

A MULTILINGUAL IDEOLOGY IN A MONOLINGUAL COUNTRY: LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN FINLAND

IRINA BUCHBERGER*
University of Helsinki, Finland

ABSTRACT

Both the learning of domestic and foreign languages have always occupied a prominent role in Finland and its education system. This contribution will describe foreign language education policies adopted in Finland. Concrete policy measures to materialise a multilingual ideology in this almost monolingual Member State of the European Union will be described and analysed. The contribution will focus on the (complex?) relationships between the learning of the two official languages of the Republic of Finland (Finnish, Swedish), English as dominant lingua franca, and other (European) foreign languages.

RESUMEN

Tanto el aprendizaje de la lengua familiar como el de las lenguas extranjeras han desempeñado un papel destacado en Finlandia y en su sistema educativo. Mi contribución en este libro describe las medidas en torno a la educación en lenguas extranjeras en Finlandia. Trato con ello de describir y analizar medidas educativas concretas dirigidas a materializar una ideología multilingüe en un Estado, miembro de la Unión Europea, que casi es monolingüe. El trabajo se centra en las relaciones (¿complejas?) entre el aprendizaje de las dos lenguas oficiales de la República de Finlandia (Finlandés y Sueco), el Inglés como lingua franca dominante, y otras lenguas extranjeras (europeas).

RÉSUMÉ

Ma collaboration dans ce volume a pour objectif décrire et analyser les mesures adoptées par le système éducatif en Finlande, en ce qui concerne l'éducation en langues étrangères, s'agissant d'un pays où les apprentissages

* Irina Buchberger (Prof., PhD) currently works at the University of Helsinki (Department of Teacher Education), Finland. She got her PhD in 1988 from the University of Helsinki and the position of professor in 1991. Her research interests deal with mother tongue teaching and learning, and language policy analysis. She has frequently published on these issues in both national and international journals and books.

de la langue familiale et les langues étrangères ont joué un rôle privilégié. Il s'agit de dispositions éducatives concrètes orientées à matérialiser une idéologie multilingue dans un État, devenu membre de l'Union Européenne, qui est presque monolingue. Ce travail, donc, est centré sur les relations (complexes?) entre l'apprentissage des deux langues officielles de la République de Finlande (le finnois et le suédois), la langue anglaise comme *lingua franca* dominante et d'autres langues étrangères (européennes).

1. MULTILINGUAL FINNS IN THE ENGLISH SPEAKING CORNER OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

At the Barcelona summit the European Council (2002) has defined as one of its concrete future objectives for the education and training systems to be materialised till 2010 that all young European citizens should be able to communicate in three European Community languages. What seems to be a vision to many Europeans in a number of Member States of the European Union (e.g. Great Britain), has been a reality in the Finnish education system since the early seventies-multilingual Finnish citizens competent in four (European) languages.

However, the role of the English language has increasingly become dominant in Finland as well as in the other Nordic countries the past decades especially when compared to French. In all Nordic countries English has become the main foreign language.

Table 1. Knowledge of English and French as foreign languages in some EU countries (persons aged older 15 years) (cf. INRA, 2001).

<i>Country</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>
Sweden	70.3	0.4
Denmark	65.5	0.5
Finland	47.3	0.1
Netherlands	45.5	6.0
Germany	45.1	3.3
Italy	30.4	18.9
Spain	29.9	10.4

The whole younger generation in the three northern European Union Member States Denmark, Finland and Sweden is able to communicate in English because English has the position of a first or second foreign language in the curricula of all primary or secondary schools in these countries.

2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF FINNISH AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

To gain deeper understanding of the recent relationship between the Finnish language and foreign languages, some historic context information will be provided.

Finland was part of Sweden until 1809. While ordinary people have communicated in various Finnish and Swedish dialects at that time, a small elite only was bilingual or multilingual. During the Swedish regime the official languages were at first Latin and later on Swedish.

From 1809 on, Finland became part of Russia until 1917. During the Russian regime Swedish and partly Russian were the official languages until 1863. In 1863, the Finnish language received the status of an official language in the autonomous Finnish part of the Russian empire. The ongoing dominant use of Swedish (the language of the former mother country) as language of administration, education and culture in the Finnish autonomous part had aroused suspicion and fears on the side of the Russian rulers. These perceptions may be seen in relation to the fact that Finnish received the status of an official language.

