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"I don't stereotype, do I?" - results from the project Raising Awareness through Virtual Experiencing (RAVE).

Over the past four years we have conducted several matched-guise experiments aimed at raising sociolinguistic awareness of issues related to language and stereotyping among teacher trainees and other professional programs (business, law, sociology and psychology, for example). The pedagogic ambition is that metalinguistic knowledge be translated into professional language practice, but the experiments have also generated some interesting sociolinguistic findings. The methods are based on digital matched-guise techniques. For example, we can now manipulate voice quality to sound like that of the opposite sex, or specific vowels sounds to change impressions of an accent. With these methods we give students personal experiences of how a person's perceived "identity" (gender, age, ethnicity etc.) can subconsciously affect their judgement of language output, and in extension, people.

Short bio note



Mats Deutschmann is Professor in English at Örebro University. His research interests fall into several, partly overlapping, fields. These include sociolinguistics and the status of minority languages, especially in educational contexts. He is currently leading two projects on language and stereotyping, which focus on explorations of identity (gender in particular) and how language stereotyping affects the judgements of the hearer. Using the affordances offered by digital media, the aim is to raise sociolinguistic language awareness among teacher trainees and other student groups in programs preparing for 'people-oriented' professions.