# Language Contacts and Discourses in the Far North

*Edited by*
Maria Frick
Tiina Räisänen
Jussi Ylikoski

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Maria Frick · Tiina Räisänen · Jussi Ylikoski
Editors

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*Editors*
Maria Frick
University of Oulu
Oulu, Finland

Tiina Räisänen
University of Oulu
Oulu, Finland

Jussi Ylikoski
University of Turku
Turku, Finland

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Editors<br>
Maria Frick<br>
Tiina Räisänen<br>
Jussi Ylikoski
</div>

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# Notes on Contributors

**Ellen Bijvoet** is Associate Professor of bilingualism and Senior Lecturer in Swedish as a second language at Uppsala University, Sweden. Her research interests include folk linguistics, language attitudes, migration-related linguistic variation, and linguistic practices of young people in linguistically and culturally heterogeneous urban settings.

**Maria Frick** is a University Lecturer in Estonian and Finnish at the University of Oulu, Finland. She conducts research in interactional linguistics, focusing mainly on the study of multilingual and multi-modal interactional practices. Frick leads the Academy of Finland project Linguistic and Bodily Involvement in Multicultural Interactions (LinBo, 2019–2025).

**Sabine Grasz** is a University Lecturer in German language and culture at the University of Oulu, Finland. She has studied learners' multilingual repertoires as a resource in learning and using German as a foreign language. Currently, her main research interest is in the language identities, multilingual practices, and language maintenance of German speakers in Northern Finland.

**Kaarina Hippi** worked as a Post-Doctoral Researcher at the University of Oulu's LinBo project in 2020–2022. She is affiliated with the University of Helsinki, Finland (Title of Docent), and as of February 2023 she is a Senior Grant Researcher at the Societal awareness of linguistic variation and change (LANGAWARE) project at Tampere University, Finland. Her

research interests include interactional sociolinguistics, multilingualism, older adults, and linguistic perceptions.

**Marjatta Jomppanen** is a University Lecturer of North Saami studies at the University of Oulu's Giellagas Institute for Saami studies.

**Jaana Kolu** is Associate Professor (tenure track) of Swedish at the University of Eastern Finland. Her research interests are in multilingualism, language ideologies and policies, translanguaging, linguistic identity, youth language, and especially Sweden-Finnish and Tornedalen adolescents' language resources. She has carried out research on bilingual adolescents' translanguaging practices outside the classroom context.

**Riitta Kosunen** is a Lecturer of Swedish at the University of Oulu, Finland. Her research interests lie primarily in multilingual language practices such as code-switching and translanguaging, especially in informal written discourse. Her other research interests are translation and pedagogical communication.

**Liisa-Maria Lehto** is a Post-Doctoral Researcher at the University of Oulu, Finland. In her research, Lehto concentrates on discourses and ideologies among different multilingual groups, and she is especially interested in using corpus-assisted methods to study discourses.

**Jukka Mettovaara** is a Doctoral Researcher at the University of Oulu's Giellagas Institute for Saami studies. He is writing his doctoral thesis on the grammatical change in contemporary Aanaar Saami.

**Heidi Niemelä** is a University Teacher of Finnish language and literature in teacher education at the University of Oulu, Finland. She is writing her doctoral thesis on language ideologies on the Finnish language in Finnish primary education.

**Jan-Ola Östman** is Professor Emeritus of Scandinavian languages at the University of Helsinki, Finland. He works mostly on the sociology of language, dialectology, pragmatics and discourse, and construction grammar. He was President of the International Pragmatics Association in 2012–2017.

**Tiina Räisänen** is a University Lecturer in English at the University of Oulu, Finland. Her research focuses on professional discourse and communication in various working life contexts, particularly in multilingual, lingua franca, and multimodal environments, as well as professionals

as language learners and global knowledge workers. She has published in peer-reviewed international journals, such as *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, and *European Journal of International Management*. She has also co-edited *Dangerous Multilingualism: Northern Perspectives on Order, Purity and Normality* (Blommaert et al., 2012, Palgrave).

**Jussi Ylikoski** is Professor of Finno-Ugric languages at the University of Turku, Finland and Adjunct Professor at the Sámi University of Applied Sciences in Guovdageaidnu, Norway. He has worked on several Saami, Finnic, and other Uralic languages, specialising in morphology, syntax, and historical linguistics. He also has a wider background in general linguistics and indigenous studies and is an experienced editor of linguistic publications.

# Transcription symbols

| | |
|---|---|
| . | falling intonation |
| , | level intonation |
| ? | rising intonation |
| ↑ | rise in pitch |
| sp<u>ea</u>k | emphasis |
| sp- | word cut off |
| spea:k | sound lengthening |
| £speak£ | smiley voice |
| @speak@ | other change in voice quality |
| .h | audible inhalation |
| h | audible exhalation |
| he he | laughter |
| sp(h)eak | laughter within talk |
| [ | beginning of overlap |
| ] | end of overlap |
| = | no gap between two adjacent items |
| (.) | pause |
| (0.6) | pause in seconds |
| # | pause, break, or a new start |
| <speak> | reported speech |
| (speak) | item in doubt |
| (-) | item not heard |
| (( )) | comment by transcriber |
| - - | talk continues, data not shown |

# Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | first person |
| 2 | second person |
| 3 | third person |
| acc | accusative |
| ade | adessive |
| agn | agent noun |
| an | action noun |
| attr | attributive form |
| com | comitative |
| comp | complementizer |
| conneg | connegative form |
| cvb | converb |
| ela | elative |
| ess | essive |
| gen | genitive |
| ill | illative |
| ine | inessive |
| inf | infinitive |
| loc | locative |
| neg | negation verb |
| nom | nominative |
| nz | nominalizer |
| pass | passive |
| pl | plural |
| pst | past tense |
| sg | singular |

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# Language Discourses and Contacts in the Twenty-First-Century Far North—Introduction to the Volume

*Maria Frick, Tiina Räisänen, and Jussi Ylikoski*

## 1.1 About This Book

With this volume, we invite you on a trip to the Far North of Europe, to Finland and its neighbouring countries Estonia and Sweden, and across the Arctic circle to the Lapland area which stretches from northernmost Scandinavia in the west to northern Finland and North-Western Russia. This is the area in which the Saami and Finnic peoples have lived for centuries, forming language contacts and discourses that are in constant change. On the pages of this book, consisting of 10 individual chapters and this introduction, we will introduce you to some of the inhabitants in this area and familiarise you with their everyday linguistic practices

M. Frick (✉) · T. Räisänen
Research Unit for Languages and Literature, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland
e-mail: maria.frick@oulu.fi

J. Ylikoski
Department of Finnish and Finno-Ugric Languages, University of Turku,
Turku, Finland

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during the first two decades of the twenty-first century. We cover under-studied topics such as the linguistic situation of indigenous Saami people and language attitudes of twenty-first-century migrants. In the chapters of the book, we will find out how they talk about their linguistic identities and the use of different languages. We will also explore their linguistic attitudes, ideologies, and ways in which their language use and their talk about language reflect their personal social relations and society at large. The studies in this book have been selected in order to show-case the versatility of language contacts in areas that have not yet been addressed in multilingualism studies, but which offer unique insights into and broaden our understanding of the topic. The studies represent individuals with different backgrounds as well as areas with their unique cultural and geographical characteristics, including cities as well as sparsely populated rural areas. The chapters also exhibit a flexibility of method-ological choices in the study of language discourses and contacts. The qualitative studies in this book have been chosen with the aim of showing the depth and richness of language discourses and contacts rather than at providing generalisations.