The development of the Finnish language into a language for administration and of art and science was both targeted and rapid. With different Finnish dialects as a basis, the so-called Fennoman movement began to develop the Finnish literary language. Many members of the Swedish speaking elite were active in this movement. They were also ready to learn and use Finnish at home and in official situations. This Finnish speaking part of the upper class was loyal to the Finnish "folk" and ready to work for its interests. The "folk" was an idealised vision developed by the Swedish speaking elite itself, had strong roots in Lutheran ethics and close ties to the sector of agriculture. Against this background, it managed to increase its political and economic freedom at the expense of the new Russian speaking elite. The role of the Russian language as the third official language in the country began to decrease (Alapuro, 1998; Peltonen, 1998).

A general strike in 1905 and the civil war 1918 (after Finland had received independence from Russia in 1917) may be seen as a shock to the confidence of the elite towards the "folk". But, the common national project was yet too important to give up. After the civil war the striving for a Finnish culture became even stronger. Education and schooling in general and the school subject "Finnish language" in particular (which has been taught from 1841 onwards) had occupied a key role in this development (Alapuro, 1998; Peltonen, 1998; Koskinen, 1988).

From the very beginning, both the age and clumsiness of the Finnish language as a cultural language (compared to Swedish or other European languages) may be related to perceived feelings of inferiority and uncertainty in the minds of those members of the Swedish speaking elite who were ready to learn and to use Finnish because of political reasons. These feelings may be observed even recently (Apo, 1998; Peltonen, 1998). In parallel, the Finnish speaking "folk" has had an ambiguous relationship to the Swedish language as the language of the old elite from the very beginning –comparable to the situation with the Russian language–.

The persisting question of loyalty of the Finnish intelligentsia and the elite to the Finnish and Swedish speaking "folk" has become topical again. The recent situation with Finland as a Member State of the European Union may be perceived as challenge and new opportunity for the Finns, but at the same time as a threat to the Finnish nationality as well as to the Finnish and Swedish languages. It may remain uncertain, if the new so-called "Brussels elite" will have any readiness and competence to strive for collective goals such as the Finnish and Swedish languages in the world of English as a global language (Nordgren, 1999; Lönnqvist, 1999; Alapuro, 1998; Peltonen, 1998; Sarmela, 1996).

3. ON LIMITS OF RATIONAL SYSTEM PLANNING STRATEGIES FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Policies on foreign language teaching in Finnish education have been subject to fundamental changes the past thirty years. In chapter three, reflections will be made on the limits of rational system planning strategies that have guided language education policies till the beginning of the nineties. Language education policies adopted in "The New International Finland" since the early nineties will be discussed in chapter four and their implications for curricula in chapter five.

Ever since the days when Finland received independence priority has been given at political level to guarantee equal rights for both the Finnish speaking and the Swedish speaking population. Therefore, the first big issue in Finnish language policy has been the status of the two official languages in the education curriculum. The percentage of the Swedish speaking population was in the first decades of the 20th century around 10%, and has reduced to around 6%. Finnish constitution guarantees the same cultural and economic rights to both language groups.

This implies that the Swedish speaking population has a school system of its own (from kindergarten to university level). They have right to use their mother tongue at court as well as in health care and have own TV and radio channels. All official documents are published both in Finnish and Swedish. Most of the Swedish speaking people are bilingual. They learn Finnish either already at a bilingual home or in every case at school. Also, every Finnish speaking student studies Swedish at school as a second official language (not as a "foreign" language although it is for most of them more foreign than English).

Since the last thirty years the second big issue has been how to deal with the dominance of English as a foreign language. Before world war II the German language was most often the first foreign language in the old grammar school. Until the middle of the sixties the status of the German language stayed strong. In 1965, 38.6% of the students had German as first foreign language while the percentage of English was 60.3% (Latin 0.7%, French 0.2% and Russian 0.2%) (Piri, 2001).

In 1970, Finland has introduced a comprehensive school system of a duration of nine years which replaced an old fragmented system with an academic and a non-academic branch in parallel. Prior to 1970, it has been possible to study one foreign language in the non-academic branch compared to the academic branch with the opportunity to learn three or more foreign languages. In the new comprehensive education system the learning of two foreign languages has been made compulsory for all students. The language program was as follows: At primary level the first foreign language ("the long language") began at grade five (at the age of eleven), and the second foreign language began at grade seven (at the age of thirteen). The first or the second (foreign) language had to be the second official language of the country (Swedish for Finnish speaking students or Finnish for Swedish speaking students). Opportunity has been provided to begin the learning of a third foreign language optionally at grade eight. In addition to Swedish or Finnish schools had opportunity to offer courses in English, German, French, Russian and Latin. From the very beginning, 90% of the students have opted for English as first foreign language ("long language") compared to Swedish (10%) and German as well as French in a marginal position (Piri, 2001).

