Std.	3.2	2.48	2.38	2	2.58	2.37	
Number of respondents	4	21	26	39	32	122	

Comments. Method: one-way ANOVA. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Independent variable is "left-right", five categories: 1=far left, 2=left, 3=centre, 4=right, 5=far right. Dependent variable is evaluation of the pledge.

Section 1: Summary

Together, the results of the analyses in section 1 shows that emotive and vague words have small or no direct effects on whether the respondents like the proposal or not. For the respondents with political right predispositions, there were no significant effects of the treatments on whether they liked the proposal or not, and for the respondents with political left predispositions the effects were small, and became insignificant when the variable interpretation in terms of left and right was included in the analyses. If we interpret the third hypothesis in terms of direct effects of emotive and vague words on whether voters like campaign proposals or not, the results do not support the hypothesis. It seems more likely that the effects of emotive and vague words on whether the respondents like the proposal or not, that appear in some of the analyses, are the result of effects on interpretation in terms of left and right, which is the actual determining factor when it comes to the evaluation of the pledge. This assumption is supported by the one-way Anova analyses showing that the effects of interpretation of the pledge in terms of left and right had significant effects on whether the respondents like the proposal or not (respondents with political left predispositions only). The results did not support the assumption that interpretation of the proposal interacts or increases the effects of emotive words on whether people like a campaign proposal or not. No significant interaction effects were found, neither for respondents with political left- nor for those with political right predispositions.

To conclude, some of the results found in this section support the hypotheses in the paper. The main hypothesis was that emotive and vague words not only affect whether people like campaign proposals or not because of the emotive reactions to the word themselves, but also because the words affect people's interpretation of the intentions with the proposed policies. The analyses on the respondents with political left predispositions showed that the effects that emotive and vague words appeared to have on the respondents like or dislike of the proposal, disappeared when interpretation in terms of left and right was included. Since the words had significant effect on interpretation in terms of left and right, which in turn had significant and strong effects on whether the respondent liked the proposal or not, the results actually indicate that emotive and vague words *only* have indirect effects on like/dislike towards campaign proposals. Hence, what the results indicate is that the important effects of emotive and vague words is that they affect the interpretation of the pledges, and that it is this interpretation that is the actual determinant factor when it comes to whether they finally decide whether to like the proposal or not. To make it more illustrative, it is not enough that a word that is included in a policy proposal evokes positive emotive reactions, for a person to like the actual policy. In order to affect whether the person like the proposal or not, she must also integrate her perception of the word with the policy. This means that, in order for the word to increase a persons approval of a proposal, she must also perceive it as that the intentions with the policy actually is to achieve what she associate with the word; the emotive words become effective only when they also affect the interpretation of the policy in a certain wished for direction.

However, the results from these analyses do not tell us whether the emotive words influenced the respondents' interpretation of the *intentions* with the proposed policies. From these results, it is not possible to differentiate whether the effects of the words on interpretation in terms of left and right mean that the respondents interpreted the *intentions* with the pledge differently, or if it only measures what previous research have called "ideological cues". The respondents may have placed the pledge to the left or to the right because they used the left-and right laden emotive words as ideological shortcuts, not because their interpretation of the intentions differed. In order to investigate whether the emotive words had effect on interpretation of the intentions with the proposed policies, I will in next section show some results from the open-ended question concerning the voters' description of their interpretation of the intentions with the proposal.

Section 2

The results presented in this section serve as an illustration of what interpretations that can come out of different formulations of a policy proposal. It also serve as an initial test of the theory, to get a hunch of what effects emotive and vague words can have on the interpretation of intentions with policy proposals, and to study whether there are some patterns that can be distinguished between the treatment groups. The results will also be used for the creation of a list of interpretations, which can be used in a “closed” version of the open-ended question concerning interpretation of intentions with the proposed policies, posed in the pilot study.

The open-ended question was in this experiment worded as follows *Please describe briefly and in your own words what you perceive that the politicians want to achieve with the proposed school policies.* The answers to this question, which will be the ones presented here, have been coded into 10 categories. The variation in interpretation will be illustrated with bar charts, one figure for each of the four experiment groups. Before each chart, there will be a brief discussion of what I regard as the most interesting findings within each group. The section ends with some summary discussions of the findings.

