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THE SWEDISH MODERATE PARTY – NOT SO OPENLY HEARTED ANYMORE?

A study of the Moderates' move towards using populist radical right language.

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Bachelor thesis:	15 credits
Programme:	European Studies Programme
Level:	First Cycle
Semester year:	Autumn 2022
Supervisor:	Luca Versteegen

Abstract

Existing literature argues that mainstream parties strategise when other niche parties threaten their position. I argue that we can observe this unfold on a practical level through how the mainstream parties use language. This thesis examines the case of Sweden, where the Moderates have over time moved closer to its niche counterpart and populist radical right party, the Sweden Democrats. More specifically, I conducted a thematic analysis of twenty-four parliamentary speeches made by Moderate MPs to see if and how their use of language has followed the party's public move towards the Sweden Democrats as they have grown in power. I found that the Moderates have over time begun to use language that is similar to that of the Sweden Democrats but it is more subtle. Considering that the Moderates are a mainstream party, it is not surprising that their 'copied' language is not as clear or as vibrant as the Sweden Democrats' 'original'. This study illustrates that language is part of political strategising and there is a great need for future research to study what this might mean for party politics on a larger scale but also for other countries in Europe.

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Supervisor:	Luca Versteegen
Keywords:	Populist Radical Right, Moderates, Sweden Democrats, Meguid's Modified Spatial Model, Political language, Political communication, Populism, Nativism, Authoritarianism, Thematic analysis, Parliamentary speeches.
Word count:	11873

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Abbreviations

- MP(s) Member(s) of Parliament
- PRR Populist Radical Right
- PRRP Populist Radical Right Party

Introduction

Sweden is one of the oldest and most stable democracies in Europe (Dahlberg et al., 2022; Marshall & Gurr, 2020). In the highest of Swedish political institutions, the Riksdag, mainstream parties have longer than in many other European countries refused to give populist radical right parties (PRRPs) like New Democracy and the Sweden Democrats any influence over the governance of the country (Widfelt, 2008; Heinze, 2017). In contemporary literature, this strategic deadlock is referred to as a political *cordon sanitaire* (Heinze, 2017). In the last decade, however, the *cordon sanitaire* has gradually been relaxed as the Sweden Democrats have grown to become the second largest party by votes since they entered the Riksdag in 2010 (The Swedish Election Authority, 2022). In the autumn of 2022, after a turbulent election year, the Swedish Moderate Party (the Moderates), together with its right-wing allies, the Christian Democrats and the Liberals, formed a government with the support of the Sweden Democrats (The Swedish Moderate Party, 2022).

The Moderates' move towards the far right ahead of the 2022 election comes as no surprise, given what is known from the literature. Specifically, Meguid (2005) argues that when mainstream parties feel threatened by the electoral success of niche parties, they adopt political strategies to counter the threat. As both van Spanje (2010) and Han (2015) argue, most mainstream parties that have originated from a more centre-right position tend to strategically move closer to the populist far-right in terms of its policies. Yet, as Abou-Chadi (2014) and Wagner and Meyer (2017) illustrate, this usually does not help mainstream parties in defending or even increase electoral support. Some scholars like Krause et al. (2022) argue that this is because people generally prefer the 'original' over the 'copy', meaning that PRRPs like the Sweden Democrats represent original ideas and policy solutions, while mainstream parties like the Moderates just seem like a pale imitation next to them. Strikingly, although conservative mainstream parties keep moving towards PRRPs by accommodating their policies (Wagner & Meyer, 2017), it remains unclear if this move is also reflected in their language.

Given that language is an important part of a political party's strategy to win votes (Römmele, 2003; Johann et al., 2018) it is essential to examine how the Moderates communicate their policy ideas in parliament in response to the strengthening of the Sweden

Democrats. Arguably, as the Swedish Riksdag is by its very nature the most central institution for decision-making, it is particularly interesting to see how the Moderates use language to promote their ideas in such a crucial forum. I investigate this through parliamentary speeches by Moderate party politicians because these data represent relatively standardised material for analysing language. Arguably, the Riksdag represents a straightforward and more controlled venue for studying language than in other settings such as political tv-debates. In this way, language change can be analysed more fairly over time. In light of this, the research question for this paper is as follows:

How does the language of the Swedish Moderate Party reflect their public reaction to an increasingly powerful Sweden Democrats since they entered the Riksdag?

I argue that the Moderates have changed the way they communicate. If Meguid's (2005) theory is supported, the Moderates will change their policy positions in line with and towards the Sweden Democrats. If so, this should also be expressed in a more conservative and right-wing-oriented language. Language can thus be assumed to play a central role in how the Moderates should be perceived, not only in public but more crucially behind the doors of the Riksdag chamber. In this paper, I argue that the Moderates have over time begun to communicate more and more in a PRR manner and in line with how the Sweden Democrats use language.

This paper builds largely on Meguid's (2005) theory that mainstream parties will either *dismiss*, *accommodate* or be an *adversary* in reaction to growing radical right parties. However, it contributes to this work by empirically examining if pursuing these strategies is also expressed in language. As I will show, the Moderates have moved closer to the PRR in terms of their language. Indeed, language plays a very important role in party politics and therefore needs more research (Römmele, 2003; Johann et al., 2018).

I have limited my study to Sweden specifically because it is a country that has long been characterised by being a strong and central democracy in Europe (Dahlberg et al., 2022; Marshall & Gurr, 2020). It also represents a case that differs somewhat from similar developments in the rest of Europe because the mainstream parties in Sweden's Riksdag have for longer than in other countries remained in unison by adopting *cordon sanitaire*, to prevent the PRRPs from gaining influence over Sweden's governance (Heinze, 2017). Although there are major differences between countries in Europe, there is much to be learned from the political developments in Sweden. Indeed, while qualitative evidence may not and does not

aim to be generalised across the case being studied, the case of Sweden and more specifically the Moderates act as an example for future research to draw on. Thus, future research studying how mainstream parties react to increasingly powerful PRRPs in other European countries should be able to use language as a tool to study the development on a more practical level. Specifically, studying language change is less abstract than measuring changing policy positions within parties. My case study of Sweden and the Moderates demonstrates this.

Another contribution of my paper is the fact that it is based on qualitative research. Previous research on the radical right has been almost exclusively quantitative (Damhuis & De Jonge, 2022). In this way, my paper can contribute with a nuanced view of the research area and also show detailed patterns in which the language of the Moderates gradually shifted towards the right over time. Unlike quantitative research, I can here use very specific examples of language, meaning words and quotes, to highlight different kinds of themes that describe *how* the Moderates have changed the way they use language and not just that they *have* changed the way they use language (Boyatzis, 1998).

In this paper, I study how the Moderates have changed their language over time. To do this, I begin by reviewing the literature on previous evidence before I present my theoretical arguments in detail, building on Meguid (2005). Specifically, I argue how her strategies can be applied to this case of the Moderates and their language. After that, I conduct the empirical part of analysing how the Moderates' language has developed over time and show that it has become a more populist radical right in its language. Finally, I discuss strengths and weaknesses and raise avenues for future research.

Previous research

Literature review

What is the Populist Radical Right (PRR)?

As a precondition for understanding how the changing language of the Moderates has followed Meguid's (2005) different strategies, it is important to sort out what those strategies are for. Meguid (2005) argues that when the mainstream parties are threatened, they must find ways to strategically counter the strength of the niche parties. Niche parties, as Abou-Chadi (2018) exemplifies, can have different ideological roots on both the left and right sides of the political spectrum. I focus exclusively on the right side to compare how the language of the Moderates may have changed in real terms against how PRRPs use language. Thus, I argue that it is necessary to understand in detail what the ideological concept of PRR is.

There are many definitions of what populist radical right means. Scholars have increasingly aligned themselves with and adopted Mudde's (2007) definition of it. Mudde's (2007) extensive work on PRR shows that the ideological conception of PRR is based on three main elements. These are *1. Nativism, 2. Authoritarianism, and 3. Populism.*

First, nativism is a term that describes PRRPs as xenophobic and nationalistic. A nativist party puts forward nativist ideas and arguments and has the desire to keep its country ethnically homogeneous and many times believes that non-native ideas and non-native people pose a direct threat to the nation and the people that the party in question represents.

Second, authoritarianism states that PRR parties generally want to see tougher laws and stricter rules in society. Often this is linked to the need for a stronger leader, stricter punishments for gang criminals, tougher guidelines for school children and regulation of abortion laws.