In this introductory chapter, we will first outline the linguistic situation in Finland (Sect. 1.2). We then briefly discuss Finnish-speaking communities in neighbouring countries (Sect. 1.3) before providing an overview of the main concepts we operate with—namely, language, language discourse, and linguistic identity (Sect. 1.4).

## 1.2   The Linguistic Situation in Finland

There are approximately 5.5 million inhabitants in Finland. According to the Institute for the Languages of Finland (2022), approximately 150 different first languages are spoken in the country, but according to Karlsson (2017), this listing does not include all languages, and the real number is close to 500. In addition to the national languages, Finnish and Swedish, the Constitution of Finland acknowledges that the Saami, as the country's indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups (including speakers of the two national sign languages, Finnish and Finland-Swedish Sign Language), have the right to maintain and develop their own languages and cultures.

### *1.2.1    Two National Languages—Finnish and Swedish*

The official, national languages of Finland are Finnish and Swedish. Finnish is spoken as a first language by the large majority (4.9 million people) and Swedish by 296,000 people in Finland—while globally there are approximately 9 million Swedish speakers (Institute for the Languages of Finland, 2022). Finnish municipalities are officially bilingual or monolingual in one or two of the national languages, depending on the composition of their population and the language in which residents are registered with the government. In mainland Finland, most Swedish-speaking Finns live in bilingual municipalities concentrated in the coastal areas of Uusimaa (Swe. Nyland), Varsinais-Suomi (Swe. Egentliga Finland), and Ostrobothnia (Fin. Pohjanmaa, Swe. Österbotten) (Nordics.info, 2022). Figure 1.1 shows the location of Finnish–Swedish bilingual municipalities on the coastal area (turquoise and light blue). The light area in Fig. 1.1 shows officially monolingual Finnish-speaking municipalities, whereas turquoise areas are bilingual municipalities with Finnish as the majority language and the light blue ones bilingual municipalities with Swedish as the majority language. The four northernmost municipalities (red) have significant Saami-speaking minorities, and Saami languages have official status in them. The only monolingual Swedish municipalities in Finland are on the Åland islands (dark violet), which form an autonomous region.

Finnish belongs to the Finnic branch of the Uralic language family together with Estonian (North and South Estonian), Karelian, Veps, Votic, Ingrian, Livonian, Meänkieli, and Kven. The Finnic languages are, to varying extents, mutually understandable after some studying, but differ significantly from the Saami languages which form the neighbouring branch of the Uralic language family; the rest of the language family consists of about thirty languages spoken in the northern parts of the European Russia and West Siberia as well as Hungarian spoken in Hungary and the adjacent areas. Finnish and other Finnic languages are characterised by relatively long and agglutinative word forms that result from compounding, derivational and inflectional suffixes, and word-final clitics. Syntactically, Finnish has both sentence types that resemble sentences in English and other Western European languages, and ones that differ from them in word order and other features. There is a lot of variation in how Finnish is spoken, and the standard language (see, e.g.,
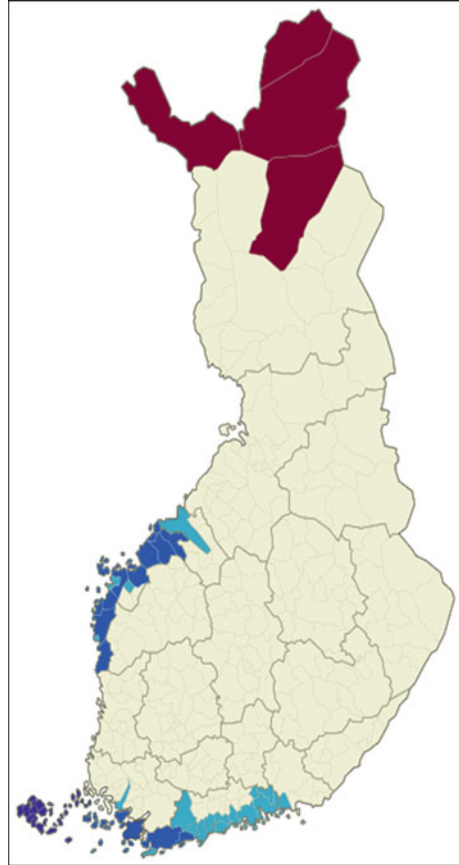
Karlsson, 2008) is a compromise that includes words and grammatical features from all major dialects of the language.

Swedish belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family. It is closely related to and, to a large extent, mutually understandable with the other mainland Scandinavian languages, Norwegian and Danish. Swedish varieties spoken in Finland are called Finland Swedish. Standardised Finland Swedish is very similar to standardised Sweden Swedish, and the two differ mainly in pronunciation. However, spoken Finland Swedish varieties show a large variety of dialectal features

that include a lot of loan words and expressions from Finnish. Historically, Finland was a part of the Swedish kingdom for centuries, and the Swedish language has a long history of being used as an administrative language in the country even though native Swedish speakers only form a minority (ca. 5–6%) of the country's population. Studying the other national language (Swedish for Finnish speakers and Finnish for Swedish speakers) in school is compulsory in mainland Finland, although the public opinion is turning more towards making Swedish an optional subject (see, e.g., YLE uutiset, 2013).

### 1.2.2 The Indigenous Saami Languages

Although many official documents regard not only the Saami people as one indigenous people but also their languages as one ('the Saami language'), the Saami branch of the Uralic language family consists of approximately ten living languages as heterogeneous as the Germanic branch of the Indo-European family. Although the Saami languages belong to the same language family with the Finnic languages such as Finnish and Estonian, and the two branches have had continuous contacts ever since they diverged from a common ancestor a couple of millennia ago, their genetic distance can be compared with that of Germanic and Romance languages, for example: Despite their common origin and geographical closeness, the Saami and the Finns, for example, are linguistically and culturally as distinct from each other as are the speakers of German and French from each other. Moreover, as the Saami languages form a geographical continuum that ranges from the central parts of Norway and Sweden to the easternmost tip of the Kola Peninsula in Russia, the individual Saami languages are usually mutually intelligible only among the neighbouring varieties.

In Finland, three entirely distinct Saami languages are spoken: The language with the most speakers in not only Finland (more than 1000 speakers) but also in Norway and Sweden (about 15,000 speakers in total) is North Saami (*sámegiella*), whereas Skolt Saami (*sää´mǩiõll*) has some 200–300 speakers in Finland and a few speakers east of the Finnish–Russian border. The only Saami language traditionally spoken only within the Finnish territory is Aanaar (Inari) Saami (*anarâškielâ*; about 400 speakers), whose recent revitalisation can be considered one of the most successful examples of reversing language shift globally. However, all Saami languages are still severely or critically endangered

and pose various challenges—as well as opportunities—to both language activists and scholars interested in the fascinating dynamics of minority languages.

In the present volume, special attention is given to the two most endangered Saami languages of Finland. The chapter by Jomppanen describes and discusses the beginning of Skolt Saami studies at the university level as well as how this has affected the revitalisation of the language in the eyes of the students and other members of the Skolt Saami language community. In the chapter by Mettovaara and Ylikoski, the recent Aanaar Saami revival is discussed by combining a structural approach to the variation within the contemporary language system and an analysis of the multilayer discourses that can be observed in the language ideologies of Aanaar Saami language activists. The position of North Saami in between the Nordic majority languages of Finnish, Norwegian, and Swedish is discussed by Hippi.