Focussed on strategies of rational system planning the Ministry of Education has been very active in language (policy) issues since the middle of the seventies. Making use of the expertise of commissions, researchers and teacher organisations the first important plan for national

language policy was produced in 1978. The Ministry set exact qualitative and quantitative targets for competencies in different languages. A coherent set of actions (e.g. legislation, statutory instruments and directives, resource allocation, curricula, teacher education programs, small-scale projects) has been taken to materialise these targets (Piri, 2001, p. 323). The Language Program Commission has set in 1978 the following targets to be met by 2010/2020:

Table 2. Qualitative and quantitative targets for different languages in Finland (for 20-63 old) of the Language Program Commission 1978 (cf. Piri, 2001, pp. 132-133).

<i>Language</i>	<i>Competence level</i>			
	<i>Very good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Passable</i>
Swedish ⁽¹⁾	10-15%	50%	25%	10-15%
Finnish ⁽²⁾	15-20%	50%	25%	5-10%
English	15-20%	50%	25%	5-10%
German	5-10%	5%	10%	5-10%
Russian	5%	5%	10%	10%
French	2-3%	5%	3-5%	5%

⁽¹⁾ Targets for Finnish speaking citizens.

⁽²⁾ Targets for Swedish speaking citizens.

One aim of the Language Program Commission was to decrease the percentage of students studying English as a “long language” from 92% to 70%, while increasing the percentage of students with “long Swedish” from 3% to 15%, “long Russian” as well as “long German” from below 0.5% to 5-7% and “long French” from 0.1% to 2-3%. The idea was to give parents more opportunities and to tempt them this way to choose other languages than English as the first language –and this way to diversify language studies–. Some members of the Commission were rather sceptical and criticised this kind of “radical rationalism” as problematic (Piri, 2001; Allardt, 1995). Indeed, they were right. The dominant position of English as first foreign language could not be questioned.

Again focussed on strategies of rational system planning, new plans were made and targets set by the Finnish Government in 1984. This time, English as the preferred “long foreign language” should be diminished to 81.5%. As outcome, the situation with English did not change, while the German language improved its position at the ex-

pense of the Swedish language (Piri 2001). These figures indicate that the rational system planning strategy of the government had limited success again.

4. LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN "THE NEW INTERNATIONAL FINLAND"

At the beginning nineties Finland has been confronted with a massive economic crisis (1990-1993). In this situation the response of the Finnish state has been a coherent and comprehensive reform policy in different areas of the society focussing on explicit targets and coherent funding policies by the state. Education and training have been chosen as one of the priority areas. In this line, the government presented in 1995 a special development plan for the reform of the education sector and university research for 1995-2000. A "knowledge strategy" aimed at a change of Finnish society into a dynamic learning society (with high quality education and training for all, a substantial increase in numbers of higher education students or the promotion of lifelong learning as key elements of this "knowledge strategy"). Emphasis has been given to a coherent research policy, internationalisation, new mechanisms of governance and administration of the education system, evaluation and a redefined concept of education equality (Castell & Himanen, 2001; F. Buchberger & I. Buchberger, 2002).

The "Research Strategy" of the governments has mainly concentrated on new areas such as information and communication technology or biotechnology. One of the concrete results of this policy may be seen with NOKIA in the information and communication technology sector which has got massive research financing by the state (Castells & Himanen, 2001).

The internationalisation of all areas has been another part of the "knowledge strategy". Its implications for language policies will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

The system of education governance and administration has become subject to fundamental change and a new model with a high amount of autonomy has been introduced granting much responsibility to the municipal level. The National Board of Education has reduced its mandate primarily to a consulting role. This means e.g. that the national frame curricula describe some general principles and guidelines of teaching only. The entire national curriculum for all foreign languages in comprehensive school consists of seven pages only, while the con-

crete curricula have to be developed at the level of municipalities, schools and teachers. Individualised curricula for particular students have to be developed by teachers in co-operation with parents and students (F. Buchberger & I. Buchberger, 2002).