The third characteristic is that the PRR parties exhibit populist elements at their ideological core (Mudde, 2007). In Mudde's (2004) earlier work, populism is defined by the idea that people in society at large are divided into two sides. One of the sides is represented by the 'ordinary' people, while the other side is represented by the 'elite'. In its rawest form, the populist outlook frames the political elite as purely evil and it is only the ordinary people who should hold the right to exercise political power.

In Sweden's case, it can be argued that the Sweden Democrats fall within Mudde's PRR definition. Indeed, in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey, the dataset reveals that the Sweden Democrats are accurately classified as a PRR party in line with Mudde's (2007) definition (Dal Bó et al., 2021; Jolly et al., 2022).

However, while it is important to understand what defines the PRR, it is essential in this paper to understand how the three PRR elements manifest themselves in party language. In fact, as Mudde (2007) states, these PRR elements tend to be interconnected with each other, which makes it particularly interesting to see how this manifests in the way parties communicate. To make a conclusion about whether or not the language of the Moderates has changed to deal with the rise of the Sweden Democrats, it is necessary first to introduce Meguid's (2005) theories on how mainstream parties tend to strategise in policy.

Meguid's Modified Spatial Model and its development over time

Meguid's (2005) research on how mainstream parties are adopting different strategies to counter the threat of niche party success. Meguid's (2005) Modified Spatial Model categorises the mainstream parties' strategies as either *1. Dismissive, 2. Accommodating, or 3. Adversarial.*

The first strategy suggests that mainstream parties fail to or choose not to address issues and topics raised by the niche parties. The second type describes that mainstream parties try to draw electoral power (votes) from the niche parties by approaching policy areas in which the niche parties are often strong and copy niche parties' views. The third type means that they try to fight the niche parties directly by increasing the distance to the niche parties (divergence).

The dismissive strategy often works as a first resort when niche parties' areas of interest are not considered to be of interest or pose an electoral threat to the mainstream parties. When niche parties subsequently threaten the establishment of mainstream parties, it is only then that mainstream parties tend to address policy issues raised by niche parties.

The more aggressive strategies, that is, the accommodating strategy and the adversarial strategy, tend to have different outcomes on niche party votes compared to each other. The accommodating strategy, Meguid (2005) argues, is a strategy that ensures that niche parties receive less support and a reduction in electoral power because voters tend to prefer to vote for mainstream parties if they copy the niche party's policies. Meguid (2005) posits that in this case the 'copy' is perceived by the voter as a better alternative than the 'original' because the

party in question is indeed established and mainstream. According to Meguid (2005), the adversarial strategy has a positive outcome for niche parties, because voters consider niche parties more relevant when mainstream parties oppose the views of niche parties and thus draw attention to them.

Meguid's (2005) argument has been tested and sometimes criticised by scholars over the years. Particularly the effectiveness and the performance of the accommodating strategy (which is also the most central strategy in this paper) seem to be the subject of some debate. Krause et al. (2022) argue, based on their research and in relation to the debate among other researchers, that the accommodating strategy does work in favour of mainstream parties. Other scholars, including Dahlström and Sundell (2012) and Abou-Chadi and Wagner (2020), argue instead that the accommodating strategy merely emphasises, legitimises, and popularises the ideas and issues of niche parties. Also, it has been shown by Krause et al. (2022) that voters actually prefer the 'original' to the 'copy' and not the other way around, meaning that PRRPs are to be considered a better and more solid choice for issues that they are known to promote. By this school of thought, it suggests that niche parties will succeed when a mainstream party copies the policies that the niche parties in some sense own.

The fact that mainstream parties adopt strategies to counter the success of niche parties is not new. There are many studies today, including Krause et al. (2022), Heinze (2017), Abou-Chadi (2014, 2018), Han (2015) and van Spanje (2010) that demonstrate this.

How mainstream parties react to the rise of PRRPs across Europe

Abou-Chadi (2018) and other scholars like van Spanje (2010) and Han (2015) argue that populist radical-right parties have influenced mainstream parties to react to their success. It has been shown that over time, as far-right parties have grown in popularity, mainstream parties have been converting their policies to be against immigration and more protectionist over their national culture to regain lost votes and power. Subsequently, mainstream parties tend to shift their political perception and position more towards the populist radical right (Abou-Chadi, 2018).

Across Europe, this trend has become increasingly evident. Examples from the early 2000s show how centre and far-right parties increasingly converged to form governments in the Netherlands, Italy and Austria, among other countries (de Lange, 2012; Mudde, 2012). In Germany, political members of the CDU have recently shown increasing support for a

coalition with their PRR counterpart Alternative for Germany. (Wurthmann, 2022). In all Nordic countries, it seems that mainstream parties at first try to exclude PRR parties but then with time and continued success of the PRR, mainstream parties are forced to accept and in some cases cooperate with the PRR (Heinze, 2017). Most central for this paper, the case of Sweden shows that the Moderates have moved towards the right by violating the general cordon sanitaire (blockade) which the mainstream parties in the Riksdag have held for a long time (Heinze, 2017; Spoon & Klüver, 2020).

Krause et al. (2022) note that in many cases, these strategic moves towards the right have only proven to be unsuccessful for mainstream parties. For example, concerning the CDU, Spoon and Klüver (2020) show that mainstream parties in Germany, that have adopted a more PRR-oriented political strategy, have neither generated greater support for themselves nor affected the support for Alternative for Germany.

Furthermore, I argue that scholars have focused primarily on how the mainstream parties strategise at a general policy level. Language, as mentioned earlier, is crucial for the survival of a political party (Römmele, 2003; Johann et al., 2018). Therefore, I argue that language also plays an important role in presenting the political views and policies of mainstream parties. Next, I move on to describe how language is used within the PRRPs and the language of the Sweden Democrats in particular.

How the PRR and the Sweden Democrats use language

The Chapel Hill Expert Survey defines the Sweden Democrats as a populist radical right party (Jolly et al., 2022; Dal Bó et al., 2021). Their membership in this party family should also become apparent in their language. Populism is considered by scholars to be a so-called "thin" ideology, meaning that its character is not sufficiently practical or complete to be classified as a real ideology. This means that populism needs to be complemented by other elements for it to be used to explain what parties are like and what defines their ideas and identity (Mudde, 2004; Stanley, 2008). But populism is not a concept that is strictly limited to being a "thin" ideology, it also constitutes a way for political parties to communicate to their voters (Block & Negrine, 2017).

A populist language style contains not only simple and straightforward language but also often carries emotions to connect with 'the ordinary people' (Block & Negrine, 2017; Bracciale & Martella, 2017). The populist language strategy is based on parties and speakers

'cherry picking' events and issues that only confirm the message they want to convey and also try to mobilise people through negative emotions. Stereotyping and the use of vulgar language are also associated with the populist language style (Bracciale & Martella, 2017). The following quotes illustrate in particular how the Sweden Democrats cherry-pick a specific event to convey their message:

“Easter this year was marred by stone-throwing, arson and outright rioting. We in Sweden did not get a break even for a few days from the widespread crime. It is clear that the police and law enforcement in general do not have the same control they once had. The police are on the retreat in large parts of Sweden and police cars are burning without any noticeable punishment for the perpetrators.” (The Sweden Democrats, 2022a, paragraph 4)

But based on the idea that populism is a ‘thin’ ideology, it is expected that the Sweden Democrats would also express authoritarian and nativist elements in their way of communicating.

Regarding nativism, I argue that the Sweden Democrats, like other PRRPs, would use xenophobic language and rhetoric to set themselves, their nation and their people apart from what is believed to be harmful to them, in this case, immigrants (Rydgren, 2004). They do this by adopting a populist language strategy of blaming other 'elitists', often governing parties, for what they consider to be problematic (Mudde, 2007). The following quote clearly shows how the Sweden Democrats combine nativist views with a populist language strategy.

“It must be easy to deport immigrants. [...] That the government allows violent criminals, rapists, and illegal immigrants, in general, to remain here, and that they are given benefits and free health care, is nothing less than a scandal. We will also revoke the citizenship of those involved in terrorism or serious crime in general.” (The Sweden Democrats, 2022b, paragraph 4)

Strikingly, the quote also illustrates how the Sweden Democrats present themselves as the fixer of this problem while claiming that others will ignore it. The Sweden Democrats also emphasise words like ‘we’ and ‘ourselves’, which suggests that they are trying to motivate and mobilise people to think as they do through emotion because they are talking about problems that affect us ‘ordinary people’. The following quote illustrates this.