### 1.2.3    *English in a Multilingual Society—A Threat or an Enabler?*

Although the majority of the municipalities in Finland are officially monolingual, it does not mean that the people living there are. The chapters by Hippi and Grasz in this volume discuss the language use and discourses of people residing in rural communities in Finnish Lapland, who encounter not only Finnish and Saami languages but also a variety of foreign languages brought along by the tourism business. The chapter by Kosunen, Frick, and Kolu takes us to larger cities such as Oulu (Swe. Uleåborg) in Northern Finland which is one of the country's Swedish 'language islands'—a small, historically rooted Swedish community in a larger Finnish-speaking municipality (see Kosunen, 2017). Kosunen, Frick, and Kolu demonstrate how Finnish, Swedish, English, and Estonian language resources are mixed in urban environments in Finland, Sweden, and Estonia.

Even though English has no official status in Finland, it is widely used in education, commerce, and public services. The majority of Finns today have a stronger command of the English language than of Swedish (Official Statistics of Finland, 2017). In the school year 2021/2022, as many as 86% of 1st graders and 98% of 5th graders studied English in school (Official Statistics of Finland, n.d.). As the examples in Kosunen, Frick, and Kolu's chapter show, this widespread knowledge of English and its high prestige is reflected in the language use of the younger

generation of Finnish speakers. English is often considered a 'language that everybody knows' and a self-evident choice to be used as a lingua franca for instance in working life (see Leppänen et al., 2011; Räisänen & Karjalainen, 2018; Räisänen & Kankaanranta, 2020; Laitinen et al., 2023; Lehto, in this volume)—even to the extent that Finnish speakers do not necessarily feel the need to study other foreign languages even though they have the motivation to study them (see Räisänen, in this volume). The role of English is a popular topic in public discourse; it has aroused heated discussion (Leppänen & Pahta, 2012) and continues to do so. English is viewed as an enabler and a threat: Proficiency in English allows people to engage in transnational contacts with people from different linguacultural backgrounds, while at the same time the widespread use of English for example in marketing, working life, and higher education is seen to jeopardise the viability of the Finnish language (e.g., Saarinen & Ennser-Kananen, 2020).

As discussed in the chapter by Lehto, this discourse of the self-evident role of English is not unproblematic. It can lead to problems of inclusion for both non-Finns and non-English speakers. People of non-Finnish origin often feel excluded when they are addressed in English instead of Finnish. These kinds of actions derive from the high prestige of English and people's false assumptions such as 'all foreigners speak English' and 'foreigners do not speak Finnish'—the latter of which is also demonstrated in Niemelä's chapter. While English as a lingua franca can be highly beneficial in many domains, increasing the equality and inclusion of all participants (see Haddington et al., 2021; Iikkanen, 2017; Räisänen & Kankaanranta, 2020), Lehto shows that English is not always the polite choice in international encounters in Finland.

The increasing use of English in Finland can also cause problems for those who are not proficient in the language (see, e.g., Pitkänen-Huhta & Hujo, 2012). This applies not only to Finns, of whom approximately one in four speaks English only at an elementary level or no English at all (Official Statistics of Finland, 2017), but also to many refugees and other immigrants. The following interview extract from a pair interview

conducted by the LinBo project[1] represents a case in point. The interview was conducted with two Afghani refugees who had moved to northern Finland as teenagers and lived in the country for four years at the time of the interview. In Extract 1, one of the interviewees describes situations in which people talk to him in English and he has to ask them to switch to Finnish which he is more proficient in. The interview was held in Finnish.

### Extract 1

```
A: No, täällä päin, -kin on ollut joskus mutta eteläpäin etelässä
päin esimerkiksi Helsingissä tuolla, niin, ihmiset, aina kun mä
oon mennyt jossakin ne ajat- öö ne heti huomaa että, me ollaan
ulkomaalaisia niin, ne heti, alkaa puhumaan, engla- englannin
kielellä. Niin, semmosissa tilanteissa niin, mää yritän sanova
sanoa että, me voidaan puhua suomen kielellä koska mä osaan,
suomen kieltä parempi kun englantia niin.
```

*Well here too sometimes, but in the south, for example in Helsinki—every time I go somewhere people they thin—they notice immediately that we are foreigners, so they start to speak English. So, in those situations I try to say that we can speak Finnish, because I know Finnish better than English.*

In the interviewee's age group (18–24 years), more than 80% of Finland's residents speak English at at least an intermediate level (Official Statistics of Finland, 2017), which means that, judging from the interviewee's description, his proficiency in the language is probably below average. Unlike for most people who were born in Finland, English is not the interviewee's first foreign language. He had studied three languages (Pashto, Arabic, and English) in addition to his native language Farsi/Dari[2] and concentrated on learning Finnish after migrating to Finland. His story is typical among many involuntary migrants who may have a command of several languages that are not much appreciated in Finnish society, and who have to start learning two to three new languages when moving to the country (Lehtonen, 2015).

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[1] The Linguistic and Bodily Involvement in Multicultural Interactions project (2019–2025) is funded by the Academy of Finland and the University of Oulu Eudaimonia Institute. https://www.oulu.fi/en/projects/linguistic-and-bodily-involvement-multicultural-interactions.

[2] The interviewee refers to his native language as *Persia/Dari* 'Farsi/Dari' in the background information sheet.

When asked which languages they would like to use more in their everyday life, the above-quoted interviewee names Finnish 'Because I live in Finland and I will learn more if I use the language, which is used by everyone here'. His response can be seen to reflect a strong will to assimilate into Finnish society and connect with speakers of Finnish. Neither of the interviewees mention their native language in this context, but the second interviewee states that he would like to speak more English ('Because it's spoken everywhere'). The interviewees' responses reflect the high status and wide usage of Finnish and English in Finnish society (see also Leppänen et al., 2011). Even when specifically asked about their use of their native languages, the interviewees report typically speaking Finnish to other Afghani people in Finland but switching to their native language when they run into problems of understanding.

Finland has scored high on the Multiculturalism Policy Index (Wallace et al., 2021), which implies that the country has advanced policies for supporting ethnocultural diversity. However, as Saukkonen (2013a, 2013b) has pointed out, the practices in Finland show a preference for assimilative policies rather than the two-way integration ideal. Integration is mainly seen as a task for the migrants to tackle themselves (instead of society tackling it as a whole) and if, in the process, migrants lose their ethnic identity or language, it is not viewed as a failed result of integration (Leinonen, 2022; Lehto, forthcoming). The above-discussed interview responses support Saukkonen's view and indicate the interviewees' attempt to assimilate into society rather than to integrate in a way that would allow them to maintain and nurture their linguistic origin.

## 1.3   Finnish Communities in Sweden and Estonia

In the neighbouring countries of Sweden and Estonia, Finns represent an ethnic minority group that has formed over centuries. Sweden Finns are often divided into three groups: Tornedalers, Finnish speakers, and Swedish-speaking Finns (Minority Rights Group International, n.d.). Tornedalers have lived in the north of Sweden since mediaeval times while the other two groups are a result of migration. Meänkieli (previously referred to as Tornedal Finnish) was recognised as a national minority language separate from Finnish in the year 2000 and has an estimate of 40,000–75,000 speakers (Institutet för språk och folkminnen, 2021).

Finnish is also recognised as a national minority language, and approximately one out of three among the 700,000 ethnic Finns are estimated to know the Finnish language (Minoritet.se, n.d.).