A new kind of culture of evaluation has also been introduced. Its main principles are responsibility, outcome-orientation, visibility and continuity. Evaluation and development take place at all levels: at national level it consists of a monitoring system monitoring for orientation purposes only, and in more concrete terms at municipal level, school level, teacher level and student level (e.g. portfolio evaluations) (F. Buchberger & I. Buchberger, 2002; Virtanen, 2002; Poropudas, 2002).

The new education policy has also meant a redefinition of the concept of "education equality". At the beginning of the comprehensive education in the seventies, it was understood as right for the same educational provision and teaching for all. The new definition understands it as right to educational provision and teaching focusing on individual differences (e.g. intelligence, needs). So the new education policy slogan "high quality education and training for all" means best education for high achievers (under perspectives of global economic competition) but also for all other students under perspectives of the Scandinavian welfare state model and, as a consequence, comprehensive education, support services and inclusive education for students with special needs.

As part of the "Development Plan" the Ministry of Education published in 1997 a special strategy program for foreign language teaching and the internationalisation of education named "Rising to the Challenge: Language Teaching in New International Finland" (MINEDU, 1997; Piri, 2001). In this program, foreign languages are seen as an integral part of the internationalisation process of education, which aims at the increase of Finns' knowledge of foreign languages and cultures, improvement of vocational skills and promotion of understanding and tolerance. The starting points of the program are globalisation of the world economy, new information and communication technologies, different polarisation processes and integration of Europe.

The basic principle of language education is that everyone in Finland learns Finnish, Swedish and English. Efforts will be made to increase the numbers of German, French, Russian, Spanish and Italian speaking citizens. Other important languages for Finns should be Japanese, Chinese and Arabic (MINEDU, 1997).

As examples of new ways in language teaching and learning the program mentions information technology, education and youth pro-

grammes of the European Union, and the use of foreign languages as languages of instruction.

The objectives of the program manifest that the role of language education is seen from a very new perspective. The objectives defined are as follows:

- Finnish people need to establish Finland's position as an active, enterprising Member State of the European Union. This means extending the present Finnish and Scandinavian identity of citizens into a European identity.
- Today's increasingly international job market, business word and decision-making process require better language proficiency and cross-cultural skills by their citizens.
- An information society depends on its citizens' ability to handle and generate information in a foreign language and a foreign cultural environment.
- The new multi-cultural Finland is a fact. Successful performance in everyday communication situations requires knowledge and tolerance of foreign cultures (MINEDU, 1997, p. 12).

A list of present problems and actions to be taken are part of this program (e.g. the bilingual status of Finland is poorly used in language education; insufficient use of immigrants' languages and cultural skills) (MINEDU, 1997).

5. A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

As a result of the new educational policy model a rather restrictive planning and control of language policy came to an end. A new type of framework curricula for comprehensive school (grades 1-9) and upper secondary school (grades 10-12) have been introduced in 1994. As regards foreign languages, these curriculum texts have mentioned foreign languages only –not any more Swedish and Finnish as official “not-foreign” languages (National Board of Education, 1994a, b).

The curriculum stresses that the first foreign language (A1) has to be offered at the lower level of comprehensive school (grades 1-6). It is also possible to take optionally another foreign language (A2) already during lower secondary level. This should give students opportunity to gain equal mastery in both foreign languages at the end of comprehensive school (National Board of Education, 1994a).

At lower secondary level (grades 7-9) curricula for B1 have to be offered which have considerably narrower focus than A-languages. A student must take A1 and either A2 or B1. One of these three languages has to be the second official language. B2-languages are optional and less demanding than B1. Provision of B2-languages is tailor-made to each particular school. B3-language teaching begins at upper secondary school and it is of optional nature. Individual schools and municipalities themselves make decision at which grade the different foreign languages will be introduced and how much teaching time will be devoted to each of them. The general curriculum guidelines contain the minimal requirements only for each school subject. The general principle is that students should choose as many foreign languages as possible –and as early as possible (National Board of Education, 1994a).

The targets of the Ministry of Education may be described as follows. In comprehensive school all students should learn the obligatory second official domestic language and another foreign language. 50% should also learn a third foreign language as an optional language during comprehensive school, which implies that half of the student population should be able at the end of comprehensive school to communicate in four European Union languages. During the three years of academic upper secondary school 90% of the students should study one or more optional languages to meet the target of Finnish citizens stressing competence in four European Union languages. Recent numbers are 40% four-lingual students at the end of comprehensive school and 80% at the end of upper secondary education. The possibility to choose two “long languages”, A1 and A2 has brought both German and French back. 12.5% of the students opted for German and 2.7% for French as A1 or A2. The popularity of English as A1 still persists (87.6%). As A2, German has become more popular than Swedish which usually has a position as B1 (Piri, 2001).