“We need to think about ourselves now. All the other parties haven't realised that mass immigration simply does not work. We have the facts, immigration happened and it did not work.” (The Sweden Democrats, 2022b, paragraph 8).

This would suggest that Sweden Democrats' language strategy is highly populist and nativist-motivated, often embracing these elements in tandem and presenting them together to promote the same objective.

Taking Mudde's (2007) definition of PRR as a guideline, the element of authoritarianism should also be part of the Sweden Democrats' language. The Sweden Democrats suggest in many policy areas that tougher rules, laws, and regulations should be introduced around things like immigration and gang crime, (The Sweden Democrats, 2020a) but how is this expressed in their language? The PRR often uses language that alludes to supporters being superior to other groups in society, while at the same time trying to use words that imply that the 'ordinary' and the 'virtuous' people are the real victims of society and that refugees and immigrants exploit the systems and are better off (Mols & Jetten, 2020).

I argue that the Sweden Democrats use language that creates an image of themselves as representatives of authoritarian ideals. Mols and Jetten (2014, 2020) argue that PRR success could be explained by the fact that their leaders use a 'no guts, no glory' approach in their public appearances and speeches, where they frame the past as glorious and the future as weak and bleak. The typical PRRP leader, therefore, wants to portray themselves as tough enough to restore past glory (Bracciale & Martella, 2017) by making the future, as a certain former American president would say, *great again*. (Young, 2017). The following quote exemplifies both the role of party leader Jimmie Åkesson for the party and the will within the party to introduce authoritarian means to curb immigration.

“Jimmie's vision for Sweden is a cohesive and safe society. A country that is well again. [...] Immigration policy must be responsible and the ineffective integration policy of recent decades must be replaced by demands for assimilation. [...] Sweden has been a good country and can be a good country again, but that requires real change. That change is what Jimmie is striving to achieve through reality-based policy work, clarity, and firm determination.” (The Sweden Democrats, 2022c, paragraph 3)

I argue, based on this, that party leaders are very important for the success of the PRRPs. As it stands, this may explain why those who vote for the Sweden Democrats do so because of the importance of the leader for their party (SVT Nyheter, 2022a). Maybe it can also explain why

Donald Trump uses slogans that refer to the fact that history was better and greater (Young, 2017). By this, it is evident that the Sweden Democrats use a specific language that alludes to Populistic, Nativist and Authoritarian ideals.

Theory

From the literature reviewed it is clear that there is a considerable amount of research on the PRR overall. However, there is less research on what constitutes PRR language or how PRR parties use it. Scholars like Mudde (2007) have focused much on what the PRR is and what ideological and political views PRRPs represent. Other scholars (Abou-Chadi, 2018; Han, 2015 and van Spanje, 2010) have studied how mainstream parties tend to react to the threat of PRRP but have done so mostly in areas related to policy change or on a more general level. Research on PRR language has almost exclusively been limited to examining how PRR leaders speak and how they or their party employ specific language to win electoral support (Mols & Jetten, 2020; Rydgren, 2004). From this, it is evident that more research is needed in the field of language, but it should be directed towards how mainstream parties use language.

Rydgren (2004) argues that for niche parties (such as PRRPs) to display their policy programmes appealingly, must do so based on the right language. It can be assumed that the same applies to how mainstream parties choose to communicate their response to the threat of PRRPs. But there is very little research examining this. There is, to my knowledge, no research on how language in itself can be seen as part of a larger mainstream response to meet the threat of the PRR.

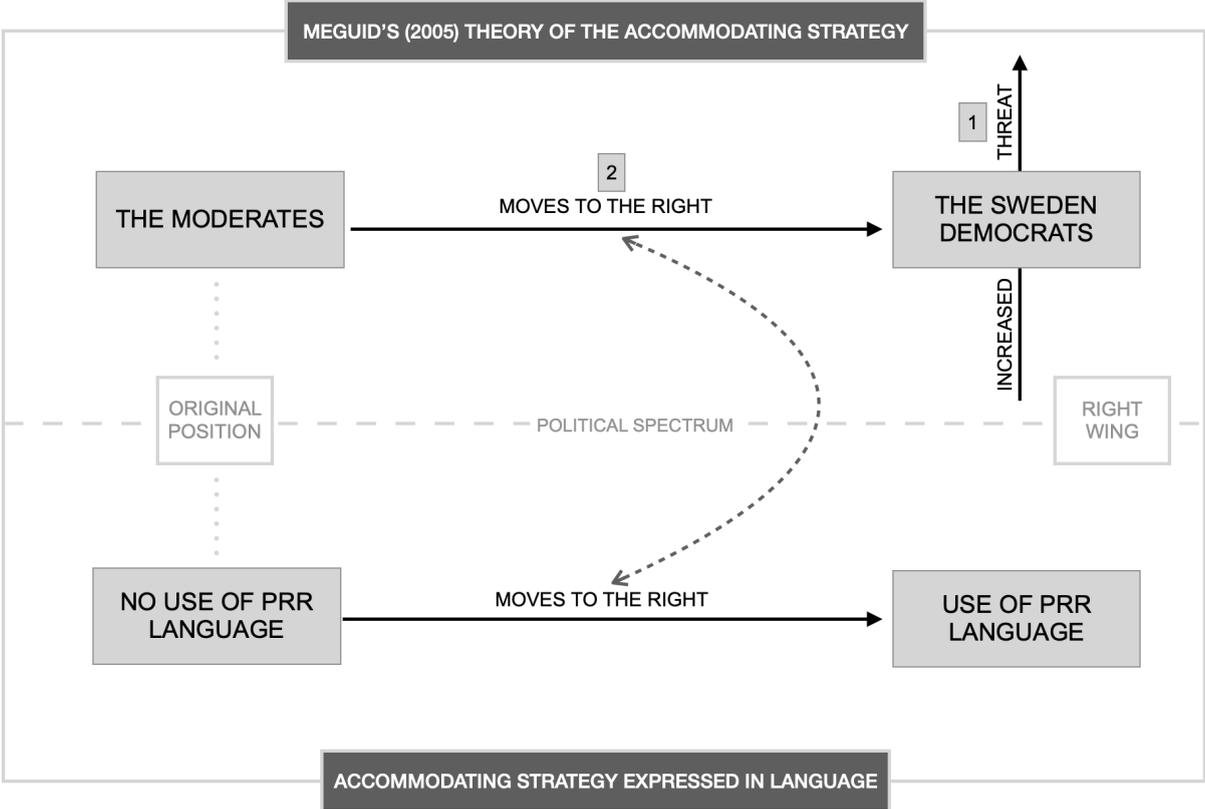
In light of this, scholars who have developed Meguid's (2005) theory have not studied political language as part of mainstream parties' ways of strategising. Therefore, I theorise that language represents the mainstream parties' strategies presented by Meguid (2005). I suggest that we should not only be able to observe whether mainstream parties are eventually adopting these strategies such as by changing their policies or their ideological relationship with the PRR. Instead, I argue that we can observe these strategic movements within the language of mainstream parties. If Meguid's (2005) model is supported, then there is an obvious pattern, where the Moderates' general move to PRR could also be observed in how the Moderates communicate. This is shown in *Figure 1*.

So far, there has only been a limited amount of empirical evidence that suggests that mainstream parties typically adopt a singular demonising language which can be related to

Meguid's (2005) adversarial approach (Hagelund 2003; Mouffe 2005). However, as Schwörer and Fernández-García (2021) have noted, this applies mainly to mainstream parties with a centre-left ideological stance and is not as widespread as formerly thought.

Based on this, I suspect that the Moderates, who are a traditional centre-right party, will adopt Meguid's (2005) accommodative approach to their language, as this would best reflect their newfound affinity with the Sweden Democrats after the 2022 election. The Moderates will, according to this premise, adopt a harsher language that expresses PRR elements and is similar to the language used by the Sweden Democrats. There should be themes of populist, nativist and authoritarian messages in what is communicated and it is based on these three elements that I then evaluate my material.

Figure 1. How the Moderates' change in language can be seen as a move towards the Sweden Democrats, in accordance with Meguid's (2005) accommodating strategy.