Coding of the open-ended question

The participants’ responses to the open-ended question of interpretation of intentions with the proposed school policies were all coded into one (or sometimes several) out of 10 different categories. The categories that were used for the coding of the answers were those that could be distinguished from the participants’ responses. Answers such as “I do not want to answer to this question”, “I do not understand the question”, or “the question is too vague to be able to interpret”, are not included in the results. Excluded are also responses that do not concern the actual question. The responses were coded into the following categories:

1: Grades. Includes answers related to passing grades and achieve a completed level of high school education. **2: Summer school.** Includes introducing a mandatory summer school for those students who fail to complete a high school level of education, or complete the formal requirements each semester. **3: More rules.** Includes demands, rules, high performance, compulsion and a more detailed school plan. **4: Better teachers.** Includes resources to teachers and to teacher training. **5: Better school.** Includes improving the school system, increase resources to schools, and to change the school to the better. **6: Opportunities.** Includes better chances, opportunities and knowledge for students to succeed in their future life, for example to be able to continue with higher educations and succeed on

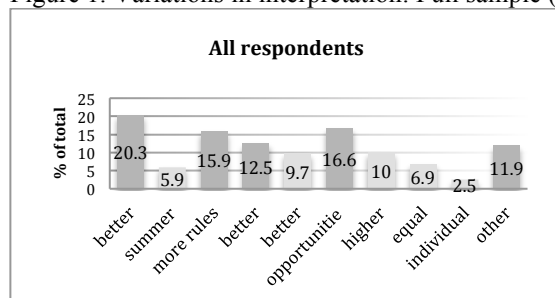
the job market. **7: Higher knowledge.** Includes higher levels of knowledge among students, and better performance on knowledge tests in international comparisons such as the European PISA tests. **8: Equal students.** Includes that students should be treated equal, have equal opportunities to complete elementary school, that teaching should be conducted on equal conditions, resources should be shared equally, and that all students should meet the same goals. **9: Individual focus.** Includes focus on individuals and to see to the needs of individual students. **10: Other.** Includes for example; Better society in general / Better public health / Increased taxes / More motivated students / Win the election / Safe school environment / Freedom to choose between schools / A mix of private and public schools / Help students with certain needs / Fairness between different schools in Sweden.

Results

The following parts illustrate and discuss the variation in interpretations within each of the four experiment groups. The bars in the diagrams show the frequency of each category of interpretation, in percent of total number of interpretations within each group. Number of respondents in each group are 80, and the response rate are over 90% in all of the groups.

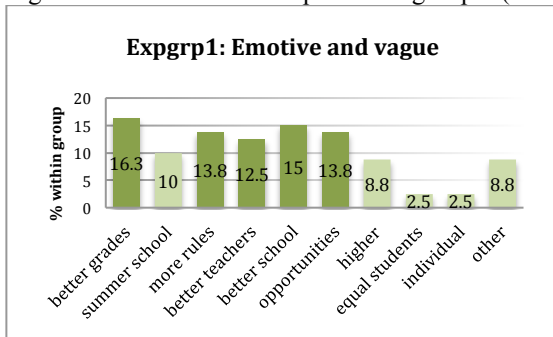
Variations in interpretation: full sample. The first bar chart, figure 1, shows the variation in interpretation for the whole sample. The figure shows that the overall most common interpretations among the respondents was that the intentions with the proposed policies were to make the students receive better grades, to create more rules, to create better teachers, and finally that the intentions was to provide the students with better opportunities in life. Less common interpretations of the intentions were to introduce a summer school, to increase equality among students, and to put focus on individual students needs.

Figure 1. Variations in interpretation: Full sample (n=320)



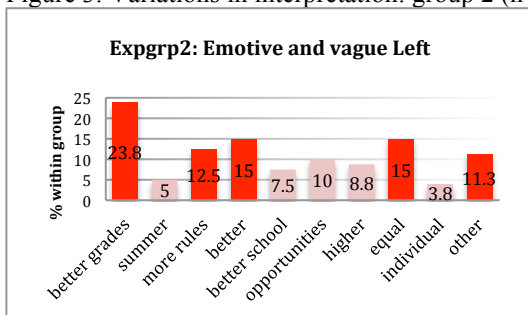
Variations in interpretation: group 1. The variation in interpretations in the group that was exposed to emotive and vague terms that are neutral to left-right ideology, are rather similar to the whole sample. Both better grades, more rules and future opportunities appear frequently. An interesting observation is that “better school” is the second second most frequent interpretation, wich should be classified as one of the more vague, or abstract, interpretations. Future opportunities are aslo a rather frequent interpretation. One of the formulations that were used as part of the manipulation in this version of the stimuli was “prospects for the future”, which relates to the quite vague idea that the school should provide the students with “better opportunities in life”. Compared to the whole sample, as well as all the other three groups below, this is the only group that uses “summer school” rather frequently when they describe their interpretation.