Statistics show that students usually begin learning of A1 at grade three at the age of 9, and A2 at grade five at the age of 11. However, it has become increasingly more common to start learning A1 at grade one at the age of seven. Schools themselves have opportunity to decide which languages are offered and when. Therefore, the combination of languages varies from municipality to municipality and school to school. In the city of Helsinki, A1 usually begins at grade 3 and the languages available are English, French, Swedish, German or Russian. A2 begins at grade 4 and languages available are English, Spanish, French, Swedish, German and Russian (EDU.HEL, 2002).

The status of Swedish has been an issue since the very beginning of the introduction of the comprehensive school system. Its nick name, "the forced Swedish", may describe feelings of many Finns. The arguments in favour of obligatory Swedish have been as follows. The bilingual administration in Finland calls for civil servants capable of Swedish. Nordic co-operation would be easier when Finns are capable of Swedish. Similarities between Norwegian, Danish and Swedish would permit mutual Nordic understanding. Economy, trade and industry would need Swedish. The opponents responses have focussed on the following issues: The learning outcomes in Swedish are too poor to permit fluent communication in Swedish as needed to provide professional service as civil servant. Even in Nordic co-operation and in the business life (e.g. in Nordic companies) English has become the common language of communication.

In 1992, the planning commission of the Ministry of Education made the proposal that in comprehensive school two obligatory languages should be taught. This should be English (and explicitly not Swedish) and one other which students could choose from languages which are available in the school curriculum in question. This proposal was rejected. The government has only been able to make a clear advice that at least 90% of the students should study English at comprehensive school as an obligatory or optional language. More recent commissions have not brought either the special status of Swedish to discussion since then nor the possible compulsion of English (Piri, 2001).

A hidden boycott of the Swedish language at schools may be seen in relationship with very poor results in national achievement tests at comprehensive school level. Especially the results of boys have been poor (cf. the test results in 2001 from those who have chosen Swedish as A-language, at which 16% got poor results with 21% of from boys; from students of B-Swedish 38% got poor results with boys as much as 51% (OPH, 2002).

6. ENGLISH FOR "NOKIA-KIDS"

Educational policy on languages is again changing driven by needs of parents of the "NOKIA-kids". Content integrated language learning (CLIL) as well as "immersion" preferably adopting English have become buzzwords and driving forces. The main reasons that many parents want immersion classes and CLIL are of an instrumental nature: English is

needed in the increasing international job market. English is the main language in the European Union and a global language. English permits easily study abroad and international mobility of families. Immersion is more effective as teaching method than traditional methodologies (Hassinen, 2002).

One of the new ideas is a positive attitude towards the content integrated language learning of foreign languages (CLIL). Using another language than students' mother tongue as language of instruction has been a normal way of teaching in many countries where the official language is a colonial language (e.g. English, French). It was also the normal way of teaching in the old Europe at that time when Latin was used as language of instruction.

In Finland, following Latin the Swedish language and during Russian time also Russian were used as languages of instruction. Swedish and Russian were used at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century also in parallel with Finnish instruction. In the old Finnish grammar school instruction using foreign languages was also possible but this did not apply to the non-academic elementary school. The language of instruction at the comprehensive school was the students' mother tongue only during the first ten years of this type of school.

The idea of using an other language than the mother tongue as language of instruction was borrowed from Canada. The type of immersion methods developed and used at first in Quebec during the sixties was applied in Finland at the end of the eighties. In Quebec the English speaking students were taught using French as language of instruction. In Finland the language of instruction was Swedish and the children were Finnish speaking. The aim was to improve the poor results of Finnish speaking students in Swedish by making use of Finland's bilingual status (Laurén, 2000).

In the Finnish-Canadian model the share of the immersion language in instruction is at the beginning 80-100%. The share of mother tongue increases during the school years so that it is at the end of grade nine of the comprehensive school approximately 50%. One teacher is using the immersion language and another the mother tongue. Both should be native speakers and the immersion language teacher should preferably be bilingual. The children can use both languages but the teachers stay monolingual. The curriculum is structured so that the children will be taught with both languages in every subject. The parents are supposed to take extra care of the mother tongue, e.g. they should discuss with

children and read books and newspapers with them. The academic results of immersion classes are very good not only in the immersion language but also in different subjects and in mother tongue they are even better than in normal classes (Laurén, 2000).