Note. The response to an increased threat from the Sweden Democrats (1) will lead to the Moderates moving further to the right and towards the Sweden Democrats (2). This is also argued to be reflected in language change. The movement of the Moderates to the right becomes clear when the party adopts a radical right-wing populist language.

Method and Material

Material: Riksdag speeches

Given that language is vital to party politics (Römmele, 2003; Johann et al., 2018) and that research on the PRR is poorly represented through qualitative methods (Damhuis & De Jonge, 2022), it is useful to explore my theoretical arguments through speeches. However, it is difficult to say how well public speeches in, for example, election campaigns or in televised debates best represent the actual language of the Moderates. These public speaking opportunities are primarily forums for capturing votes (Blais & Boyer, 1996), thus making it difficult to assess what is linked to PRR because there is so much data to consider. Instead, I argue that speeches made by parliamentarians (MPs) from the Moderate party in the Riksdag provide data that show how the Moderates communicate their policies and ideas, in a forum that is more crucial to the functioning of the state.

I argue that speeches made in parliaments are generally standardised, as they follow strict guidelines for how they are structured (The Swedish Riksdag, 2022a). This will illustrate my theoretical argument more systematically than if I had studied languages through, for example, TV debates. Therefore, I have limited my study to examining parliamentary speeches individually. In turn, this allows for a high validity because by studying speeches in Parliament, I can easily extract the essential elements, words, and meanings of language from the speeches. Since the speeches could be considered standardised, the relevance increases because the Riksdag speeches intend to be used to measure the Moderates' move towards the Sweden Democrats (The Swedish Riksdag, 2022a).

I have limited myself to analysing two speeches per year over twelve years, between 2010 and 2022. I choose 2010 as a starting point because it marks the year when The Sweden Democrats first entered the Riksdag. Following Meguid (2005) a clear reaction from the Moderates should by then start. I have chosen to study up to and including 2022 because in this way it can show how the language of the Moderates might have changed over time. 2022 is particularly interesting because it marks the year in which the Moderates used the support from the Sweden Democrats to form a government.

Furthermore, I have chosen the speeches based on random selection but with one criterion. The speeches must be given by MPs from the Moderates, but it does not matter what

position in the party they hold or in which context they are delivering a speech. These can be interpellations, debates, celebratory speeches or any other kind of speech made in the Riksdag. The speeches have been transcribed beforehand and come directly from the Swedish Riksdag Database (The Swedish Riksdag, 2022b).

Method: Thematic analysis

I conduct a qualitative thematic analysis of the Riksdag speeches to explore my theoretical argument that the Moderates' use of language becomes more populist radical right over time, reflecting Meguid's (2005) accommodation strategy. Specifically, I apply Boyatzis' (1998) definition and method of thematic analysis. Boyatzis (1998) describes a thematic analysis as measures and how identifiable patterns in a material or dataset can be traced to so-called themes. These themes are in turn used to create a detailed explanatory model of how different aspects of the material relating to the research question.

Given that Boyatzis' (1998) method can be used both inductively and deductively, I draw on existing research to derive themes that emerge from the material for my theoretical argument. I thus adopt a deductive approach and will first explore the content of Riksdag speeches and then summarise transcribed sentences and words down to codes that relate to the research question and draw on the literature, for example how the Sweden Democrats communicate and Muddes (2007) elements that define the PRR. This presentation of codes follows Boyatzis' (1998) reliability requirement and will then be grouped into descriptive sub-themes and larger explanatory themes based on what I find. I present this coding in my codebook (*see Appendix A, table 2*). The final step is to explain how the identified themes relate to the research question. I do this using my theoretical argument to illustrate with quotes how the language of the Moderates has changed over time (*see Table 1*)

Methodological discussion

It is essential to discuss the implications of my choice of method, especially for the relationship between the concepts of *reliability* and *validity*. Reliability is about the method having the precision required for the study to produce a result that is reliable, while validity is about measuring what is intended to be measured (Boréus & Bergström, 2018).

Over time, like with other qualitative methods, I argue that the reliability of the document may be undermined. Specifically, in a thematic analysis, a great deal of stress is

placed on the reliability of the coding. The risk is that another researcher might think that my coded themes do not represent what I consider them to do. Therefore, future research and others reading this must critically examine the material itself, as this will in turn increase *intersubjectivity* (Boréus & Bergström, 2018).

As for the validity of the study, I consider it good because by studying real data I can discern the language usage by extracting the words and phrases that the Moderate MPs say in person. I believe that I therefore have suitable material and that my research method allows me to develop specific themes that can answer the research question of whether the Moderates' use of language reflects their public attitudes towards the Sweden Democrats.

This study should not however be used as a frame of reference for future research to generalise from since my material is limited and highly specific. Indeed, one of the disadvantages of a qualitative method is that its reliability is weakened by its vague generalisability (Larsen, 2018). I argue that in Europe, the case of Sweden specifically is a particularly difficult case to generalise, as it represents a rather unusual case of cordon sanitaire, given the time it took for the Moderates to break the blockade against cooperating with the Sweden Democrats (Heinze, 2017).

Statement of Positionality

It is also important to consider the role of the researcher and how they portray their study, and how this may have an implication on the overall validity and credibility of the study. This is something known as *positionality* (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014; Czarniawska & Torhell, 2014). A researcher, regardless of his or her background, should contribute research that is transparent and impartial, but the material used could still be filtered through their unconscious biases (Holmes, 2020). Therefore, I declare that I am a young, white, Swedish man with an academic background and currently studying for my bachelor's degree. In relation to my object of study, the Moderates, I belong to what scholars call the outsider group, which means that I have no previous close experience or knowledge of the Moderates (Holmes, 2020).

Results

Next, I present the results from the thematic analysis. To summarise my findings, the language of the Moderates has changed and moved to a more prominent PRR language in the years 2010-2022. It is well known that the Sweden Democrats have become increasingly powerful (The Swedish Election Authority, 2022), and my findings illustrate how the Moderates' change of language reflects their reaction to this development over time. I illustrate this change by dividing the years into different periods. Each period marks when there is a clear alteration in the language of the Moderates. Indeed, my results show that the Moderates' language change is not linear but dynamic, which means that in one period their use of PRR language is more apparent while in the next period it is more subtle. Despite this, however, there is evidence to suggest that the Moderates' language change occurs over time following Meguid's (2005) accommodating strategy. The summarised results of my analysis can be found at the end of this section (see table 1), while the more thematic discussion of my findings follows below.

First period: 2010-2017

No or vague use of PRR language

Because the Moderates are a mainstream-right party and not a PRRP, my results initially and unsurprisingly show that MPs very vaguely use PRR language in the years 2010-2017 which I refer to as the first period. This is partly because I found virtually no pattern of PRR language in the years 2011, 2013 and 2015, making it difficult to conclude whether there was any consistent pattern of change in language for this period at all. However, as shown in Table 1, I have still seen small trends of populism during period one, which is something that constitutes PRR language. I choose to define these tendencies as "*soft-populism*", where the term *soft* should be seen as a milder version of populism where society is not strictly divided into two camps of the 'elite' versus the 'ordinary' (Mudde, 2007). Soft-populism, I propose, is more about presenting one alternative (often political parties) as better than the other, by emphasising that they, the Moderates, serve *the people* better than others. Thus, there is no greater value placed on the words 'ordinary' or 'elite' than on society at large.

It was only the populist attribute of what constitutes PRR language that emerged from the material in the first period. It is, therefore, difficult to say that the language of the Moderates would have changed so early on. This is particularly evident since no nativist or authoritarian elements permeated the speeches examined in the given period. As I illustrate with the quote below, it was rather the case that the Sweden Democrats were portrayed as evil during their first year in the Riksdag. This is not unexpected given Meguid's (2005) claim that one of the mainstream parties' first reaction to a PRR party's success is to portray them as evil and bad.

“Sweden has had the pleasure of enjoying free trade within the Nordic countries for many years. [...] I find it difficult to understand why it should be so remarkable and distasteful to some that we are trying to take the step of extending free movement, given the good experience we have in the Nordic countries. [...] The problem with you Sweden Democrats is that in this debate you are mixing everything up into one pile of garbage. The rest of us do not do that.” (Beatrice Ask, 2011, p.22-23).

Instead, the vague soft-populism that pervaded the first period of this study was mainly about portraying the Social Democrats as bad and spoilers of people's lives. This can be illustrated by the following quote.