Figure 2. Variations in interpretation: group 1 (n=80)



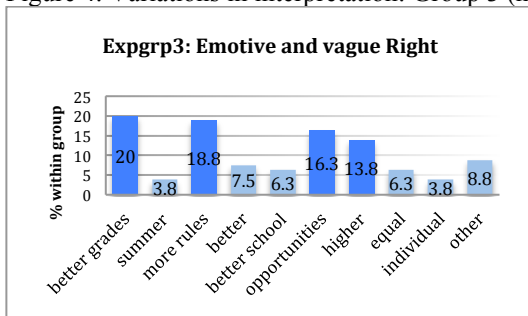
Variations in interpretation: Group 2. The third bar chart show the distribution of interpretation in the group that was exposed to emotive and vague words associated with political left ideology. The most frequent interpretation in this group turned out to be that the students should receive better grades, the interpretation that is most common among the respondents in general. The second most common interpretations of the intentions are to gain better teachers and higher equality among students (15% each). Higher equality among students should be the most interesting result for this group. This interpretation is notably more frequent in this group than in the others. Higher equality among students can be direct related to the stimuli, since equality was one of the emotive words that were included in this version of the treatment.

Figure 3. Variations in interpretation: group 2 (n=80)



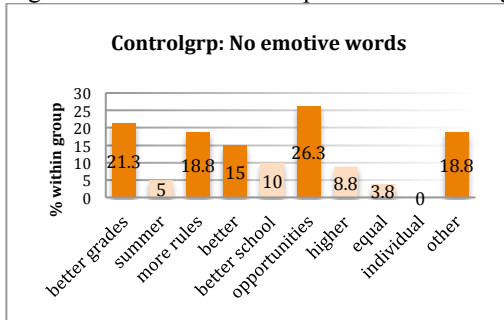
Variations in interpretation: Group 3. Figure four show the variation in interpretation in the group that were exposed to emotive and vague words associated with political right ideology. The most frequent interpretations in this group were better grades, more rules, future opportunities and higher knowledge. The respondents in this group were exposed to the words *efficiency*, focus on the *individual* students, and *higher demands*. The category “more rules” wich is the second most frequent interpretation in this group, include responses such as that the intentions is to force the students to study more and to perform better, to increase the teachers authorities and to raise the demands on students. This relate quite well to the words higher *demands* and perhaps also to the word *efficiency*. The category “higher knowledge” could also be related to the emotive word used in the stimuli; higher *demands*, since this category of interpretation also include responses such as “the students should perform better in international comparisons”.

Figure 4. Variations in interpretation: Group 3 (n=80)



Variations in interpretation: Group 4. The fifth and final figure shows variations in interpretation in the control group, which were exposed to a treatment without emotive words. Frequent interpretations in this group was to increase the students future opportunities, better grades, and more rules. Notable in this group is that the most frequent interpretation is to increase the students future opportunities; there is nothing in the formulation of the proposal that highlights future opportunities specifically. It is also noteworthy that many of the interpretations falls into the category “other”, which includes a variety of interpretations that are used by very few respondents and which cannot be placed into any of the other categories. That the respondents associated the policy with several different intentions than those that were frequent in the rest of the sample, in fact implies that the pledge may have given quite diffuse indications of the intents with the proposed policies, which is opposite to what was expected. Due to theories of emotive and vague words and persuasive language, a neutral presentation of a policy should be the most straightforward way to present the intentions and clarify to the voters what is aimed to be done. Thus, this part of the results do not favor the hypothesis that emotive and vague words diffuses information compared to “neutral information”.

Figure 5. Variations in interpretation: Control group (n=80)



Section 2: Summary

From the results above, some patterns can be distinguished in the way the different groups interpret the intentions with the proposed policies. The overall most common interpretations in the full sample was that students should receive better grades, that there should be more rules in school, and that the school should provide students with more future opportunities.

What differentiated the first group from the others was that it more frequently used the interpretation “better school”, and that the respondents in this group focused on the part of the proposal that concerned “mandatory summer school”. Group two differed from the other groups by referring to higher “equality” among students, more frequently. This interpretation was uncommon in the other groups, and it can be direct related to the stimuli since equality was one of the emotive words used in this groups’ treatment. Also group three used interpretations that can be related to the treatment. The interpretations “more rules” and “higher knowledge” appeared frequently among the respondents in this group, which both can be related to the words *demands* and *efficiency* that was used in the treatment. Notable in the results for the control group was that the interpretation of the intentions of the pledge in terms of increasing students’ future opportunities appeared frequently in the responses, and also that many of the responses fell under the category “other”; both indicating that the information in this stimuli were diffuse.

In sum, the findings indicate that words can matter for how people interpret policy proposals, and that emotive words that are used in policy proposals increases the frequency of certain perceptions of the primary intentions with the policies. In all groups there are increased frequency of interpretations that can be related to some of the emotive words used in the respective treatment. On the other hand, the control group, which was expected to be most concrete in their interpretations of the intentions, were the group that were least policy specific in their responses. The respondents in this group frequently referred to

“increase the students opportunities” which is an abstract and vague formulation of intentions, which is not mentioned in this “neutral information” version of the proposal. The responses in the control group did also more frequently fall under the category “other”, which includes a diverse range of different interpretations of the intentions. According to the theoretical approaches in the paper, a neutral presentation of “facts” should be the most straightforward way to present the intentions with a policy, and to clarify to the voters what is aimed to be done. Thus, this part of the results do not favor the theoretical assumption that emotive and vague words diffuses information compared to “neutral facts”.