In this volume, Sweden Finns are discussed in the chapter by Bijvoet and Östman, who compare Sweden Finns' language discourses and linguistic identities to those of Dutch speakers in the same town. In the chapter by Kolu, as well as the chapter by Kosunen, Frick, and Kolu, we see reports of the fluid bilingual language use and identity representations of teenagers living in a border town. These chapters represent two very different groups of ethnic Finns in Sweden. The participants in Bijvoet and Östman's chapter are work-related migrants representing the hundreds of people who migrated to Sweden from Finland in the 2nd half of the twentieth century to work mainly in industrial fields (see Korkiasaari & Söderling, 2003; Lainio, 1996). Migration to Sweden was highest in the 1960s and 1970s and decreased significantly in the 1980s due to the narrowing of the differences between the Finnish and Swedish economies and standards of living (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 2003). The participants in Kolu's study represent a historically more stable group, namely transnationals from a twin town on the border of Swedish and Finnish Tornedal, an area where daily crossings of the border have been a rule rather than an exception throughout history and where people often work, go to school, or engage in hobbies in a different country than the one in which they live.

The inhabitants of the areas that are now known as Finland and Estonia have maintained contact throughout history through trade as well as migration from one side of the Gulf of Finland to the other, leaving their traces in place names as well as in some of the coastal dialects (see, e.g., Grünthal, 1998; Korkiasaari, 2008; Mägiste, 1952; Söderman, 1996). In spite of the contact, by the time literary Finnish and Estonian were established in the sixteenth century, the two languages had become clearly distinct from each other. The reasons for Finnish migration to Estonia have varied throughout the centuries. While peasant migrants in the sixteenth to eighteenth century as well as Finnish soldiers of the Swedish army in the seventeenth century are believed to have settled there permanently, academic migrants of the nineteenth century until 1939 tended to return to Finland (see Korkiasaari, 2008; Sepp, 1997). Migration from Finland to Estonia ended for a period of approximately half a century after the Soviet occupation of Estonia in 1944. However, during that

period, thousands of Ingrian Finns, who had priorly lived in the St Petersburg area in Russia, moved to Estonia. Generations of Finnish migrants to Estonia have been linguistically and ethnically merged into the Estonian population, and the Finns in current-day Estonia consist of two distinct groups: Ingrian Finns and recent 1st generation migrants (Frick et al., 2018; Jakobson, 2012, pp. 161–165).

Figure 1.2 shows how the number of ethnic Finns, Finnish nationals, and native Finnish speakers has changed during the past decades.

The numbers in Fig. 1.2 include both Ingrian Finns, who migrated to Estonia from other parts of the Soviet Union mainly in the 1950s and who typically have Estonian citizenship, and more recent migrants from Finland. The decrease in the number of ethnic Finns and native Finnish speakers is explained by the persecution of Ingrian Finns during the Soviet period, which resulted in their children mainly acquiring Estonian or, in some cases, Russian ethnic identity and mother tongue. In the past ten years, the number of Finnish citizens living in Estonia has tripled, showing a significant increase in recent migration from Finland to Estonia. The census numbers include both people who have settled in Estonia and those who live there for work and studies, often commuting between the countries and living as 'transmigrants', thus forming a transnational space that encompasses both countries (Jakobson et al., 2012). Finns in Estonia are discussed in the chapter by Kosunen, Frick, and Kolu, who
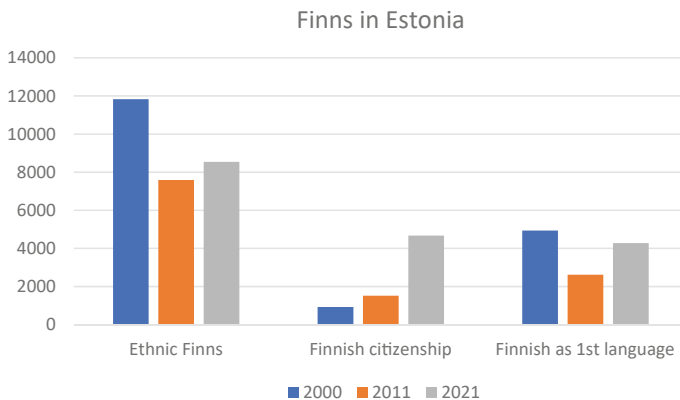


**Fig. 1.2** Finns in Estonia according to Rahvaloendus.ee (n.d.) and Statistics Estonia (2022)

examine the multilingual language use of Finnish students in Estonia and show how these transnationals make use of Finnish, Estonian, and English linguistic resources in their everyday life.

## 1.4    Language, Language Discourse, and Linguistic Identity

Understandably, the notion of '*language*' is at the centre of this volume. How we treat the concept is of utmost importance. Here it is crucial to consider both scientific conceptualisations as well as laypeople's understandings, since this book focuses on individuals' language use and their voices about language. Inside the covers of this book, researchers conceptualise language mostly from various sociolinguistic perspectives. Sociolinguists' understanding of language centres around the idea of language being subject to variation and change especially as a result of individuals' mobility and contact with each other. Moreover, empirical sociolinguistic research has proven the need to view language as fluid and emerging in practices of translanguaging where individuals themselves do not necessarily account for the existence of borders between distinct national languages but instead draw from their existing multilingual resources for meaningful communication (Canagarajah, 2013; Li Wei, 2017; Otheguy et al., 2015). However, for laypeople, distinct languages (e.g., Finnish, English, Swedish, German, the Saami languages, and so on) function as resources for conceptualising their own lives with languages, as especially pointed out in the chapter by Bijvoet and Östman. Furthermore, in the interview excerpts in the chapters by Hippi, Räisänen, Grasz, Lehto, and Kolu, the participants talk about their language practices by naming distinct languages. This talk, as well as language use in general, is viewed in this volume as social action through which people react to and construct their social relations and the world they live in.

In this volume, the term language discourse is defined loosely as 'a way of speaking about language'. It derives from Gee's (2004, 2015) two notions of discourse: discourse with a small 'd' and Discourse with a capital 'D', where 'discourse' refers to language in use while 'Discourse' sets a larger societal and historical context for the language in use. That is, language discourse focuses on language(s) and derives its meaning from context. To understand language discourse is to understand society: the groups and the individuals that produce, draw on, and reconstruct the discourse. Discourses are a 'social form of language use as well as socially

shared ways of constructing the world' (Lehto, in this volume), which means that when we analyse people's language discourses, we also view how they not only reflect but also construct the society they live in: what they make of Finland as a linguistic community, how they see themselves and others as speakers of Finnish, Saami, Swedish, English, and other languages—and, furthermore, how they, as language users and members of society, build the linguistic landscape they live in.

Following our definition, discourses can be found through the analysis of both the themes and the linguistic build-up of the text (that is, the 'what' and 'how' people talk about a given subject—in our case, language and language use). The discourses that emerge in this volume are often ones that the reader may have encountered in public or academic texts, but the current volume gives voice to individuals, allowing them a chance to describe their linguistic life in their own words. The discourses discussed in the different chapters are mainly taken from interview data and thematic group conversations, but the chapter by Mettovaara and Ylikoski also views published discourses by language activists and professionals. Not all discourses are spoken, and in the chapter by Niemelä, we view discourses that are presented as drawings.

One of the recurring discourses in the studies is the discourse of being able to use one's linguistic resources, of getting along with the languages one knows. Finland is seen (and constructed) by English-speaking migrants as a place where one can widely use English (Lehto, this volume). English is talked about as a 'tool' that has instrumental value in Finland, while Finnish is described as a language that has value in itself: It is 'important' as the 'language of the country' and seen by migrants as a gateway to belonging to society (Lehto, this volume). For native speakers, a similar discourse is found in relation to local Finnish dialects: Hippi describes in her chapter how inhabitants in a small village in Lapland align with or distance themselves from the local language variety depending on their personal history and attachment (insider vs. outsider) to the local community.

