

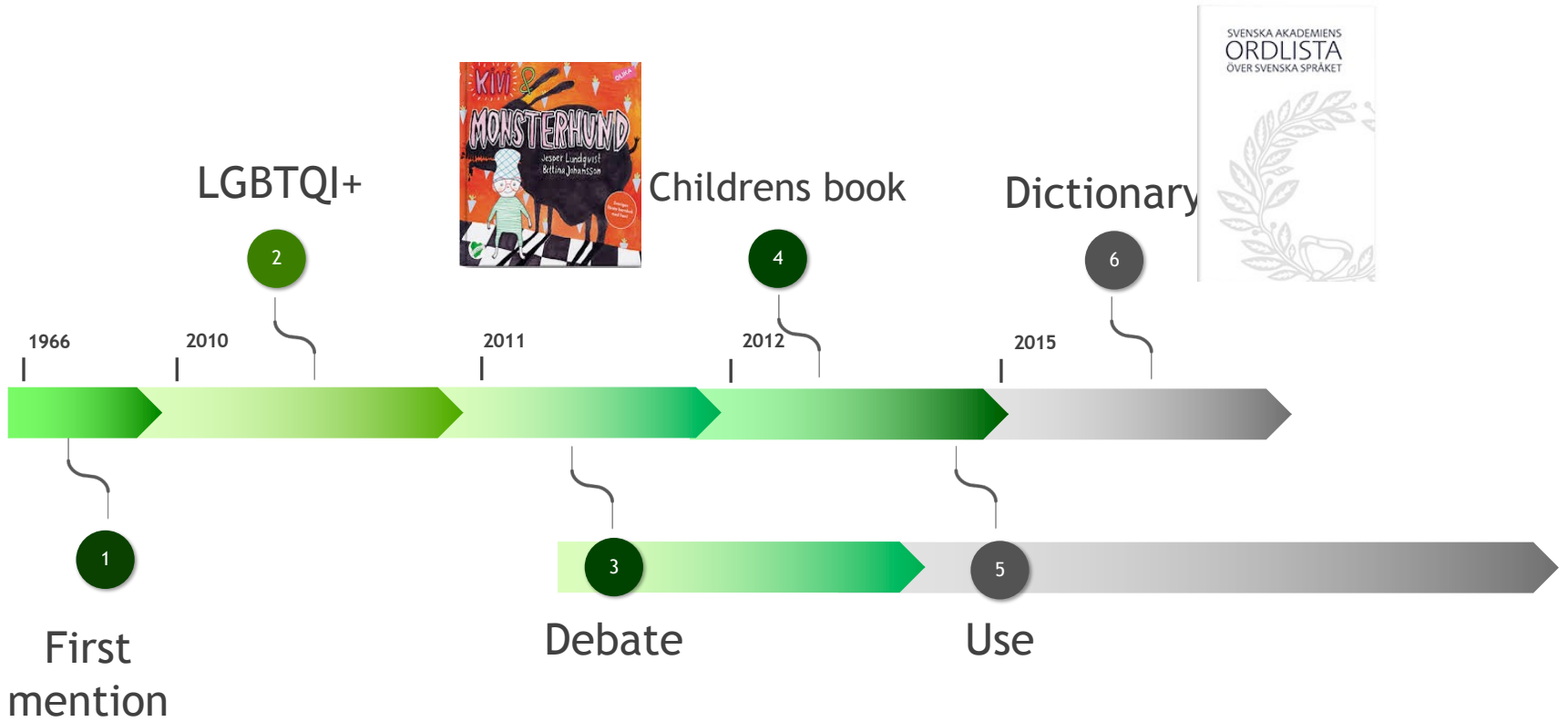


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Attitudes to gender-inclusive pronouns

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The double meaning of hen

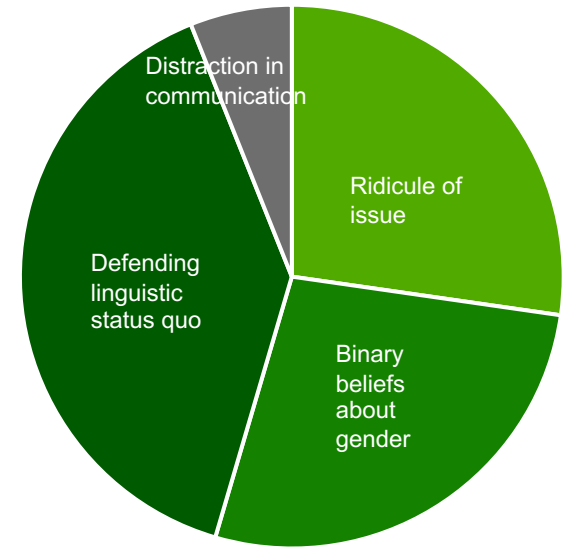
Specific

- Refer to individuals with (potentially) non-binary gender identity
- Challenges **beliefs about gender as binary (27%)**