So why did we found these results in the control group? Maybe, the policy proposal that were described in the treatment were not formulated as concrete as intended. It could also be that the policies that were described somehow clearly indicated that the opportunities for the students to succeed later in life would increase with these interventions. In order to test this further, I will replicate the experiment, with similar design but a variation of emotive words and policy proposals.

Concluding discussion

The results from the pilot experiment indicate that emotive words can matter for how people interpret not only the words themselves, but also their overall interpretation of the intentions with policy proposal. While keeping in mind that these results only applied to the respondents with ideological left predispositions, the first analyses of the experiment (section 1) showed effects of vague and emotive words on interpretation of the proposal in terms of left and right, and that interpretation in terms of left and right in turn had significant effects on whether the respondents liked the proposed policies or not. However, the analyses did not show any direct effects of emotive and vague words on the respondents’ tendencies to like the proposal or not. In line with the hypothesis of the paper, these results indicate that it may not be enough that a word that is included in a policy proposal evokes positive emotive reactions for the person to like the actual policy. In order to affect whether the person’ finally decide to like the proposal or not, she must also integrate her perception of the word with the policy, with other words, she must perceive it as that the intentions with the policy actually is to achieve what she associate with the word. The results from the open-ended question, in which the respondents were asked to describe their interpretation of the intentions with the proposed school policies, also showed patterns in how the respondents describe their interpretations, which can be related to the emotive words they were exposed to in the stimuli.

To summarize, the results from the experiment indicate that embedding emotive words in policy proposals can matter for how people interpret, not only the words themselves, but also their interpretation of intentions with the proposed policies. In the experiment, emotive and vague words lead to different interpretations of the proposal, both in terms of left-and right, and in terms of the respondents' description of the intentions with the proposed policies. So, when political parties make a choice to embed emotive and vague words in a policy proposal, they may also decide the way voters will interpret the intentions of the policies, as well as their expectations on the outcomes. Exactly in which way different emotive words diffuses or clarifies, limits the room for different alternative interpretations or increases it, does however still remain unclear. The hypothesis in the paper was that emotive and vague words not only affect whether people like a policy proposal because of the emotive reactions to the word themselves, but also because the words affect people's interpretation of the intentions with the proposed policies. If the results from this experiment would hold also for a larger sample of respondents, it stresses the need for further investigation of how emotive words in campaign proposals affect, not only whether people like the proposals or not, but also how it affects their interpretation of the intentions, as well as what outcomes they expect. The forthcoming experiment that will be included in later versions of this paper will be conducted in a Large N online survey, with a sample of approximately 4000 respondents. It will also include more variations of the emotive and vague words that were used in this experiment, as well as a control for the party that signs the proposal. Further, it will also "close" the open-ended question by using some of the categories found in the responses to the open-ended question analyzed in this version of the paper.

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Appendices

1. Summary results from pre-test of emotive words.

Table four below shows the results from a pre-test of a list of political words that can be considered emotive in a Swedish context. The survey was conducted on 80 voluntarily recruited participants at the central station in Gothenburg, Sweden's second largest city. The table include the results of bivariate regression analyses of whether ideological predispositions in terms of left or right affects whether people like or dislike a list of words that can be considered as emotive in a Swedish political context. Blue color denotes that the words have a high mean value (4 or higher on a scale ranging from 1-5, where 1 denotes strongly dislike, and 5 denotes strongly like). For the words marked with blue color, there were no significant differences between left and right respondents in terms of whether they liked the word or not. These words, e.g freedom, development and change, are regarded as positive emotive words that are neutral to left-right politics. Brown color denotes emotive words that are liked significantly more the more to the left the respondents place themselves on a political left-right scale, e.g equality, solidarity and welfare. Green color denotes emotive words that are liked significantly more the more to the right the respondents place themselves on a political left-right scale, e.g privatization, freedom of choice and economic growth.

Table 4: Bivariate regression analyses of effects of political left-right predispositions, on whether Swedish citizens like or dislike the emotive words listed.