Another recurring but more negative discourse is the one of missing or limited resources. Lehto's (in this volume) informants talk about situations and groups of people with whom one cannot use English: elderly people, one's in-laws, or the children's daycare. Lehto's study also shows that not all Finns are comfortable or fluent enough to hold a conversation in English.

A negative emotion is seen in some of the drawings examined in Niemelä's chapter, in which 'foreigners' are drawn as lacking the Finnish language—and sometimes any language at all—accompanied with a sad face. The sadness of not knowing Finnish links to the discourse of the importance of knowing the language which gives access to society.

When talking about limited or missing heritage language resources, especially for the Saami languages, people often voice a desire to know more of the language and a sorrow for having lost the chance to learn it as a child (Hippi, in this volume). This reflects the history of oppression and negative attitudes towards the Saami languages that have now eased or even reversed. On the other hand, no expressions of sorrow or longing to know one's heritage language better is reported in Kolu's chapter, which describes Sweden Finnish teenagers' shift to a monolingual Swedish over their school years. On the contrary, when listening to an earlier recording of herself speaking Finnish, one of the informants describes it as 'strange' and 'not like me at all'. This shows an acceptance of the apparently voluntary language shift in the informant's life.

Perhaps the opposite to the discourses of limited or missing resources are the discourses about the overabundance of a language. The discourse of 'too much English' is a recurrent example of this. Participants in the studies reveal their negative attitude towards, for example, naming Finnish companies with English names (Hippi, in this volume). The abundant use of English in Finland is also seen as a hindrance to the learning of Finnish by migrants (Lehto, in this volume) and the learning of other foreign languages by Finns (Räisänen, in this volume), or as a problem when one would prefer to use Finnish (Extract 1; Lehto, in this volume). Another discourse of overabundance is the one regarding the obligatory studies of Swedish in school. Some of the participants in Räisänen's study see Swedish as not being useful and describe Swedish studies as 'a waste of time'.

Another group of discourses have to do with language contacts and language mixing. On many occasions, one hears or uses languages that do not belong to one's strongest resources. Räisänen's chapter discusses higher education students' motivations for learning other foreign languages at different stages in their lives and shows that some people choose to study a foreign language (for instance Spanish or Russian) due to parental advice or a general interest in languages while some may become interested in a language through a hobby such as gaming or sports. Face-to-face contacts with speakers of different

languages are not uncommon in the Far North of Europe. In northern-most Finland, people encounter and sometimes use Norwegian in the local shop and when crossing the border (Hippi, this volume). Some-times, these language contact situations are described as a necessity and an obligation. For instance, in the Lapland tourist service, one has to know Norwegian (Hippi, in this volume). 'Additional languages' such as German and French are described not as a necessity but as 'useful' in the working life of Räisänen's informants who work in technological fields.

Language mixing is reported in several studies in this volume, and different authors use different terms to denote it (translanguaging, code-switching, etc.). Interviewees report switching languages in a conversation when not understanding each other (Lehto, this volume) or just for the fun of it (Hippi, in this volume). Examples of language mixing in the chapter by Kosunen, Frick, and Kolu demonstrate how people fluently mix languages that are strong in their repertoire or socially relevant in their lives. A mixed-language repertoire can be used when interlocutors share the same resources with the speaker, which is true for the use of Finnish and English by younger generation Finns, for the use of Finnish, Estonian, and English by Finnish students in Estonia, and for the use of Swedish and Finnish on the border of the two countries. While Kosunen, Frick, and Kolu describe language mixing on the lexical level, Mettovaara and Ylikoski mainly focus on the grammatical mixing of two languages, Aanaar Saami and Finnish. The discourses revolving around the impact of the majority languages on Saami languages are often negative, viewing the influence as 'unwanted' and 'harmful'. As Aanaar Saami is severely endangered and all its speakers are bilingual in Finnish, Finnish influence is also seen as 'inevitable'. On the other hand, it appears that one of the major factors of the unusually successful revival of Aanaar Saami has been the extraordinary tolerance towards all speakers; as a key figure in the revi-talisation movement puts it, it has been considered better to speak 'bad' Saami than no Saami at all (Morottaja, 2007).

Language and identity are inseparable in that language is a form of identity work. From a discursive perspective, identity is constructed in discourses that allow for certain identification possibilities (Gee, 2015; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Language discourses are therefore means for people to enact and construct their language-based identities as language users and learners for example (see Virkkula & Nikula, 2010). Language choices as well as talk about one's language choice can be viewed as demonstrations of one's linguistic and social self: When using a

specific language, a person positions oneself in the role of a speaker of that language (see Bucholz & Hall, 2005; Kolu, in this volume; Pennycook, 2004).

The individuals' stories in this volume illustrate various types of identity constructions. For example, Kolu's chapter shows how teenagers living on the Swedish side of the Finland–Sweden border in Lapland identify themselves as Finnish but perform a bilingual identity through frequent code-mixing. Kolu's longitudinal study shows how two of the informants' linguistic performance changes over time as the teenagers become more and more Swedish-speaking after switching schools and starting to spend more time with Swedish-speaking friends, while the other two keep performing a bilingual identity throughout the study. People not only perform but also discuss their linguistic identities. For instance, Kolu's informants tie their linguistic identity (as Finnish- or Swedish-speaking or bilingual) to both the amount and frequency of use and proficiency in the language. Linguistic identities are, however, fluid and, as Kolu shows in her chapter, they can change even in the course of a single conversation when people reflect on their identity.

Bijvoet and Östman's chapter demonstrates how Finnish and Dutch migrants in Sweden use certain labels and categories as the basis of their identity construction. None of the migrants want to see themselves as 'Swedish' but rather as 'Finnish', 'Sweden Finns', 'Dutch', and 'European'. The authors discuss how ethnicity as a category is relevant for the participants, quoting Horner and Weber (2017, p. 108), according to whom ethnic identity is '[o]ne of the deepest layers of identity that many people feel strongly about'. Bijvoet and Östman's data illustrate that participants themselves may strongly ascribe to essentialist identity categories (as Finns, for example), but some of their voices imply that identity is situated and negotiated in interaction and thus changing (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). The authors conclude that one's origin does not determine the way identity is constructed in their new homeland. We see the same situation in various other chapters as well: Identity—and language discourses more broadly—are context-dependent, but they still bear traces from people's histories and migration backgrounds.

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# Managing Differences, Showing (Dis)affiliations: Language Contacts Through the Eyes of the Inhabitants of a Village in Finnish Lapland

*Kaarina Hippi*

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the linguistic experiences of inhabitants in a small Northern Finnish village (henceforth referred to as Village N) which is a dynamic multilingual context with its own specificities (cf. Pietikäinen, 2018): The national languages of Finland and Norway feature prominently, and the village's location in historical Saami land (Sápmi) also has

K. Hippi (✉)

Research Unit for Languages and Literature, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland
e-mail: kaarina.hippi@helsinki.fi

Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

Language Studies, Tampere University, Tampere, Finland

an effect on the multilingualism present there. Tourism has a strong influence in the area and is a source of employment for the locals. Norwegian is frequently heard, as the citizens of the neighbouring country form the largest distinct group of visitors in the area; they typically own or rent cottages or set up caravans there. In addition, depending on the season, Village N receives visitors from various other countries. The inhabitants have various temporary contacts with visitors or at least make observations on them from afar. As the local population is small, visitors are a significant part of this locality. The speakers are themselves mobile: They visit different places during their holidays, and some of them have resided in many places within the country. Thus, questions of im/mobility arise in different ways (cf. Horner & Dailey-O'Cain, 2019).