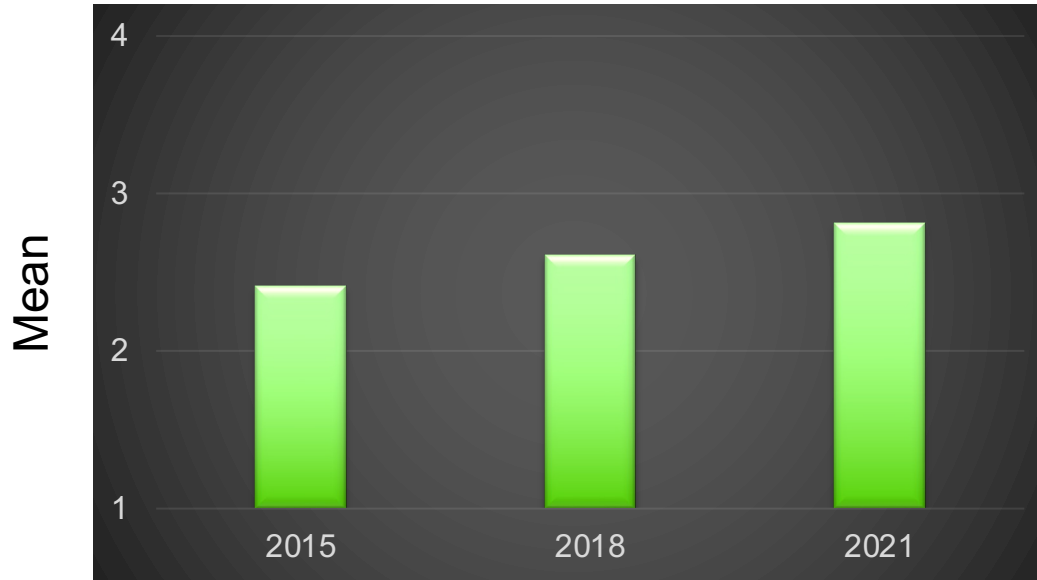
Generic

- Practical use, instead of paired forms, to anonymize, when gender is unknown/unimportant
- Challenges **traditional views and linguistic conservatism (39%)**

Arguments against using hen

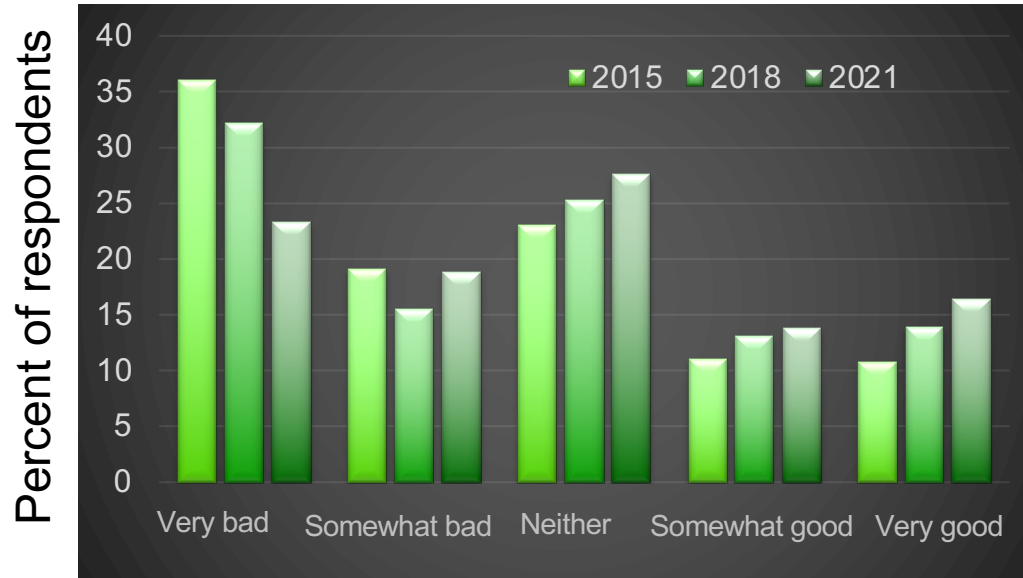


Attitude change over time



What is your opinion about hen as a gender natural pronoun?
1 = Very bad; 5 = Very good