During the nineties the number of immersion classes has increased as a result of parents' activities, despite attempts to limit it by the National Board of Education. Immersion is today in Finland the most increasing progressive educational movement. The parents are well organised and in most cases also well-informed on immersion methods. Recently, in most cases the immersion language is English and not Swedish (as it was at the beginning). Parents opting for English immersion classes are better educated than Finnish parents on the average and those parents opting for Swedish immersion classes (Hassinen, 2002; Salmi, 2000).

Immersion classes are usually situated as special classes in regular comprehensive schools. In many cases, there are more parents who want to get a study place in an English immersion class for their child than places available. As a consequence, schools are using language tests and require that the child has been two or three years in English kindergarten. These kindergarten are in most cases private ones and other than regular Finnish and Swedish kindergarten (Hassinen, 2002). This fact may be perceived as social segregation of children in the very first years of schooling.

7. THE NEW ROLES OF INDIGENOUS AND LESSER USED LANGUAGES: FINNISH AND SÁMI

Finland is linguistically a homogenous country although it is officially bilingual. The reason is that linguistic minorities have always been both absolutely and in relation to the Finnish majority small. Around 5 millions inhabitants speak Finnish as their mother tongue. Swedish is the mother tongue of less than 300,000 inhabitants. The two other old minorities are 6,000 Sámi people with around 1,700 Sámi language speakers and 10,000 Roman people from whom the most speak a Roman language. The sign language is also seen as mother tongue of its own and minority language.

During the last years, Finland has received many new immigrants. The largest language groups are Russian (29,200), Estonian (9,700), English (6,300) and Somali (5,900). The amount of immigrants is still small recently (1.8%) compared to other European countries (e.g.

Luxembourg 37.3%, Switzerland 20.1%, Austria 9.1%, Germany 8.9% or Sweden 5.4%) (Böhm, 2002).

The multilingual population is concentrated along the southern coast and at the metropolitan area. The inner immigration in Finland concentrated there, too. The eastern and northern parts of Finland are becoming monolingual and almost empty. Therefore, some Finns meet both more Finns and more immigrants while some meet fewer Finns and hardly any foreigners (Nuolijärvi, 1999). In Helsinki children who will begin comprehensive school in autumn 2002 as many as 9.3% have another mother tongue than Finnish or Swedish (EDU.HELV, 2002).

All children of comprehensive school age who have come to Finland are offered preparatory teaching. The aim is to give them skills which they need to deal with a Finnish-speaking learning environment. Preparatory teaching usually lasts for one year. During that time most children learn Finnish to an extent sufficient to be able to work and study in Finnish. They can study in a group of their own and/or with Finnish students. Immigrants are also entitled to study their mother tongue throughout comprehensive school. Both Finnish as a second language and as a mother tongue of immigrants follow the national curriculum guidelines. In academic year 2001-2002 instruction has been given in 40 different languages in Helsinki (EDU.HELV, 2002).

Even though Finnish as a second language has gained a stronger standing than ever before in the educational system during the past ten years, it is still not perceived by a majority of teachers as a school subject on a par with other disciplines by a majority of teachers (cf. Suni, 1996). In contrast to Finnish language teaching as a second official language in Swedish schools, Finnish as a second language for immigrants has not been perceived as "true language teaching". The situation seems to be comparable to other European languages. Their status as traditional foreign languages seems to be higher than their status as a second or foreign language for immigrants.

In the comprehensive school the language program is the same for immigrants as for Finnish speaking students. Swedish and one or more foreign languages from the curriculum of the school in question have to be studied in addition to Finnish and the immigrant's mother tongue.

The work which has been done in Finland with the Sámi language may be seen as an example on how an old European minority language can be developed rapidly into an official language, school subject mother tongue, foreign language, and also language of instruction. In three most northern municipalities Sámi has become a third official lan-

guage since the last ten years. Recently, it is taught in 29 schools with around 500 students. It is taught as a mother tongue and as a foreign language to some Finnish speaking students in the northern part of Finland (MINEDU, 2002).