The focus is on experiences of languages and attitudes on them, co-constructed with the interviewer in thematic interviews on linguistic life stories. The approach of linguistic experiences and practices while taking interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee into account aims to gain new insight into linguistic atmospheres. There are seven informants, all of whom have Finnish as their strongest language, even though North Saami is the other mother tongue of one. Their linguistic repertoires include various other linguistic resources, or specific bits of languages and varieties, for example, Norwegian, Swedish, and English (cf. Blommaert & Dong, 2013). The study discusses their personal experiences that are connected to certain places and times; their language contacts in the village as well as in their larger networks outside it currently and in the past have an effect on their linguistic views.

The interviewees in this study have one main language, Finnish; however, other languages play different roles in their everyday life. Research on linguistic biographies has mainly been interested in people who are easily categorised as multilingual, that is, those who use many languages in their everyday life, for example due to their multi-ethnic family background (cf. Busch, 2017b, p. 47). However, seeing heteroglossia, illustrated by stratification and many voices, in any 'language' (Bakhtin, 1981) blurs the boundary between so-called multilingual and monolingual speakers: Linguistic diversity is the reality for all, and it is relevant to also take dialects into account, as will be done in this study. Naturally, when speakers struggle with understanding, linguistic boundaries are especially relevant and visible. This is the case in the borderland where the informants live. In the study, multilingualism is seen as practice-based, shedding light not only on 'how human beings manage

the differences between the languages they use' (Li Wei, 2018, p. 18), but also on how they perceive the differences they hear. In this chapter, I study linguistic contacts in the light of personal trajectories that illustrate 'not just individual situated experiences, but more broadly, life in globalized modernity, with its multiple self-contradictions, conflicts and fragmentations', as Codó (2018, p. 15) puts it.

This study discusses how residents of the village describe the languages in their life. This is examined through the experiences on languages mentioned in the interviews, and through detecting the interviewees' personal stance (affiliation and disaffiliation) in their interactions with the interviewer who presents questions and provides certain categories. Individual life trajectories, the sociolinguistic circumstances of a shared place of residence, and personal relationships intertwine in linguistic biographies. The analysis of individual speakers helps to reveal connections to ideologies and the linguistic atmosphere on a societal level. The affective stance as constructed in interviews can be stronger or weaker, and it reflects the emotional experiences of the speakers in their linguistic life story. Thus, the study combines micro-level means to express (dis)affiliation in interaction and the experiences of one's life history; this discussion illustrates how the stances to languages are experienced and negotiated. This kind of approach sheds light on the context and roots of the language attitudes and shows their direct connectedness to everyday life (cf. Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain 2017, p. 10).

The research questions are as follows:

- What kind of overall affiliations to languages can be found?
- How do the interviewees construct their affiliations towards languages in the interview interaction as their attitudes are analysed in detail?

## 2.2 Language Biographies, Attitudes, and Affective Orientation in Interaction

Language can be seen as both local and trans-local, and various spatio-temporal frames interact with one another and are activated in a situation (Blommaert & Dong, 2013). The research setting of mobile inhabitants residing in a small Northern village highlights this perspective. Speakers have different levels of access to linguistic resources, and those resources

in their repertoires are learnt during specific phases in one's life and in specific contexts (Blommaert & Backus, 2013). Here, linguistic repertoire is seen as situated and affective, and it is examined not from the outside but through individual experiences; the lived experience of language (*Spracherleben*, Busch, 2015b) is a crucial point of study (see also Codó, 2018). Linguistic experience is not neutral as it is connected to emotional experiences (Busch 2015a, p. 277). Busch states that the emotionally loaded experience is often neglected because so much of the focus is on linguistic competences. However, when speaking of competence, there is also an affective and biographical side present that I will focus on. According to Busch (2015b, p. 14), the absences are also relevant, and they might become visible as gaps, threats, or desires. Affect has been studied especially in language learning, though overall, as Kalaja et al. (2017, pp. 229–230) state, the interplay between beliefs and emotions has only recently begun to be studied in applied linguistics. Language anxiety has been discussed in the context of language learning, but other emotions less so at present (Scotson, 2020, p. 46).

In the language biographical approach, linguistic practices are seen as part of individual life trajectories and discourses that are bound to a certain place and time (Busch, 2017b). Thus, the lived experience mediates between discourses on language and language repertoire (Busch2015a, 2017b, p. 53). The basic aspects of linguistic experiences are, as delineated by Busch (2015a, p. 277), the relationship between self-perception and perception by others, belonging and not belonging, and the question of power and powerlessness. These experiences are bound to ideologies that lie behind how we perceive ourselves and others as speakers—that is, ideologies lead to attitudes (Busch, 2017b, p. 54), and linguistic ideologies are used to construct affiliations and exclusion (Busch, 2017a, p. 348).

In detecting the links between attitudes and ideologies, interactional analysis is helpful (König et al., 2015; see also Spotti & Blommaert, 2016). Through analysing attitudes in interaction (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2017), I discuss one's relationship with languages, and as this deals with evaluation, positions, and alignment, the concept of stance is particularly useful (ibid.; DuBois, 2007). Thus, attitudes comprise affects and emotions. Sociolinguistically, individual histories of repertoires can be seen as crucial in interpreting a speaker's positions or stances on languages. In stancetaking, 'affective display can do the work of evaluation, self-presentation, and positioning' (Jaffe, 2009a). For instance, in

a Corsican school, the stance towards different languages was detected as language choice: Teachers attributed authorship and competence to students through their linguistic behaviour (Jaffe, 2009b).

In the current study, besides the contents that express the interviewees' direct opinions on languages, I explore the interactional co-construction of perceptions and experiences on languages in interviews, for example how the interviewee interprets the questions and how the interviewer's choices might affect the responses (cf. Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2011, pp. 92–93). This interactional approach allows 'analysts to get closer to understanding the position of language attitudes in everyday life, because it is through interaction that they are enacted, contested, and transmitted' (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2017, p. 10). In addition, I take into consideration language sociological questions, as the linguistic reality in a small location in the Far North is the main framework for the people studied. Studying a small locality offers an interesting window to understand how the local space is negotiated (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2011, p. 92). This can help to raise awareness about power relations and language ideologies as well as unravel pre-established categories as the speakers bring forth their own, sometimes unexpected views and practices (cf. Busch, 2017b, pp. 55–56).

## 2.3   Data and Methods

In the following, I will introduce the informants and elaborate on some features of their linguistic repertoire (2.3.1). After that, I will present the methods used in the study (2.3.2).

### 2.3.1   Data Collection, Informants, and Their Languages Briefly

The study includes seven informants who have been interviewed in 2018 as part of the project A Hundred Finnish linguistic life stories (Hippi et al., 2020). This project involved collecting linguistic biographies in interviews that had a set of questions aimed at finding out the interviewees' ideas about the languages around them. The author of this chapter has, together with another researcher, collected all the interviews studied in this chapter. All of the informants (or their guardians in the case of children) have given their informed consent to participate in the research. Their background information is presented in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1**  Informants

| Code[1] | Education/work history | Places of residence | Languages | Duration of interview |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| M1930' | Higher education | Eastern Finland; from 1956 Helsinki & Southern Finland; from 2002 Village N | Finnish, English, Swedish, German | 1:34:51 |
| M1950' | Matriculation exam, border controller, retired; temporary jobs in tourist business | Lapland, couple of places; from 1990–1996 Rovaniemi; from 1983–1990 and from 1996 Village N | Finnish, English, Swedish, Norwegian | 1:00:51 |
| F1950' | Service industry | This municipality; from 1978 Village N | Finnish, English, Norwegian, Swedish | 00:11:50 + 1:01:39 |
| F1960' | Vocational school | This municipality; from 1992 Village N; from 2011 second place of living in another Northern village | Finnish, Saami,[2] English | 57: 57 + 06:34 |
| F2000' | 5th grade, elementary school | Northern Finland; Thailand (1 year); Village N (1.5 years) | Finnish, English, Swedish, Norwegian | 53:36 |
| M2000' | 5th grade, elementary school | Village N | Finnish, English, (Russian, Saami) | 42:11 |
| F2010' | 1st grade, elementary school | Village N | Finnish, Norwegian, Swedish | 01:01:10 |

[1] M indicates male, F female, and numerals indicate the decade of birth. The codes apply to the current study.