Split on response alternatives



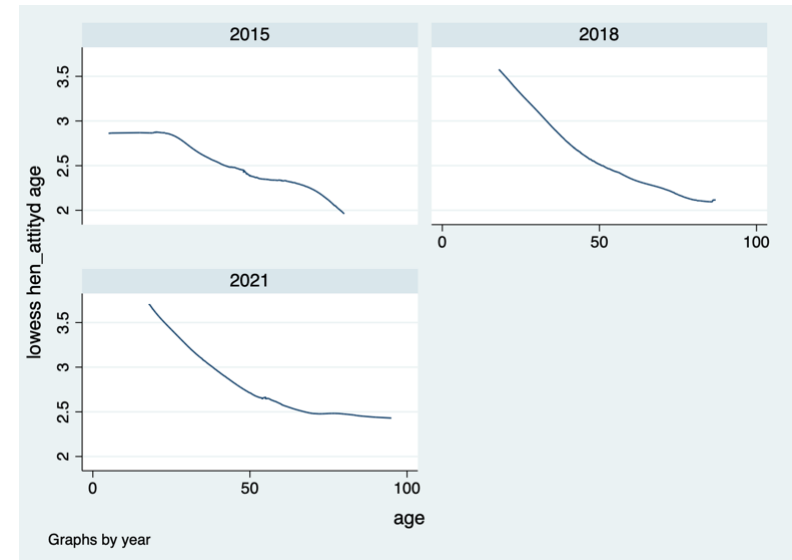
Who likes hen?

Individual level:

- Younger people
- Women
- Left-wing ideology
- Interest in gender issues

Contextual level:

- Time: Explains about **50%** of the variation in attitudes (Gustafsson Sendén et al. 2015; Lindqvist et al., 2016)



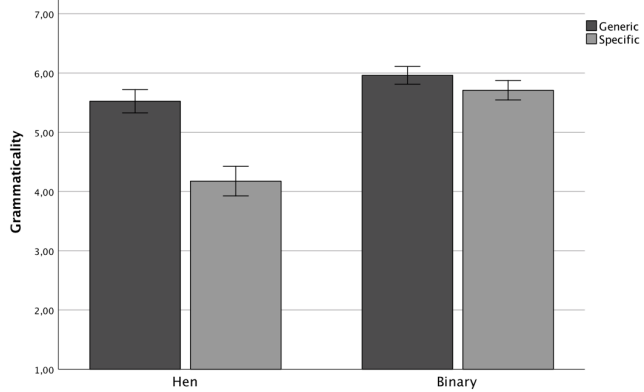
How is hen perceived in text?

Ratings of grammaticality, reading difficulty and negative valence

18 sentences with a **name** or a **role**, and a **pronoun**

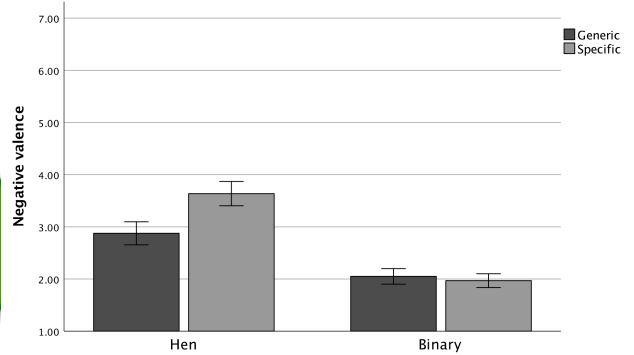
Anna took a nap, she[hen] was tired.

When a pilot is sick, hen [he/she] should stay at home.

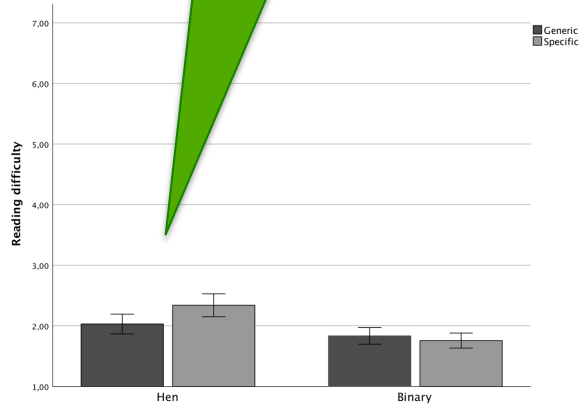


Specific hen is seen as less grammatically correct

Yet, not really difficult to read



Hen, especially specific hen, is seen more negatively than binary pronouns



How do people use hen?