<i>Emotive words</i>	<i>Coefficient (std in parantheses)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Summary statistics, Grand Mean</i>	<i>Number of observations</i>
Freedom	-0.007 (.04)	0.844	4.52	59
Social safety net	.009 (.21)	0.965	4.99	84
Law and order	.052 (.04)	0.174	4.13	84
Responsibility	.013 (.04)	0.737	4.46	58
Gender equality	-.14 (.03)	0.000***	4.6	84
Safeness	-.086 (.04)	0.028	4.44	58
Privatization	.248 (.04)	0.000***	2.76	84
Plurality	-.146 (.04)	0.000***	4.14	84
Economic growth	.117 (.04)	0.009**	3.71	83
Solidarity	-.175 (.03)	0.000***	4.30	83
Individualism	.040 (.06)	0.537	3.64	58
Welfare	-.129 (.04)	0.001**	4.30	82
Forward thinking	-.015 (.05)	0.757	4.24	57
Freedom of choice	.14 (.05)	0.003**	3.93	82
Collectivism	-.177 (.05)	0.001**	3.43	57
Economic redistribution	-.158 (.04)	0.000***	3.77	82
Public sector	-.116 (.04)	0.007**	3.82	83
Development	-.006 (.04)	0.895	4.29	58
Market economy	.122 (.04)	0.005**	3.66	57
Equality	-.146 (.04)	0.000***	4.46	70
Sustainable development	.005 (.04)	0.919	4.55	47
Justice	-.015 (.04)	0.687	4.55	47
Citizen participation	-.081 (.05)	0.124	4.22	47
Innovation	-.026 (.04)	0.530	4.3	47
Peace	.022 (.04)	0.564	4.7	47
Change	-.065 (.05)	0.162	3.97	47
Competitiveness	.103 (.06)	0.070(*)	3.77	47

Comments: Level of significance. ***= p< 0.001, **= p< 0.01, *= p< 0.05, (*)= p< 0.1. Independent variable is ideological predispositions in terms of left and right (scale ranges from 1 "far to the left", to 10 "far to the right"). Dependent variables are whether the respondents like or dislike each of the emotive words listed (scale ranges from 1 "strongly dislike", to 5 "strongly like").

2. Summary results from analyses of emotive words used in the 2006 and 2010 election manifestoes, of all Parliamentary parties in Sweden during these periods. All election manifestoes are retrieved from the Swedish national data web source, at www.snd.gu.se, 2014-02-26.

Table 5: Summary emotive words in election manifestoes, 2006-2010

Party manifestoes	Words (Frequency per page in percentage points in parentheses)						
	Freedom of choice	Individual/-ualism	Economic growth	Plurality	Quality	Total number of words	Number of pages
V (2010)	0 (.0)	1 (.14)	0 (.0)	2 (.29)	1 (.14)	2638	7
S (2010)	0 (.0)	2 (.29)	2 (.29)	1 (.14)	12 (1.71)	2537	7
S (2006)	0 (.0)	2 (.18)	5 (.45)	1 (.09)	7 (.64)	4171	11
Mp (2010)	0 (.0)	1 (.17)	0 (.0)	3 (.5)	8 (1.33)	2430	6
Mp (2006)	1 (.2)	1 (.2)	0 (.0)	2 (.4)	3 (.6)	1838	5
FP (2010)	7 (.21)	9 (.27)	4 (.12)	6 (.18)	18 (.55)	Xxx	33
FP (2006)	0 (.0)	9 (.35)	3 (.12)	1 (.04)	10 (.38)	Xxx	26
FP (2002)	6 (.4)	3 (.2)	8 (.53)	3 (.2)	5 (.33)	5675	15
C (2010)	17 (.94)	6 (.33)	12 (.67)	8 (.44)	14 (.78)	7085	18
C (2006)	1 (.08)	5 (.42)	3 (.26)	1 (.08)	2 (.17)	4405	12
M (2006)	5 (.16)	9 (.29)	13 (.42)	9 (.29)	17 (.55)	10894	31
KD (2010)	2 (.22)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	1 (.11)	4 (.44)	3354	9
KD (2006)	4 (.8)	1 (.2)	0 (.0)	1 (.2)	1 (.2)	2125	5
SD (2010)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	2 (.4)	1 (.2)	7 (1.4)	1802	5
<i>In total, all parties (n=6) 2006</i>	11 (.12)	27 (.3)	24 (.27)	15 (.17)	40 (.44)		90
<i>In total, all parties (n=7) 2010</i>	26 (.31)	19 (.22)	20 (.24)	22 (.26)	64 (.75)		85
<i>Red-green (-V) 2006 (n=2)</i>	1 (.06)	3 (.19)	5 (.31)	3 (.19)	10 (.63)		16
<i>Red-green 2010 (n=3)</i>	0 (.0)	4 (.2)	2 (.1)	6 (.3)	21 (1.05)		20
<i>Right-wing coalition 2006 (n=4)</i>	10 (.14)	24 (.32)	19 (.26)	12 (.16)	30 (.41)		74
<i>Right-wing coalition (-M) 2010 (n=3)</i>	26 (.4)	15 (.23)	18 (.28)	16 (.25)	43 (.66)		65