[2] In the background information sheet and also in the interviews, North Saami is referred to as 'Saami', with no further specification.

As seen in Table 2.1, the interviewees have varying backgrounds and lengths of stay in Village N. Languages are listed here as they were in the background information sheet, translated from Finnish. The sheet contained a field titled *Mother tongue/tongues and other knowledge of languages,* and it was up to the interviewee how they interpreted it. Some informants—especially children—have also listed languages in which they only knew couple of words. Thus, it must be kept in mind that the languages listed here have different meanings according to the speaker. Evaluating competencies is not static; rather, it shifts depending on the discourse activated (Djuraeva & Catedral, 2020, p. 281). For some informants, the interviewer filled out the information sheet on their behalf after asking for their answers; these answers could later be revisited by the interviewer in the actual interview. In the interview, there were different questions on languages, such as *When and how have you learned those languages you know?* (cf. background information sheet) and *Which languages do you hear and use at your work?* Finnish is the first language of all the informants, which is consistently visible from Table 2.1: It is the first in the list for everybody.

The Norwegian language is a self-evident part of this location; every interviewee talks about Norwegian visitors and the Norwegian language. Four informants mention Norwegian as part of their linguistic repertoire. They also report in the actual interview that they use Norwegian in some way or other. M1930' does not list Norwegian as one of his languages despite being able to read in it (see Table 2.1 and Sect. 2.4.2). M2000' and F1960' only report hearing spoken Norwegian in their daily lives.

English is marked as part of the repertoire of all but the youngest informant. Swedish is mentioned as one of the languages of five informants (everyone except F1960' and M2000'); it is a compulsory language for all in the Finnish school curriculum. Saami is mentioned by two informants, F1960' and M2000'. I will use two languages of M2000', Russian and Saami, as a brief example of how the role of the languages listed in Table 2.1 is unravelled in the interview. M2000' has listed Saami and Russian as his languages, albeit in parentheses. He expresses in the interview that he knows 'some words of Saami' and 'some words of Russian'. However, unlike Saami, Russian seems to hold a special significance for him; this is explained by his important connections to his uncle's place in Eastern Finland, as he goes there during his holidays and plans to move there as an adult. He talks about his uncle's employees there as 'our' (*meijän*) berry pickers, showing also in this way a close connection

to a place that is far away from his permanent locality. For M2000', these languages have connections to different places: Saami represents Northern Lapland and Russian Eastern Finland.

The four languages chosen for analysis in the following subsections—Finnish, Norwegian, Saami, and English—were featured most prominently in the informants' language repertoires; everybody talks about them. The variation within these languages is also made relevant in the interviews; it is part of the multilingualism that the informants experience. Other languages were also mentioned in the interviews: Swedish comes up when talking about Norwegian, and Russian, German, Spanish, and Japanese are languages some participants mention having some kind of personal interest in. Due to space limitations, these details are not examined more closely here.

### 2.3.2    *Approach*

I analyse descriptions of language use that reveal the participants' relationship with the different languages in their life within an interactional sociolinguistic framework (Bailey, 2015), defining relationship as attitudes displaying emotional stance, affiliation, and disaffiliation. I will discuss how the participants' contacts with their linguistic resources are interpreted in relation to their societal situation and linguistic biographies (cf. Busch, 2017a) that can be seen as their social and cultural itineraries (Blommaert & Backus, 2013). I provide glimpses into the informants' experiences, descriptions for a wider context, and an overall picture that elaborates on the informants' varying positions to the languages mentioned in the study.

I use the concept of affective stance that can be seen as contextualisation: It hints at how a speaker's position is to be interpreted by the other interlocutor (i.e., in the interview situation), and contextualisation cues are resources for that (Gumperz, 1982; Jaffe, 2009a). The informants construct their stances while telling stories and discussing the topics with the interviewers, who are outsiders in this village. As ideologies are seen to have a strong impact on personal attitudes (Busch, 2017a), this approach is informed by research on language ideologies (Woolard, 2020).

The interactional-level discussion in this chapter complements its content-level observations (cf. Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2017, p. 6). Besides, when analysing the extracts, interactional and content-level analysis are intertwined with and cannot be separated from each other. The

extracts in each subsection illustrate how the stances on language use are constructed in interaction (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2011): for example, who initiates the naming of a certain language or topic and what kind of affective stance is constructed in a given interview situation (expressing affiliation/disaffiliation in particular). Thus, besides propositional content, a sequential organisation can reveal further details and the complexities of one's relationships to languages (cf. Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2011). This kind of approach that examines reported linguistic experiences while taking interaction into account aims to gain deeper insight into the linguistic attitudes and language contacts of the individuals; affiliations are not static but instead constructed and negotiated in interactions on the basis of personal experiences.

## 2.4 Multilevel, Personal, and Context–Bound Relationships to Languages

In the following subsections, I will first deal with the Finnish language and its use (2.4.1). Secondly, I will move into analysing the experiences of Norwegian (2.4.2). In the third subsection (2.4.3), the focus is on Saami, the heritage language in the area, and the last analysis subsection (2.4.4) discusses the attitudes and challenges of using globally widespread English from a Northern point of view.

### 2.4.1 Variation and Local Identification—Finnish

In the following, I briefly outline the informants' views on the dialectal variety of Finnish they claim to have. The use of Finnish dialects has connections to the interviewees' affiliations and desires as Finnish speakers and highlights their heterogeneous linguistic trajectories and their belonging to the place. For example, it has been shown in a study of Finnish Tornio Valley residents how the speakers' feelings of being an insider or outsider have a connection to the use of a local dialect feature (Vaattovaara, 2009): Strong local identification is connected with the wide use of this feature.

The informants have different orientations to their current place of living. M1930', who does not feel connected to the place, mentions that he does not need to modify his speech to accommodate the locals. He is not enthusiastic about living in the village but has a relationship that keeps him there. M1950' has roots elsewhere, and he describes himself to

be very flexible in his language use: He easily acquires his interlocutors'
way of speaking, including some old local dialect words. On the other
hand, F1950' thinks that the village is the best place in the world, and
she tells that she does not vary her local way of speaking. Elsewhere in
Lapland, she has noticed the difference between her own dialect and ways
of speaking there. These positions align with Vaattovaara's (2009, p. 154)
findings where the young people who identified strongly with their home
area denied abandoning their dialect, whereas those who identified weakly
with their home area reported varying their speech and abandoning their
dialect in certain situations.

Two of the schoolchildren have strong connections elsewhere in
Finland: F2000' has been living in the village with her family for 1.5 years,
and their stay seems to be temporary, whereas M2000' has strong ties
elsewhere and plans to move away upon reaching adulthood. F2000'
says that she received comments on her way of speaking when she
arrived at this locality. M2000' tells that his speech is 'mixed' and he
has acquired variants from elsewhere, for example from newcomers to the
local school. His older brother teases him for using the southern variants
of personal pronouns (*mä* instead of *mie*). He also makes observations
on the language used in Eastern Finland and mentions his uncle's friend's
dialect as hard to understand. M2000' and F2000' recognise that regional
variation is a reason for the comments they have received, and that their
use of these variants is connected to their personal language contacts.
The youngest of the interviewees does not say much about her dialect
and describes it as 'ordinary' (*tavallinen*).