“Added to this are all the cost increases that the Social Democrats will use to erode pensioners' everyday finances. Raising petrol taxes, raising lorry taxes and raising aviation taxes will hit people hard. This is, of course, deeply worrying. But fortunately there is a simple solution to ensure that we avoid these risks. That is to vote for a continued Alliance government this autumn. Then pensioners can rest assured that we will look after the economy and take responsibility for public finances, Madam President.” (Anders Borg, 2014, p.69)

This quotation illustrates that the use of nativism and authoritarianism does not characterise the Moderates' way of speaking in the first period, and therefore I consider that no PRR elements constitute this period.

Instead, I argue that the Moderates use a language that stands in direct contrast to nativist and authoritarian language. I argue that the Moderates demonstrate anti-authoritarian governance and criticise potential regulation of society as can be seen in the quotes above.

Regarding nativism, there is nothing in the material that indicates that the Moderates want to protect Sweden or Swedish society from foreign influences (Mudde, 2007; Rydgren 2004).

Second period: 2018

Possible use of PRR language

When studying the second period for the year 2018, there may have been a change in the way the Moderates communicate. I argue that it is more PRR-like and therefore more similar to the language used by the Sweden Democrats. However, it should be said that I could only find Moderate PRR tendencies in 2018 specifically. In the first period, a consistent theme of no or vague use of PRR language could be observed for several years. This could indicate that the PRR pattern identified in the second period was just a coincidence as there is far less material to draw from. This is quite likely, especially since no PRR trends could be found in the material from the following year, 2019. Therefore, I would reserve from claiming that there has been a language change, although it is still possible that there has been.

Nevertheless, the material from 2018 indicates that the Moderates are using PRR-like language. The populist element that constitutes PRR language can be observed when Moderate MPs use the specific word, individual, to frame how ordinary and lonely individuals' lives are being destroyed as a result of the Social Democrats' deliberate desire to make their situation worse.

“The [Social Democratic] answer to the problem of the growing housing shortage and the increasing difficulties for the individual to get a home is to make it even worse for the individual and more difficult to get a home. [...] To the individuals who have found a home or are about to do so, they [the Social Democrats] say: you have it difficult now, but we will make it even more difficult.” (Isabella Hökmark, 2018, p.33)

As the quote illustrates, the Moderates have started to involve populist elements in their way of speaking because they adopt a language that suggests that the Social Democrats deliberately want to make things worse for people.

Furthermore, both nativism and authoritarianism are also prominent in the second period. In one of the speeches, this is particularly evident when a Moderate MP talks about immigration policy. In this specific case, the speaker adopts authoritarian language while promoting stricter rules for immigrants coming to Sweden, since this is something that has been done internationally. This indicates that the Moderates advocate several PRR elements simultaneously, which also supports Mudde's (2007) argument that the three PRR elements are interconnected with each other. Furthermore, this suggests that the MP in question communicates that immigrants should know what rules and norms apply in Sweden. This might reflect a desire by the MP to assimilate immigrants rather than integrate them, which could be in line with nativist ideals. The following quote exemplifies how the Moderates combine those ideals with authoritarian solutions to immigration problems.

“We have to make sure that we avoid repeating decades of bad integration policies [...] People coming to Sweden should know what laws and rules apply in this country, even if we change governments [...] We also have to tighten the requirements for citizenship. In an international perspective, the requirements in Sweden are very low. [...] It is also reasonable to know a little about the country that will be your new home. You should have a general knowledge of the Swedish language and be familiar with the laws and values that are the norm in our society.” (Johan Forsell, 2018, p.132)

While it is clear that the Moderates, unlike in the previous period, have become more aggressive in the way they speak than before. MPs have adopted a more accusatory tone, blaming others for society's problems to a greater extent than previously observed in the first period. I claim that this could be part of the Moderates' change of language. Given what I have exemplified earlier, the Sweden Democrats have long adopted this kind of accusatory language, blaming the governing parties for how they have failed to limit immigration to Sweden. In doing so, they promote themselves as saviours. The Moderates are doing the same thing as can be seen in the first sentence of the most recent quotation. I argue that the Moderates more or less in this case copy what the Sweden Democrats otherwise tend to do, which also indicates, following my theoretical argument, that the Moderates in this period follow Meguid's (2005) accommodating strategy when they communicate.

I conclude that based on what I have just discussed, the Moderates' use of language in the second period of this study might have changed and moved further towards a

PRR-oriented language. This suggests that the Moderates may also have moved closer to the way the Sweden Democrats communicate. Still, it is important to review this period with caution, as there is less material to draw on, compared to other periods. At the same time, this period illustrates the beginning of an underlying trend of language change for the Moderates. However, as the following third period illustrates, it can be difficult to see such trends clearly.

Third period: 2020-2021

Subtle use of PRR language

In the material constituting the third period, meaning the Riksdag speeches from 2020 to 2021, a vague and subtle populist language can be discerned. I would argue that this type of populism is similar to that which could be found in the first period, that is, soft-populism. The Moderates do not blame the elites for making it harder for ordinary people to thrive but they do use other populist styles to prove a point. In fact, the way the Moderates communicate during this third period suggests that MPs use cherry-picking, which is distinctively populist according to Bracciale and Martella (2017) in order to put forward messages that can mobilise others. The following quote illustrates this.

“Madam President, the terrorist murder of the French teacher Samuel Paty has shaken all those who defend democracy and freedom of expression. What happened in France could also happen in Sweden. [...] Teachers are threatened if they mention the Holocaust or say something that upsets Islamist fanatics. This undeniably leads to self-censorship and an erosion of our free society and human rights. How does the Minister for Democracy intend to stop this development?”
(Boriana Åberg, 2020, p.27).

In this case, I also believe that the Moderate MP has deliberately chosen to talk about what happened in France in order to utilise a certain feeling of fear which is also typical of populism (Bracciale & Martella, 2017). However, I cannot and should not determine whether this would be the case and therefore, I maintain that there are only small signs of populist language in the third period. There is, however, more to say about authoritarianism during this period.

Compared to the second period, authoritarian language seems to be more prominent in the third period. For example, I argue that there are authoritarian undertones that characterise

the way MPs speak in the third period, which is, also, something that is done in the second period. While there is no clear nativist message conveyed in the Moderates' way of speaking, I argue that nativist ideas possibly characterise the language of this period because Moderate MPs exhibit possible fear of immigration and at the same time advocate taking tougher measures to keep track of who is living in Sweden.

“The Moderates' starting point is that foreigners who pose a threat to Sweden's security should leave [...] The European Court of Justice says that the state must do its best to protect its nationals. But do we even know who is to be protected and from what? [...] there are quite serious shortcomings, particularly in the work of clarifying the (immigrant) applicant's identity [...] In a great many countries, forged identity documents are common. Madam President, it is important for the state to be able to establish who is living in Sweden and to ensure law and order.” (Alexandra Anstrell, 2021, p.48)

As the quote illustrates, the MP in question believes that immigrants are taking advantage of the Swedish state's shortcomings in terms of identity control, which they believe is a threat to Swedish and Swedes security. Strikingly, when comparing this quote with the equivalent from the Sweden Democrats, its similarities become pronounced. The Moderate MP says for example that foreigners who pose a threat to Sweden should leave the country, and the Sweden Democrats say (see above) that they want to revoke the citizenship of those who are involved in serious crime. Although the two quotes do not necessarily express extreme authoritarian messages, it is still possible to see how the Moderates increasingly but subtly speak like the Sweden Democrats.

This would, in summary, indicate that there is, in fact, a possible subtle trend in increased use of PRR language among Moderate MPs and thus the Moderates as a whole. Although I loosely established the idea that this could be the case already in the last period, I can say with greater certainty that this is indeed the case here. In fact, I have more material to rely on, and although the Moderate MPs do not clearly show the use of outright populism, I see that the language has changed over time and is somewhat more similar to that used by the Sweden Democrats, suggesting that for the third period, Meguid's (2005) accommodating approach may be expressed.

Fourth period: 2022

Subtle use of PRR language

Before presenting the fourth and final period of my findings, it is important to note that, similar to the second period, I do not have extensive material to draw on. This is because I conducted the study at the end of 2022, which means that I naturally had less material to use. I found that Moderate MPs used authoritarian language that was more apparent than in the periods prior. My material from this period indicates that the Moderates advocate for authoritarian policies on immigration and integration issues using nativist prejudices in their language. Thus, there is no indication that Moderate MPs used nativist language on a more active or obvious level. The same could be said about populism as I could not find any material that contained this element in the Moderate's language. Instead, I argue that the MPs made use of populist language tools to convey nativist and authoritarian messages. For example, I found that Moderate MPs made use of cherry-picking and stereotyping which I explained earlier is part of the populist strategy.