Table 6: Summary emotive words in election manifestoes, 2006-2010

Party manifestoes	Words (Frequency per page in percentage points in parentheses)						
	Sustainability	Future	Safeness	Community	Opportunities	Total number of words	Number of pages
V (2010)	5 (.71)	14 (2)	3 (.43)	10 (1.43)	9 (1.29)	2638	7
S (2010)	2 (.29)	6 (.86)	5 (.71)	5 (.71)	23 (3.29)	2537	7
S (2006)	3 (.27)	10 (.9)	21 (1.91)	6 (.55)	10 (.9)	4171	11
Mp (2010)	8 (1.33)	3 (.5) (+1 neg)	4 (.67)	1 (.17)	12 (2)	2430	6
Mp (2006)	2 (.4)	0 (.0)	2 (.4)	0 (.0)	9 (1.8)	1838	5
FP (2010)	2 (.06)	11 (.33) (+3 neg)	17 (.52)	12 (.36)	35 (1.06)	Xxx	33
FP (2006)	2 (.08)	5 (.19)	15 (.58)	0 (.0)	34 (1.31)	Xxx	26
FP (2002)	1 (.07)	5 (.33) (+1 neg)	3 (.2)	3 (.2)	18 (1.2)	5675	15
C (2010)	12 (.67)	9 (.5)	18 (1)	12 (.67)	47 (2.61)	7085	18
C (2006)	6 (.5)	8 (.67) (+1 neg)	15 (1.25) (+1 neg)	11 (.92)	25 (2.08)	4405	12
M (2006)	5 (.16)	9 (.29) (+1 neg)	35 (1.13)	18 (.58)	77 (2.48)	10894	31
KD (2010)	1 (.11)	1 (.11) (+1 neg)	19 (2.11)	3 (.33)	18 (2)	3354	9
KD (2006)	1 (.2)	1 (.2) (+1 neg)	10 (2)	4 (.8)	12 (2.4)	2125	5
SD (2010)	2 (.4)	2 (.4)	17 (3.4)	4 (.8)	5 (1)	1802	5
<i>In total, all parties (n=6) 2006</i>	19 (.21)	33 (.37)	98 (1.09)	39 (.43)	167 (1.86)		90
<i>In total, all parties (n=7) 2010</i>	32 (.38)	46 (.54)	83 (.98)	47 (.55)	149 (1.75)		85
<i>Red-green (-V) 2006 (n=2)</i>	5 (.31)	10 (.63)	23 (1.44)	6 (.38)	19 (1.19)		16
<i>Red-green 2010 (n=3)</i>	15 (.75)	23 (1.15)	12 (.6)	16 (.8)	44 (2.2)		20
<i>Right-wing coalition 2006 (n=4)</i>	14 (.19)	23 (.31)	75 (1.01)	33 (.45)	148 (2)		74
<i>Right-wing coalition (-M) 2010 (n=3)</i>	17 (.26)	23 (.35)	71 (1.09)	31 (.48)	105 (1.62)		65

Table 7: Summary emotive words in election manifestoes, 2006-2010

Party manifestoes	Words (Frequency per page in percentage points in parentheses)						Total number of words	Number of pages
	Responsibility	Rights	Welfare	Equality	Gender equality			
V (2010)	5 (.71)	18 (2.57)	18 (2.57)	2 (.29)	8 (1.14)		2638	7
S (2010)	4 (.57)	10 (1.43)	12 (1.71)	4 (.57)	2 (.29)		2537	7
S (2006)	8 (.73)	13 (1.18)	16 (1.45)	2 (.18)	4 (.36)		4171	11
Mp (2010)	4 (.67)	18 (3)	5 (.83)	1 (.17)	5 (.83)		2430	6
Mp (2006)	3 (.6)	17 (3.4)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	5 (1)		1838	5
FP (2010)	24 (.73)	53 (1.61)	7 (.21)	1 (.03)	20 (.61)		Xxx	33
FP (2006)	6 (.23)	16 (.62)	5 (.19)	0 (.0)	11 (.42)		Xxx	26
FP (2002)	10 (.67) (+1 neg)	14 (.93)	12 (.8)	0 (.0)	8 (.53)		5675	15
C (2010)	12 (.67)	13 (.72)	22 (1.22)	2 (.11)	12 (.67)		7085	18
C (2006)	14 (1.17)	12 (1)	18 (1.5)	1 (.08)	2 (.17)		4405	12
M (2006)	41 (1.32)	31 (1)	21 (.68)	1 (.03)	2 (.06)		10894	31
KD (2010)	14 (1.56)	15 (1.67)	4 (.44)	1 (.11)	2 (.22)		3354	9
KD (2006)	8 (1.6)	12 (2.4)	2 (.4)	0 (.0)	1 (.2)		2125	5
SD (2010)	4 (.8)	3 (.6)	2 (.4)	0 (.0)	1 (.2)		1802	5
<i>In total, all parties (n=6) 2006</i>	80 (.89)	101 (1.12)	62 (.69)	4 (.04)	25 (.28)			90
<i>In total, all parties n=7) 2010</i>	67 (.79)	84 (.99)	80 (.94)	11 (.13)	50 (.59)			85
<i>Red-green (-V) 2006 (n=2)</i>	11 (.69)	16 (1)	16 (1)	2 (.13)	9 (.56)			16
<i>Red-green 2010 (n=3)</i>	13 (.65)	46 (2.3)	45 (2.25)	7 (.35)	15 (.75)			20
<i>Right-wing coalition 2006 (n=4)</i>	69 (.93)	71 (.96)	46 (.62)	2 (.03)	16 (.22)			74
<i>Right-wing coalition (-M) 2010 (n=3)</i>	50 (.83)	81 (1.25)	33 (.51)	4 (.06)	34 (.52)			65