"Fill in the blanks"



When a pilot is sick,
_____ should stay at home.

Lex was tired, _____ took a
nap.



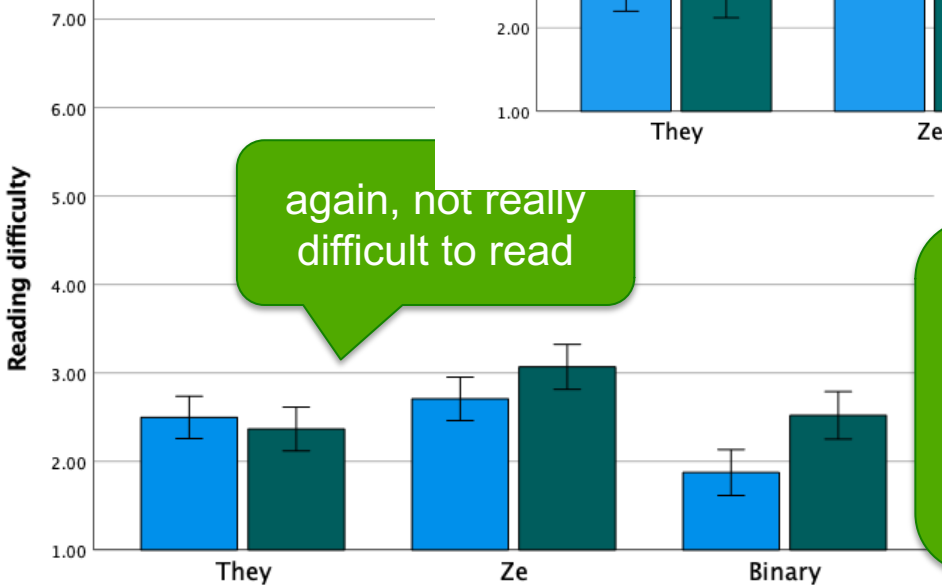
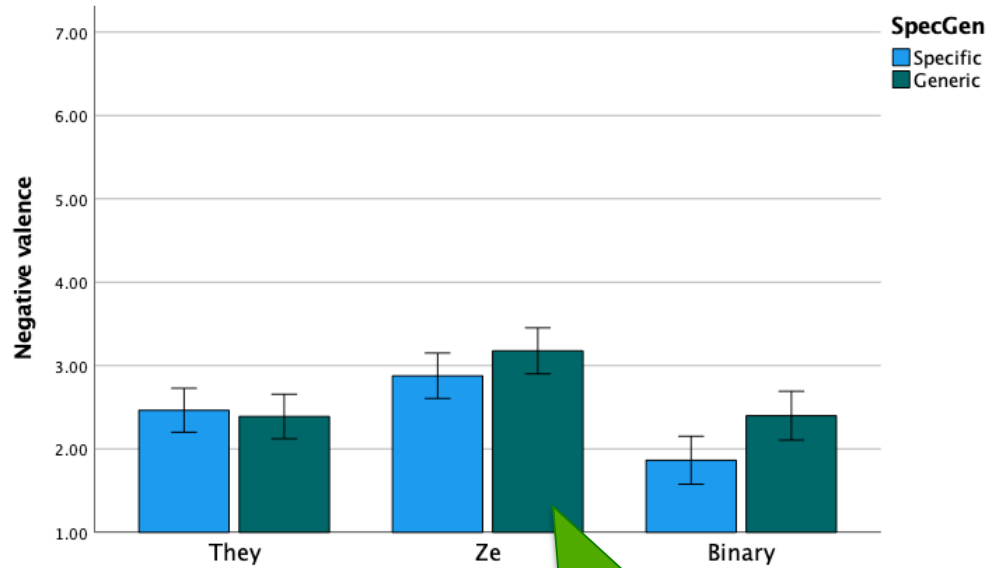
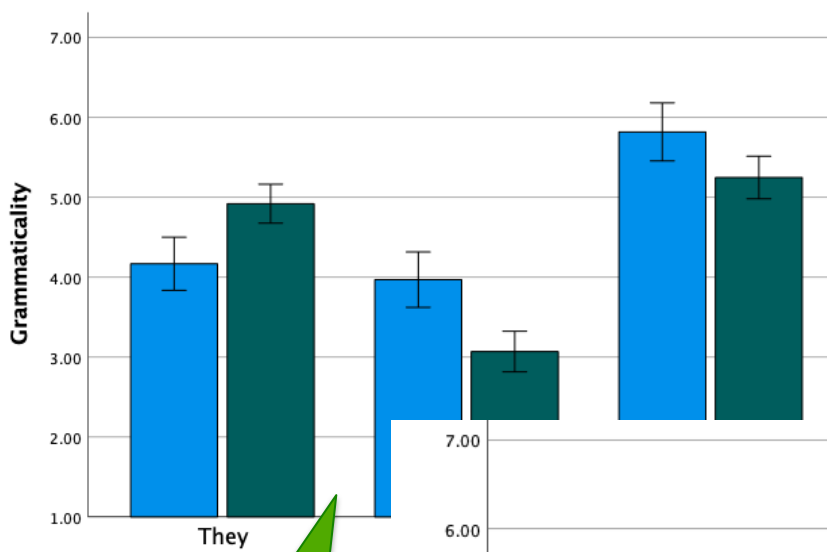
Generic hen is most popular!