Furthermore, when Moderate MPs used cherry-picking and stereotyping in particular, other PRR elements became more apparent especially, concerning nativism.

In one of the speeches from 2022, the Moderate MP in question stereotypes that immigrants, once they have obtained Swedish identification numbers (*samordningsnummer*), move back to their home country and commit various kinds of crimes there by using their new identification numbers. The following quotation illustrates this use of populist tools.

“Sweden is plagued by serious and systemically threatening crime. Shootings, explosions and gang violence [...] people from poor EU countries are lured to come to Sweden. They are then sent back to their home country after obtaining an identification number, which is used to commit various crimes. It is about money laundering, welfare fraud, fake companies and so on. The lack of control over who stays in the country is one of the causes of crime and also a factor that makes law enforcement more difficult [...] International mobility of people was much less than today, as was the abusive exploitation of the Swedish welfare system.” (Boriana Åberg, 2022, p.15)

The stereotyped message that immigrants would exploit Swedish identification numbers is similar to the message that the Sweden Democrats convey when they refer to immigrants exploiting Swedish welfare (The Sweden Democrats, 2022b). It seems that the MP in

question, judging from the last sentence of the quote, uses the same argument that the Sweden Democrats use, namely that foreigners in today's Sweden exploit 'our' welfare system. The Moderate MP makes this argument by simultaneously comparing today's society with the past, to convey how things were better (more glorious) in the past, which Mols & Jetten (2014, 2020) argue is a common authoritarian rhetorical technique employed by PRRP leaders.

In the same speech, the MP in question urges to start using stricter rules and requirements for the issuance of identification numbers, and how the new government led by themselves will make sure to revoke all numbers that are not confirmed in a good sufficient way, which I argue is authoritarian.

“The Moderates went to the polls with the intention of bringing order to Sweden, and the Tidö Agreement that we signed with the partner parties clearly states that our authorities should have control over who stays in Sweden. This will be done by preparing a large-scale national census and revoking all identification numbers that are not confirmed in a reliable manner by the holder. The Moderates have long pushed the issue of law and order in the system of identification numbers. [...] It is fair to say that the laws have not kept pace with developments. Laws and rules for the common good cannot be based on everyone being honest - because not everyone is honest.” (Boriana Åberg, 2022 p.15).

I argue that it is authoritarian because the MP says that tougher measures must be taken to ensure that immigrants do not take advantage of the welfare system.

Also, It is important to note that both quotes presented in this period are related to each other and constitute the same speech. It is important to know this because authoritarian language seems to appear more clearly when putting the second quote in context with the first.

To summarise this fourth period, I argue that the use of authoritarian language is apparent. Indeed, I did not observe any explicit use of populist or nativist language in this period, but they were still subtly visible because they enhanced the authoritarian language. I argue that it is also apparent that the language used in this fourth and final period is similar to the language used by the Sweden Democrats. Therefore I conclude that language change over all given periods is present, and relates to my theoretical argument.

Table 1. Moderates' language changes over four periods between 2010-2022 in summarised quotes and how these can be categorised into descriptive sub-themes and larger explanatory themes

Period	Year	Summarised quotes	Sub-theme	Theme
1	2010	"M protects people who work, while S does not."	Soft populist language	No or vague use of PRR language
	2012	"S wants to destroy refugees prosperity In Sweden, by taxation, but M don't"		
	2014	"S destroys elders economy, but if people vote for M, elderly will be taken care of"		
	2016	"The government presents itself as the giver of all good gifts, but the bill for all new subsidies and so-called investments is paid by the people"		
	2017	"The government is forcing people into early retirement."		
2	2018	"S wants to make it worse and harder for the individual to get housing"	Populist language	Possible use of PRR language
		"Immigrants should know what rules, norms and values apply in Swedish society."	Authoritarian language with possible nativist bias	
		"Internationally, people are tougher on immigrants, so we should be too."		
3	2020	"The terrorist acts that happened in France could also happen in Sweden."	Soft populist language	Subtle use of PRR language
		"Swedish teachers are threatened as soon as they mention the Holocaust or anger Islamist fanatics"		
	2021	"Foreigners who pose a danger to Sweden should leave the country"	Authoritarian language with possible nativist bias	
		"It is essential that the state can determine who lives in Sweden and ensure law and order."		
4	2022	"They (immigrants) are then sent back to their home country after obtaining a national identification number, which is used to commit various crimes."	Authoritarian language with the use of populist rhetorical tools and possible nativist bias.	Subtle use of PRR language
		"The Moderates went to the polls with the intention of bringing order to Sweden, and the Tidö Agreement that we signed with the partner parties clearly states that our authorities should have control over who comes to Sweden. This will be done by preparing a large-scale national census and revoking all identification numbers that are not verified by the holder in a satisfactory manner."		

Note. In the material that I randomly obtained, I found no patterns of PRR language in the years 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2019. However, there is still an overall pattern of developing PRR language between the periods. Also, although there were more quotes to use, I have chosen to summarise the most central and significant ones in this table for illustrative purposes.

Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

This study is made at a time when the power of PRRPs has long been prominent in Europe (Mudde, 2012). Across the continent, several scholars have attempted to generalise individual countries' development and explain how it is part of a larger European or global theme (van Spanje, 2010; de Lange, 2012; Mudde, 2012; Wagner & Meyer, 2017; Spoon & Klüver, 2020). My study does not attempt to do this. Instead, it exemplifies how developments in Sweden can be observed through language change and how language could be a practical tool to use in future research to study political change. I studied, based on my research question, the Moderates' use of language over time and how it reflects their public reaction to an increasingly more powerful Sweden Democrats. I did this largely based on Meguid's (2005) theory that mainstream parties will tend to dismiss, accommodate or be an adversary in reaction to growing radical right parties. My theoretical argument posits that the Moderates will accommodate the Sweden Democrats' language, as it would be in line with their public reaction to eventually collaborate with the Sweden Democrats in the Tidö agreement (The Swedish Moderate Party, 2022).

I used Boyatzis's (1998) method of thematic analysis to explore my arguments and found through my material that the Moderates have changed their language over time as the Sweden Democrats have become stronger, but I argue that this change is more subtle than obvious.

During the first period of my findings, the evidence suggests that the Moderates have historically been dismissive of the Sweden Democrats because they did not pose an electoral threat to the Moderates during that time. It is even possible to discern how Moderate MPs in the first period of my study used language that was demonising just as Fernández-García (2021) shows that centre-left parties tend to do.

In the third and fourth periods of my study, the PRR elements were subtly present, which could indicate that the language used in this period is more similar to that used by the Sweden Democrats. Thereby, it can be seen that over time from the first period to the fourth and last, the Moderates have adopted, following Meguid's (2005) accommodating strategy, a

language similar to that used by the Sweden Democrats. It indeed reflects the Moderates' public reaction in approaching the Sweden Democrats physically, as both parties are now working together (The Swedish Moderate Party, 2022).

In a detailed examination of each period, it is not easy to distinguish how the language of the Moderates involved populist, nativist, and authoritarian elements. Unlike the Sweden Democrats, the Moderates use PRR elements in a more subtle way, which is to be expected since the Moderates are not a PRRP but a mainstream party. For instance, while Rydgren (2004) suggests that a PRRP uses xenophobic language I cannot say that the same applies to the Moderates. I argue that the Moderates are, as previous literature has noted, a pale 'copy' of a more vibrant 'original' (Krause et al., 2022) and therefore I do not think it is surprising that namely the nativist and populist elements are less prominent in the Moderates' use of language. The authoritarian element, however, is more prominent and indicates at least that the language of the Moderates has hardened and is in this way similar to that of the Sweden Democrats.

I consider the Moderates to be a pale 'copy' of the Sweden Democrats' vibrant 'original' because in many respects the Moderates advocate similar ideas and measures but do so using language that is more difficult to interpret.