8. A MULTILINGUAL IDEOLOGY IN A MONOLINGUAL STATE

Main themes in recent sociolinguistic research are anti-multilingual initiatives in different countries and their connection to nationalistic ideologies. In many cases, monolingual ideologies may be interpreted as reactions to immigration. The English-Only Movement in the USA (Crawford, 2002; Crystal, 1997), tendencies in multi-ethnic Britain towards minority languages (Blackledge, 2000), problems in Germany with immigrants lacking competence in German (Spiewak, 2002), or language policies adopted in Estonia or Lithuania towards Russian speaking minorities may be seen in this line.

As already mentioned Finland is a relative monolingual country that has strongly encouraged multilingualism both at a state level and at an individual level. In Finland, languages can be categorised into three main groups: the official languages (Finnish, Swedish and Sámi), foreign languages (e.g. English, German, French, Russian) and immigrant languages (e.g. Estonian, Somali) (cf. Piri, 2001). Some languages belong to two groups. All official languages are taught also as foreign languages. English and Russian are foreign languages and immigrant languages. Most of the immigrant languages are languages which the Finns are not (yet) interested to learn. The official language policy aims at maintaining and cultivating as many foreign languages as possible for individual cultural richness and for increasing the national linguistic capital. The promotion of the concept of individual language portfolios (as developed by the Council of Europe) may be seen as one measure to materialise this.

Linguistic diversity, its preservation and protection have been an aim of European institutions (Council of Europe, European Commission) for long. The establishing of European education co-operation programmes to encourage and support people to learn European languages has to be seen in this line. The aim has not only been a multilingual Europe (European Union) but also multilingual Europeans. Language competence has been seen as key element in the personal and professional development of individuals (cf. the documents on the "European Year

of Languages” 2001). However, restriction has frequently been made to “European languages” neglecting the rich cultural capital of languages of immigrants.

Finland has had the “three-language-program” as an obligatory part of the curriculum in the comprehensive school since 1970. However, in many European countries individual multilingualism is perceived as a distant objective and long-term target.

What is the recent situation with language competence in European countries? 74% of all citizens of the European Union older 15 are not able to communicate in a second European language. 53% of all citizens say that they are able to communicate in another language than their mother tongue (INRA, 2001). 71% of young people (15-24) said in 1997 that they are able to speak a language other than their mother tongue at the level “well enough to have conversation” (Trimm, 1998). The opinions of Europeans towards foreign languages are very positive. 93% of parents say that it is important for their children to learn foreign languages. 71% of Europeans hold the opinion that all European citizens should be able to communicate in at least one foreign language (INRA, 2001).

The role of the English language as a global language has stipulated heavy discussions on the future of small languages. The English Plus –language policy in Finland has until now managed to guarantee “a safe life in the shade of the global language”. However, English has become an integral part of the globalisation process. How resistant official national languages and national as well as local education systems will be in this development remains an open question (Phillipson, 2002; Burbules & Torres, 2000).

REFERENCES

- ALAPURO (1998). “Sivistyneistön ambivalentti suomalaisuus”, Alasuutari, P. & Ruuska, P., *Elävänä Euroopassa: muuttuva suomalainen identiteetti*, Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 175-190.
- ALLARDT, E. (1995). *Suunnistuksia ja kulttuurisokkeja*, Helsinki, Otava.
- APO, S. (1998). “Suomalaisuuden stigmatisoiva traditio”, Alasuutari, P. & Ruuska, P., *Elävänä Euroopassa: muuttuva suomalainen identiteetti*, Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 83-128.
- BLACKLEDGE, A. (2000). “Monolingual ideologies in multicultural states: Language, hegemony and social justice in Western liberal democracies”, *Estudios de Sociolingüística*, 1 (2), pp. 25-45.