But in specific sentences, binary pronouns are most popular.

What about English pronouns?

- Singular they
- Ze
- Binary pronouns

- Experiment same as Swedish on rating sentences
 - pronoun - name/role
 - Grammaticality, reading difficulty, neg valence



Specific they and both specific and generic ze is seen as less grammatically correct

again, not really difficult to read

Both neutral pronouns were more negatively seen, but binary pronouns in generic use (paired) was also slightly negatively seen

SpecGen
■ Specific
■ Generic

Take-home

Attitudes to hen have become more positive over the years

While there is still resistance, people don't really have any problems reading a sentence with hen

The generic use of hen is actually the most popular!

Similar tendencies in English, but varies with pronoun (they/ze), where they is seen more positively than ze.

What does this mean for inclusion of women and non-binary individuals?

www.genderfair.se

Gender Fair Language

A research project about language and gender

Search

hen [hen¹] pron.; gen. *hens*; objektsform *hen* hellre än *henom* **1** könsneutral benämning på person som är omtalad ev. implicit i sammanhanget **2** benämning på person som inte vill kategorisera sig som vare sig man el. kvinna



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Hierarchical regression analyses predicting grammaticality, reading difficulty and valence.

Study 2, N = 297.

		Grammaticality		Reading difficulty		Valence	
		Generic	Specific	Generic	Specific	Generic	Specific
Step 1	Age	-0.10	-0.23***	-0.01	0.01	0.06	0.02
	Gender	0.09	0.09	-0.10	-0.07	-0.21***	-0.17**
	Gender identity strength	0.08	0.09	-0.17**	0.09	0.05	0.12*
		Adj.R ² =0.01	Adj.R ² = 0.05	Adj.R ² =0.03	Adj.R ² = 0.00	Adj.R ² =0.04	Adj.R ² =0.04
Step 2	Age	-0.03	-0.22***	-0.06	-0.2	-0.05	-0.07
	Gender	0.01	0.03	-0.00	-0.02	-0.05	-0.03
	Gender identity strength	0.11*	0.04	-0.20***	-0.11	-0.00	0.07
	Traditionalism	-0.20**	0.06	0.22**	0.07	0.30***	0.18**
	Gender beliefs	-0.14	-0.21***	0.15*	0.14	0.30***	0.33***
		Adj.R ² =0.08	Adj.R ² =0.08	Adj.R ² = 0.11	Adj.R ² =0.02	Adj.R ² =0.27	Adj.R ² =0.20

For negative valence, gender beliefs predict ratings for both generic and specific meaning

Note: Gender is here included as a binary variable, and coded 0 = man, 1 = woman

Traditionalism mainly predict ratings of generic meaning

Hierarchical regression analyses predicting specific and generic use of hen. Study 3, N = 451.

		Specific	Generic
Step 1	Age	-0.07	0.03
	Gender	0.18*	0.14**
	Gender identity strength	-0.10	-0.03
		<i>Adj.R²=0.02</i>	<i>Adj.R²=0.01</i>
Step 2	Age	-0.05	0.06
	Gender	0.04	0.05
	Gender identity strength	-0.06	0.02
	Traditionalism	0.03	-0.04
	Gender beliefs	-0.31***	-0.32***
		<i>Adj.R²=0.10</i>	<i>Adj.R²=0.12</i>

Only gender beliefs predict use, regardless of meaning

Note: Gender is here included as a binary variable, and coded 0 = man, 1 = woman