As Abou-Chadi (2014) and Wagner & Meyer (2017) have previously noted, mainstream parties that use Meguid's (2005) accommodation strategy neither get more votes nor have difficulty in restricting the flow of voters to other parties. I argue that this has also been the case in Sweden as the Moderates lost many votes to the Sweden Democrats between the 2018 and 2022 elections (SVT Nyheter, 2022b). I agree with Römmele (2003) and Johann et al. (2018) that language is an important part of political parties' strategy, but judging by the Swedish case, it seems that the Moderates' use of PRR language does not paint the Moderates as effectively as the 'original' Sweden Democrats, nor does it make the accommodating approach seem any stronger.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research

Looking at the strengths of this paper, I think it is relevant both in time and in the way the study was conducted. In a European context, where PRRPs has been shaping the political sphere of countries for a long time, much research has already been done. My study draws on a well-known and established theory by Meguid (2005) that has been tested by other scholars,

but I do so in the field of political language. In this way, I have touched new soil, and my study helps to illustrate how political strategies in depth are expressed more practically through language. I also believe that my study contributes with a qualitative perspective on the PRR in general since most research on the subject to date has been quantitative (Damhuis & De Jonge, 2022).

However, in qualitative research of this kind, much relevant information can be lost. In fact, I argue that my main limitation is that I do not have a large amount of material to draw on. Methodologically, I would not be able to conduct a study covering a larger amount of material because of time constraints, but theoretically, this matters less because I did not aim to generalise my material. Instead, I highlighted and used a theoretical argument that, to my knowledge, is new and that future research can build on when conducting a more comprehensive study.

Furthermore, there are other limitations to this paper. First, this study is only a case study of a single country in Europe and therefore it is difficult to say whether my theoretical argument for Sweden could also be seen in the developments of other countries. However, I have opened doors for future research that aims to explore this, and scholars can make use of my approach to study language in other parts of Europe.

Second, my study only addresses one mainstream party of several possible ones. In Meguid's (2005) theory, not only mainstream parties belonging to the centre-right are tested, but both centre-right and centre-left parties. Therefore, I believe that in order to get a better and more complete picture of Meguid's (2005) theories, future research should study the Social Democrats or other centre-left parties in other countries in detail.

Third, although in my opinion there are advantages to analysing parliamentary speeches to examine language change, I also believe that there could possibly be better ways to do this. Television debates, for example, are as mentioned earlier primarily forums for parties to acquire voters, whereas parliamentary speeches are not (Blais & Boyer, 1996). When MPs communicate their ideas directly to their constituents, it might be clearer and more obvious to see language changes. I believe that future research that has the opportunity to go through such rich material should do so.

Fourth and finally, just as previous research indicates, PRRPs have long shaped Europe (Mudde, 2012). Therefore, there may be a reason to believe that my study is somewhat too narrow in terms of timeframe and that the Moderates' change of language could have

happened earlier. For example, De Lange (2012) studied several countries simultaneously in the early 2000s, which is a time when PRRPs captured several countries' governments. If future research wishes to study the case of Sweden more closely in the context of language, it should study mainstream party reaction to the Sweden Democrats' predecessor, New Democracy.

Conclusion

In this study, I have investigated whether the mainstream Moderates have changed their language over time and whether it reflects their public movement towards the right, as the Sweden Democrats have increasingly grown stronger. My findings illustrate that the Moderates have changed their language to become more PRR-like, which is in line with Meguid's (2005) accommodating strategy. Based on Mudde's (2007) three elements of nativism, authoritarianism and populism, it can be seen that over time Moderate MPs have begun to use these elements subtly, with the nativist element being the least prominent and authoritarianism the most over all periods. This result is important because it illustrates that it is possible to practically observe the strategic development of mainstream parties through their language change. It contributes to drawing attention to how future research has an opportunity to explore this further, whether in-depth in the case of Sweden or elsewhere in Europe.

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<https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/06DFE32E-5D82-4B3F-A28F-449193302A68>

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<https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/C9431F1A-ECF6-4530-BB35-5F83034C39B6>

Prot. 2013/14:11. *Måndagen den 14 oktober*.
<https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/BD0BE299-42BA-4448-A59B-E91CF38BAA1F>

Prot. 2013/14:131. *Onsdagen 25 juni*.
<https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/6AA8B470-93DD-431E-9EA9-CE317B6F4136>

Prot. 2014/15:106. *Fredagen den 29 maj*.
<https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/FB06DA45-2B46-464A-86CA-6AFDA1F73A96>

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<https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/A0DF222F-AA9C-44F3-94DC-86ADE24BD531>
- Prot. 2018/19:59. *Tisdagen den 5 mars.*
<https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/C9B3C652-8B60-459D-8C56-FC063450954F>
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- Prot. 2021/22:81. *Tisdagen den 15 mars.*
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- Prot. 2022/23:28. *Onsdagen den 30 november.*
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Appendix

Below I have presented the codebook that I used to conduct the thematic analysis (see Appendix A.) In my codebook, I have structured my findings and based them upon Mudde's (2007) definition of the PRR elements. I have given interesting words and meanings a *label* for what they in the brief entail, and then I have *defined* what was said more precisely. In the third column, I have briefly explained *the inclusion criteria* I used to delimit the content by the PRR elements. I explain how this is expressed in the language through a *description* of the content. In the fourth column, I *exemplify* the content so that you as a reader can better understand my approach and why I chose to classify something as populist, nativist or authoritarian.

In Appendix B, I have summarised relevant information about the Riksdag speeches I used as material for my study. Since APA7 does not explain how to refer to Riksdags speeches or the protocols that accompany them, I have chosen to use Lund University's (2022) reference guide as it is the only source I can find that explains how to cite protocols from the Riksdag. Still, their way of referencing does not, in my opinion, give a clear enough picture of the speeches I have used and therefore I have also made my table summarising in detail from whom and at what time the speech in question comes.

Appendix A. Codebook

Table 2. Codebook

Coded label	Definition	Description & Inclusion criteria	Example
<i>Populist words and meanings identified through Moderate Members of Parliament ([M]MPs) speeches</i>			
The people	Mentionings of the people as one specific group	When (M)MP highlights the people as a mistreated group by the elite	"The government presents itself as the giver of all good gifts, but the bill for all new subsidies and so-called investments is paid by the people"
Individual	Mentionings of individuals	When (M)MP highlights that specific innocent individuals are mistreated by the elite	"S wants to make it worse and harder for the individual to get housing"
Elders economy	Mentionings of elders and their economy	When (M)MP highlights that elders are mistreated by the elite	"S destroys elders economy, but if people vote for M, elderly will be taken care of"
Bad government	Mentionings that frame the government in a bad way	When (M)MP highlights the government as the mistreating elite	"The government presents itself as the giver of all good gifts, but the bill for all new subsidies and so-called investments is paid by the people"
Social Democrats	Mentionings that frame S in a specific way	When (M)MP frame S as elite or destroyer of peoples, and (or) elders life and (or) immigrant women's lives	"of the Social Democrats, they say: She is the problem. This woman is a problem. She has a high income. She is one of those who create income inequality."
Moderates	Mentionings that frame M in a specific way	When (M)MP frame M (themselves) as the saviour of peoples and (or) elders life and (or) foreigners life and the party that will bring law and order to society	"M protects people who work, while S does not."
<i>Populist rhetorical techniques identified through Moderate Members of Parliament ([M]MPs) speeches</i>			
Cherry-picking	Handpicking events to convey a certain feeling or message	When (M)MP actively pick events to create feelings of fear and urgency	"the terrorist murder of the French teacher Samuel Paty has shaken all those who defend democracy and freedom of expression. What happened in France could also happen in Sweden."
Stereotyping	Use of specific meanings to highlight	When (M)MPs over-generalise people and use a set of fixed	"They are then sent back to their home country after obtaining an