- BUCHBERGER, F.; BUCHBERGER, I. (2002). "Europa – Chance zur Reform von Schule und Lehrerbildung?", in Hilligus, A.; Rinkens, H.; Friedrich, C. (Hg.), *Europa in Schule und Lehrerbildung*, Paderborn, LIT.
- BURBULES, N. C.; TORRES, C. A. (eds.) (2000). *Globalisation and education. Critical perspectives*, New York, Routledge.
- BÖHM, W. (2002). *Europa verschärft Kampf gegen illegale Einwanderung*, Die Presse, 14.6.2002.
- CASTELLS, M.; HIMANEN, P. (2001). *Finnish model of information society*, Helsinki, Sitra.
- CRAWFORD (2002). Anatomy of the English-Only Movement, //ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/JWCRAWFORD/anatomy.htm (21.6.02), pp. 1-25.
- CRYSTAL, D. (1997). *English as a global language*, Cambridge University Press.
- EDU.HEL (2002). Helsingin kaupunki. Opetusvirasto, //www.edu.hel.fi
- EUROPEAN COUNCIL (2001). *Draft detailed work programme for the follow-up of the report on the concrete objectives of education and training systems*, Brussels, COM(2001) 501 final.
- HASSINEN, A. (2002). Kielikylpy Espoossa. Pro gradu –tutkielman käsikirjoitus, Helsingin yliopisto, Opettajankoulutuslaitos.
- INRA (2001). International Research Association. Die Europäer und die Sprachen. Bericht der INRA (European Coordination Office S.A. an die Generaldirektion Bildung und Kultur.
- KOSKINEN, I. (1988). Hyvästit kieliopille. Tutkimuksia 67, Helsinki, Helsingin yliopiston opettajankoulutuslaitos.
- LAURÉN, C. (2000). *Kielen taitajaksi – kielikylpy käytännössä*, Jyväskylä, Ateena kustannus Oy.
- LÖNNQUIST, B. (1999). Språk är kommunikation, inte identitet. Hufvudstadsbladet, 5.3.1999.
- MINEDU (2002). Etusivu. Uutiset. Valtio tukee saamen kielen opetusta miljoonalla eurolla, //www.minedu.fi/opm/uutiset (11.7.2002)
- , (1997). *Rising to the challenge: language teaching in the new international Finland. Strategy programme for language teaching and internationalization of education*, Opetusministeriö, Koulutus- ja tiedepolitiikan osaston julkaisusarja, Helsinki.
- NATIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION (1994a). *Framework Curriculum for the Comprehensive School 1994*, Helsinki.
- , (1994b). *Framework Curriculum for the Senior Secondary School 1994*, Helsinki.
- NORDGREN, E. (1999). Miniseminarium kring Järnefeldepoken: Asikter om fenomanin. Hufvudstadsbladet, 31.3.1999.
- NUOLIJÄRVI, P. (1999). Suomen äidinkielet. Esitelmä Kotikielen Seuran kokouksessa, 14.3.1999.
- OPH (2002). Etusivu. Ruotsin kielen hallinta perusopetuksen päättövaiheessa, //www.oph.fi (11.7.2002)

- PELTONEN, M. (1998). "Omakuvamme murroskohdat", Alasuutari, P. & Ruuska, P., *Elävänä Euroopassa: muuttuva suomalainen identiteetti*, Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 19-40.
- PHILLIPSON, R. (2002). Review of English as a global language, <http://infoweb.magi.com/~mfettes/global.html>, 24.7.2002
- PIRI, R. (2001). Suomen kieliohjelmapolitiikka. Kansallinen ja kansainvälinen toimintaympäristö. Jyväskylän yliopisto. Soveltavan kielentutkimuksen keskus. Jyväskylä.
- POROPUDAS, O. (2002). Koulutuspolitiikka saa tutkijalta synninpäästön. Helsingin Sanomat, 23.7.2002.
- SALMI, J. (2000). Ruotsin kielikyöpy vai ruotsinkielinen opetus. Vanhempien motivaatio ja odotukset Sipoon kunnassa. Pro gradu -tutkielma, Helsingin yliopisto, Opettajankoulutuslaitos.
- SARMELA, M. (1996). Suomalainen eurooppalainen. Olkamme siis suomalaisia. Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja 75-76, Helsinki, SKS, pp. 16-34.
- SPIEWAK, M. (2002). Staatsangehörigkeit: "deutsch". Mangel Sprachkenntnis, Selbstghettoisierung, Ausgrenzung: Die Bildungskatastrophe der ausländischen Schulkinder. Die Zeit, Nr. 30. 18.7.2002.
- SUNI, M. (1996). Maahanmuuttajaoppilaiden suomen kielen taito peruskoulun päättövaiheessa. Opetushallitus. Moniste 11/1996.
- TRIMM, J. L. M. (1998). "European perspectives on modern language learning", *Language Teaching*, 31, pp. 206-217.
- VIRTANEN, A. (2002). Uudella koulutuksella uudelle vuosituhanelle. Suomen 1990-luvun koulutuspolitiikka. Helsinki, Opetusministeriö.