Table 8: Summary emotive words in election manifestoes, 2006-2010

Party manifestoes	Words (Frequency per page in percentage points in parentheses)				Total number of words	Number of pages
	Democracy	Peace	Efficiency	Development		
V (2010)	5 (.71)	0 (.0)	1 (.14)	9 (1.29) (+1 neg)	2638	7
S (2010)	1 (.14)	1 (.14)	1 (.14)	7 (1) (+1 neg)	2537	7
S (2006)	2 (.18)	9 (.82)	5 (.45)	20 (1.82)	4171	11
Mp (2010)	2 (.33)	2 (.33)	3 (.5)	5 (.83)	2430	6
Mp (2006)	1 (.2)	2 (.4)	3 (.6)	6 (1.2)	1838	5
FP (2010)	17 (.52)	4 (.12)	14 (.42)	19 (.58) (+3 neg)	Xxx	33
FP (2006)	6 (.23)	0 (.0)	1 (.04)	20 (.77) (+2 neg)	Xxx	26
FP (2002)	9 (.6)	1 (.07)	3 (.2)	6 (.4) (+3 neg)	5675	15
C (2010)	1 (.06)	3 (.17)	21 (1.17)	50 (2.78)	7085	18
C (2006)	5 (.42)	2 (.17)	1 (.08)	16 (1.33)	4405	12
M (2006)	13 (.42)	3 (1)	12 (.39)	60 (1.94) (+5 neg)	10894	31
KD (2010)	3 (.33)	2 (.22)	3 (.33)	13 (1.44)	3354	9
KD (2006)	1 (.2)	0 (.2)	2 (.4)	4 (.8)	2125	5
SD (2010)	3 (.6)	0 (.0)	2 (.4)	4 (.8)	1802	5
<i>In total, all parties (n=6) 2006</i>	28 (.31)	16 (.18)	24 (.27)	126 (1.4)		90
<i>In total, all parties n=7) 2010</i>	32 (.38)	12 (.14)	45 (.53)	103 (1.2)		85
<i>Red-green (-V) 2006 (n=2)</i>	3 (.19)	11 (.69)	8 (.5)	26 (1.63)		16
<i>Red-green 2010 (n=3)</i>	8 (.4)	3 (.15)	5 (.4)	21 (1.05)		20
<i>Right-wing coalition 2006 (n=4)</i>	25 (.34)	5 (.07)	16 (.22)	100 (1.35)		74
<i>Right-wing coalition (-M) 2010 (n=3)</i>	24 (.37)	9 (.14)	40 (.62)	82 (1.26)		65

Table 9: Summary emotive words in election manifestoes, 2006-2010

Party manifestoes	Words (Frequency per page in percentage points in parentheses)						Total number of words	Number of pages
	Freedom	Competitiveness	Change	Justice	Solidarity			
V (2010)	3 (.43)	0 (.0)	10 (1.43) (+2 neg)	13 (1.86)	4 (.57)		2638	7
S (2010)	3 (.43)	4 (.57)	1 (.14) (+1neg)	5 (.71)	1 (.14)		2537	7
S (2006)	1 (.09)	6 (.55) (+1 neg)	1 (.09) (+3neg)	8 (.73)	4 (.36)		4171	11
Mp (2010)	5 (.83)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	3 (.5)	3 (.5)		2430	6
Mp (2006)	1 (.2)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	3 (.6)	4 (.8)		1838	5
FP (2010)	10 (.3)	2 (.06)	10 (.3)	1 (.03)	1 (.03)	?		33
FP (2006)	5 (.19)	8 (.31)	1 (.04) (+5neg)	1 (.04)	0 (.0)	?		26
FP (2002)	8 (.53)	5 (.33)	3 (.2) (+1 neg)	1 (.07)	6 (.4)		5675	15
C (2010)	13 (.72)	7 (.72) (+2 neg)	2 (.11) (+1neg)	4 (.22)	2 (.11)		7085	18
C (2006)	0 (.00)	3 (.25)	3 (0.25)	2 (.17)	2 (.17)		4405	12
M (2006)	8 (.26)	8 (.26) (+1 neg)	13 (.42) (+3 neg)	2 (.06)	1 (.03)		10894	31
KD (2010)	1 (.11)	0 (.0)	0 (.0) (+1 neg)	1 (.11)	0 (.0)		3354	9
KD (2006)	0 (.00)	0 (.0)	3 (.6)	3 (.6)	2 (.4)		2125	5
SD (2010)	2 (.4)	0 (.0)	1 (.2)	1 (.2)	1 (.2)		1802	5
<i>In total, all parties (n=6) 2006</i>	24 (.27)	25 (.28)	20 (.22)	19 (.21)	13 (.14)			90
<i>In total, all parties n=7) 2010</i>	37 (.44)	13 (.15)	24 (.28)	28 (.33)	12 (.14)			85
<i>Red-green (-V) 2006 (n=2)</i>	2 (.13)	6 (.38)	1 (.06)	11 (.69)	8 (.5)			16
<i>Red-green 2010 (n=3)</i>	11 (.55)	4 (.2)	11 (.55)	21 (1.05)	8 (.4)			20
<i>Right-wing coalition 2006 (n=4)</i>	13 (.18)	19 (.26)	20 (.27)	8 (.11)	5 (.07)			74
<i>Right-wing coalition (-M) 2010 (n=3)</i>	24 (.37)	9 (.14)	13 (.2)	6 (.09)	4 (.06)			65