	over-generalised views of other people	assumptions about the people or group being generalised.	identification number, which is used to commit various crimes. It is about money laundering, welfare fraud, fake companies and so on."
Nativist words and meanings identified through Moderate Members of Parliament ([M]MPs) speeches			
Cultural assimilation	Mentionings that immigrants should assimilate to Swedish society	When (M)MP says that immigrants must adapt and learn Swedish values and follow the norms of Swedish society	"Immigrants should know what rules, norms and values apply in Swedish society."
Exploitation of society	Mentionings that foreign people are abusing Swedish society and welfare	When (M)MP stereotypes that foreign people are exploiting Swedish welfare	"International mobility of people was much less than today, as was the abusive exploitation of the Swedish welfare system."
Immigrants commit crime	Stereotyped mentioning of immigrants	When (M)MP stereotypes that many immigrants commit various crimes in or against Sweden	"They are then sent back to their home country after obtaining an identification number, which is used to commit various crimes. It is about money laundering, welfare fraud, fake companies and so on."
Authoritarian words and meanings identified through Moderate Members of Parliament ([M]MPs) speeches			
Tougher laws	Mentionings of wanting tougher laws	When (M)MP emphasises the need for tougher laws on immigration, integration and foreign people who exploit Swedish society.	"Internationally, people are tougher on immigrants, so we should be too."
Law and order	Mentionings of wanting law and order	When (M)MP utilises words like law and order to highlight the need for tougher laws on society at large.	"It is essential that the state can determine who lives in Sweden and ensure law and order."
Tougher on Illegal work	Mentionings of being tougher on illegal workers	When (M)MP wants to get rid of immigrant workers who reside and do undeclared work in Sweden.	I think it's terrible that there was a maid working illegally for the Prime Minister. It was a person who was in Sweden illegally, who did not have the right to stay here [...] We will fight this in every way possible. We will fight against this type of crime and turn over every stone. It is embarrassing that there was a maid who did undeclared work at the Prime Minister's home.
Deportation	Mentionings of deporting immigrants	When (M)MP wants to deport foreign and third country nationals who pose a threat to Swedes and Swedish society	"Foreigners who pose a danger to Sweden should leave the country"
Revoked ID	Mentionings of revoking identification numbers	When (M)MP say that M will revoke all ID numbers of foreign people who cannot in a satisfactory manner be verified.	"Our authorities should have control over who comes to Sweden. This will be done by [...] revoking all identification numbers that are not verified by the holder in a satisfactory manner."
Holding captive	Mentionings of holding immigrants captive	When (M)MP that immigrants who pose a threat to Sweden will be held in captivity if they can not be deported.	that foreign nationals who pose a threat to Sweden's security should leave the country. If, for various reasons, this is not possible, these persons need to be detained or monitored in a safe manner, of course in accordance with our international obligations.

Appendix B. Table with information of the analysed Riksdag speeches

Table 3. Detailed overview with information of all Riksdag speeches that were analysed

<u>Speeches details</u>		
Legend: Last Name of MP, First Name of MP (party abbreviation) – Description or title of the speech, date of the speech: [speech number], page: page number, URL		
Year	Speech 1	Speech 2
2010	Littorin, Sven Otto (M) – Response to interpellation (2009/10:321) on measures in response to the European Commission's call on the Swedish Government to strengthen the regulation of fixed-term employment, 2010-04-20: [81], page: 66 https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/6924D996-FB4C-4D2C-B141-E6C787999EBD	Elmsäter-Svärd, Catharina (M) – Response to Interpellation (2010/11:92) on train delays for passengers and freight traffic, 2010-12-22: [144], page: 120-121 https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/2D547902-0EA6-4BCB-8213-4100518425BF
2011	Ask, Beatrice (M) – Current debate (2010/11:123) Border controls in Europe, 2011-06-28: [18], page: 22-24, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/9F3F6A70-4A5E-4344-A81C-7C128EB349B6	Norman, Peter (M) – Response to interpellation (2011/12:24) on postal services in southern Stockholm, 2011-10-18: [39], page: 32-33 https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/1CED4152-0C96-40A9-A2B5-437CA4112EF8
2012	Munkhammar, Johnny (M) – Response to interpellation (2011/12:203) on increased economic income inequality, 2012-02-28: [34], page: 28, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/8C1FDF2C-C261-4809-AFDC-4710E8A4AEA3	Elmsäter-Svärd, Catharina (M) – Response to interpellation (2012/13:167) on nuanced field of vision requirements for driving licences, 2012-12-14: [86], page: 65, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/C9431F1A-ECF6-4530-BB35-5F83034C39B6
2013	Norman, Peter (M) – Response to interpellation (2012/13:416) on the tax equalisation system, 2013-05-28: [36], page: 27 https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/06DFE32E-5D82-4B3F-A28F-449193302A68	Bildt, Carl (M) – General policy debate (2013/14:11) World and Europe, 2013-10-14: [24], page: 11-14, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/BD0BE299-42BA-4448-A59B-E91CF38BAA1F
2014	Borg, Anders (M) – Response to interpellation (2013/14:518) on pensioners' tax, 2014-06-25: [75], page: 69, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/6AA8B470-93DD-431E-9EA9-CE317B6F4136	Kjellin B, Margareta (M) - Response to interpellation (2014/15:100) on the closure of the Elderly Persons Inquiry, 2014-11-28: [17], page: 17, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/BDCC416C-8111-47CB-B08A-6D8FBE23FF60
2015	Petersson, Jenny (M) – Svar på interpellation (2014/15:580) om jämställdhet, 2015-05-29: [41], page: 34-35, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/FB06DA45-2B46-464A-86CA-6AFDA1F73A96	Kristersson, Ulf (M) – Debatt (2015/16:5) med anledning av budgetpropositionens avlämnande, 2015-09-21: [22], page: 17-19 https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/90B3E9ED-4D72-43FC-AD8A-1702C2475677
2016	Åberg, Boriana (M) – Svar på interpellation (2015/16:235) om det nya vapendirektivet, 2016-01-15: [6], page: 5 https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/D2181395-1D97-45E9-AF43-D2F9093334AD	Rosencrantz, Jessica (M) – ärendedebatt (2016/17:44) kommunikationer, 2016-12-12: [1], page: 3-4, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/62237653-0E89-4477-993A-279F4E09DD48
2017	Wykman, Niklas (M) – Svar på interpellationerna (2016/17:474-516) om skillnaden i sysselsättning	Stockhaus, Maria (M) – Svar på interpellation (2017/18:98) om fallande intresse för lärarutbildningen -

	mellan inrikes och utrikes födda, 2017-06-02: [2], page: 3-4, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/5054DD94-22A7-4AF1-ADCB-C967620D357B	2017-12-01: [81], page: 65, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/A0DF222F-AA9C-44F3-94DC-86ADE24BD531
2018	Hökmark, Isabella (M) – Svar på interpellation (2017/18:538) om amorteringskrav och fallande nyproduktion på bostadsmarknaden, 2018-05-28: [40], page: 33-34, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/99CE8240-E35C-450C-901D-8385239E1E81	Forsell, Johan (M) – Allmänpolitisk debatt (2018/19:8) forts. från prot. 7 Migration och integration, 2018-10-17: [310], page: 131-133, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/A1DAE1B8-EDBA-47E5-B2D1-412C948E21F4
2019	Hultberg, Johan (M) – Svar på interpellation (2018/19:67) om läkemedelsstatistik, 2019-03-05: [16], page: 16-17 https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/C9B3C652-8B60-459D-8C56-FC063450954F	Stockhaus, Maria (M) – Svar på interpellation (2019/20:41) om barns idrottande och bullernivåer, 2019-11-12: [2], page: 3-4, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/BD06F4E2-FED2-4926-B994-B0CD42B8D583
2020	Josefin Malmqvist (M) – Utökad utbildningsplikt (2019/20:70) Frågestund, 2020-02-06: [100], page: 50-51, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/351C4501-3305-4A91-910A-F96EC92A8932	Åberg, Boriana (M) – Frågestund (2020/21:30) Lärares möjligheter att undervisa om yttrandefrihet, 2020-11-05: [73], page: 27, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/2BCDF4E9-4766-4440-B66C-53FBED544829
2021	Anstrell, Alexandra (M) – (forts.) Svar på interpellation (2020/21:623) om ökande säkerhetshot mot Sverige, 2021-04-20: [64], page: 48 https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/4B89B8A7-712B-4B4F-9CB6-1DC5694EB283	Green, Mats (M) – Arbetsmarknad och arbetsliv (2021/22:46) och Arbetsmarknadspolitik och arbetslöshetsförsäkringen, 2021-12-15: [29], page: 23-25, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/008355CC-CDD4-4053-9EBE-D4251B34D094
2022	Beckman, Lars (M) – Svar på interpellation (2021/22:379) om näringsministerns dialog med näringslivet, 2022-03-15: [72], page: 60-61, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/27EDD7FE-92FD-4714-8969-E940B63D4ED8	Åberg, Boriana (M) – Stärkt system för samordningsnummer, 2022-11-30: [16], page: 15-16, https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/4109BAC5-1C72-477D-A7C2-E639D8970B25

Note. To find the speech you are looking for, use the desired link and go by the page number that is listed at the end of each reference, just before the URL-link.