3. Randomization checks of background variables

Table 10: Control of randomization

Control factors	Mean scores (number of participants)				Grand mean (n)	Sig.	F-quota (df)
	Expgrp1	Expgrp2	Expgrp3	Expgrp4			
Age	39.5 (77)	40.8 (78)	39.2 (77)	37.2 (79)	39.2 (311)	.646	.554 (3)
Sex	1.46 (79)	1.56 (80)	1.48 (80)	1.55 (80)	1.51 (319)	.44	.902 (3)
Level of education	3.31 (80)	3.03 (80)	3.21 (80)	3.23 (79)	3.19 (319)	.341	1.121 (3)
Left-right affiliation	2.32 (79)	2.22 (79)	2.44 (78)	2.27 (78)	2.31 (314)	.475	.836 (3)
Political interest	2.20 (80)	2.19 (80)	2.32 (79)	2.22 (78)	2.23 (317)	.771	.375 (3)

Comments: One-way ANOVA. Significant results are marked with an asterisk (*). Sex, 1=woman, 2=man. Level of education, 1= Junior high school, 2= Senior high school, 3=College or other post-high school education (excluding University), 4= University. Left-right affiliation, 1=far to the left, 2=somewhat to the left, 3=somewhat to the right, 4=far to the right. Political interest, 1= Very interested, 2=Fairly interested, 3=Not very intresserad, 4=Not interested at all. Political trust "Generally speaking, how much do you trust Swedish politicians? 1=Very much, 2=Somewhat, 3=Not so much, 4=Not at all.

4. Stimuli, pilot: English translation.

Control: No emotive and vague words

Every child deserves a good start in life.

"It has been found that the knowledge of Swedish students drops in international comparisons, and more and more adolescence find it harder to meet the qualification requirements for high school.

To increase the quality of the Swedish education, we propose a focus on primary school with four billion. The money will be used to develop a more detailed school plan, implement mandatory summer school for students who do not meet the qualification requirements to high school, and expanded resources for teacher training."

Manipulation 1: Emotive and vague words (ideologically neutral)

Every child deserves a good start in life.

"It has been found that the knowledge of Swedish students drops in international comparisons, and more and more adolescence find it harder to meet the qualification requirements for high school. To improve the situation, we need **changes** and **forward thinking** in the Swedish school politics.

We want a school that offers **prospects for the future**. To increase the quality of the Swedish education, and create **fair** conditions for development of the students, we propose a focus on primary school with four billion. The money will be used to develop a more detailed school plan, implement mandatory summer school for students who do not meet the qualification requirements to high school, and expanded resources for teacher training."

Manipulation 2: Emotive and vague words (left)

Every child deserves a good start in life.

"It has been found that the knowledge of Swedish students drops in international comparisons, and more and more adolescence find it harder to meet the qualification requirements for high school. To improve the situation, we need a school policy that creates **equality** and a **safe** environment for the students.

We want a school that takes **responsibility** for the students. To increase the quality of the Swedish education, and create **equal** conditions for the students to develop, we propose a focus on primary school with four billion. The money will be used to develop a more detailed school plan, implement mandatory summer school for students who do not meet the qualification requirements to high school, and expanded resources for teacher training."

Manipulation 3: Emotive and vague words (right)

Every child deserves a good start in life.

"It has been found that the knowledge of Swedish students drops in international comparisons, and more and more adolescence find it harder to meet the qualification requirements for high school. To improve the situation, we need an **efficient** school policy based on **freedom of choice**.

We want a school that **places demands** on the students. To increase the quality of the Swedish education, and create conditions for the students to develop **individually**, we propose a focus on primary school with four billion. The money will be used to develop a more detailed school plan, implement mandatory summer school for students who do not meet the qualification requirements to high school, and expanded resources for teacher training."