All interviewees acknowledge the local way of speaking—broadly
understood—somehow and reflect on their relationship with the local
language practices, which they either align themselves to or distance
themselves from depending on their personal history (cf. Busch, 2017a,
p. 342). A closer examination of Extract (1) from an interview reveals
how F1960' brings forth her way of speaking in interaction. F1960'
identifies her speech as the local dialect (presumably encompassing the
municipality).

(1)

01 Int:    ootkos sitte ite kiinnittäny omaan puhetapaasi, joskus huomiota, että,
           **have you paid attention to your own way of speaking, that,**
02         niinku just tähän, miten, puhut (.) suomea tai sitten (.)
           **I mean, how do you speak (.) Finnish or then (.)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 03 | | jopa (.) niin kun, puhut saamea tai (.) mu-, englantia |
| | | **even (.) I mean, speak Sámi or (.) ot-, English** |
| 04 | | että (.) o- onk- (.) onks sulle tullu mieleen jotain, |
| | | **that (.) h- ha- (.) has something crossed your mind,** |
| 05 | F1960' : | no tietenki että (.) kyllähän mie puhun nin, eri lailla, mun murrehan on |
| | | **of course that (.) I do speak like, in a different way, because my dialect is** |
| 06 | | aivan erilainen ku esimerkiks täällä ko- (.) koska täällähän on paljon niinku, |
| | | **totally different than for example here be- (.) because here there are a lot of so to speak** |
| 07 | | mualta tulleita (.) joil on, sanotaanko mitä äjos mie sanoisin semmonen, |
| | | **those who have come from elsewhere (.) who have, let's say what if I were to say such** |
| 08 | | kirjakielen, suomi, ja mullahan on sitte ihan niinku, |
| | | **iterary Finnish, and I do have then I mean,** |
| 09 | Int: | joo, |
| | | **yes,** |
| 10 | F1960' : | semmonen, tämän perän murre, että (.) siinä josku sit ettei ne kaikkia |
| | | **such a, dialect of this corner, that (.) in it sometimes then they do not** |
| 11 | | sanoja ymmärrä, |
| | | **understand all of the words,** |

The interviewer asks about the interviewee's way of speaking in Finnish, but also mentions Saami and English, which are not touched on in F1960's reply as she concentrates on her Finnish. The formulation of the question is careful; the interviewer reformulates it but does not use the word dialect (*murre*), which the interviewee initiates herself (l. 4). The interviewer asks a polar question to which, in the interview context, denial is an expected reply in addition to confirmation (l. 4, 'has something crossed your mind'). However, F1960' starts immediately explaining the difference in her dialect, and her stance on the issue comes up clearly through different means in her assessment (VISK § 667). She expresses certainty by using the enclitic particle *-han* and the modal particle *tietenkin* 'of course' (l. 5), which frames the information as self-evident (VISK § 1608). In addition, she uses the intensity qualifier *aivan* (VISK § 664, 'totally', l. 6), expressing the totality of the difference. This description shows how she sees her position when speaking Finnish: She,

as a speaker of 'the dialect of this corner' (l. 10), is in the minority, as many people she is in contact with are from elsewhere in Finland (l. 6–7); therefore, the difference between herself as a local language user and 'them' is clear. After the extract she specifies that she means the visitors to Village N. They speak 'standard literary Finnish' (l. 8), and they do not always understand the words she uses (l. 10). In particular, her language creates a communication barrier between herself and others, not the other way round. She brings forth the difference emphatically as a relevant part of her linguistic reality, and it also proves in practice how standard language and non-standard varieties exist alongside each other and a named language is not 'one'—speakers navigate with these differences that are not faded; on the contrary, they are made clearly meaningful (cf. Walsh, 2021).

### 2.4.2    *Interest and Resistance—Norwegian*

In the following subsection, I will discuss and show in more detail how the informants describe their relationship with Norwegian. Every interviewee mentions that they sometimes visit Norway; crossing the border does not require any documents. Two informants report having attended Norwegian courses: M1950' as part of his work as a border controller, and F2000' at school. However, F2000' underlines that participation in the clubs being organised is her main focus, not a special desire to know this language. This comment can be seen in relation to the small size of the village: There are only scarce activities, and an active person would need to also take part in those that they would not otherwise have chosen. Despite this, F2000' lists Norwegian as one of her languages (see Table 2.1 in Sect. 2.3.1), which highlights the meaning of surroundings in one's repertoire.

The only shop in the area is mentioned as a central location, and typically it is the place where one hears Norwegian. F2000' expresses that especially on the weekends, the local shop is 'flooded with Norwegians' (*tulvii norjalaisia*). In the following example, M1930' describes his observations on Norwegian, linking his experiences to the shop. He has lived in a Swedish-speaking area in Finland, and like many Finns, he has learnt Swedish at school, but this background fact does not seem to help him in understanding spoken Norwegian. He describes this language barrier and difference in the following Extract (2):

(2)

| 01 Int: | mitä y-, kieliä täällä ylipäätään kuulee täällä Kylä N:ssä, jos ajattelet |
| | **what e- languages here one overall hears here in Village N, if you think about** |
| 02 | ihan tämmöstä sun, normaalia arkea ni, |
| | **just this kind of your, normal life so,** |
| 03 | (0.3) |
| 04 Int: | suomi, englanti, mut mitäs muuta. |
| | **Finnish, English, but what else.** |
| 05 M1930': | no enhän mä kuule kun, siis jos mä oon ko- tuolla, kylällä ni mä kuulen |
| | **well I don't hear anything else, I mean if I'm there in the village so I hear** |
| 06 Int: | m. |
| 07 | suomea. |
| | **Finnish.** |
| 08 Int: | joo. |
| | **yeah.** |
| 09 | (0.4) |
| 10 Int: | entäs si-, |
| | **what a-** |
| 11 M1930': | sit mä kuulen norjaa. |
| | **then I hear Norwegian.** |
| 12 Int: | joo. |
| | **yeah.** |
| 13 M1930': | sis norjaa mä kuulen paljon. |
| | **I mean Norwegian I hear a lot.** |
| 14 Int: | joo. |
| | **yeah.** |
| 15 M1930': | ja mä en ymmärrä sitä sanaakaan. |
| | **and I don't understand a word of it.** |
| 16 Int: | ↑aijaa. ei ruotsin pohjalta onnistu. |
| | **↑alright. on the basis of Swedish not possible.** |
| 17 M1930': | ei. ja sit mä kysyin, tuolta yhdeltä, ruotsinkieleltä professorilta |
| | **no. and then I asked, one, Swedish speaking professor** |
| 18 | tuolta, mt. just näillä eläke-, y, lounailla niin tuota että, |
| | **over there, mt. just on these pensioners' lunches so,** |
| 19 | nii se sano että e on iha ymmärrettävää. että, |
| | **he said that it's totally understandable. that,** |
| 20 | Pohjois-Norjassa puhuttu norjan kieli eroaa niin paljon kirjakielestä, |
| | **the Norwegian spoken in North Norway differs so much from literary language,** |
| 21 Int: | mhm? |
| 22 M1930': | että, yy yy sitä ei ymmärrä. |
| | **that, yy yy you don't understand it.** |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 23 Int: | | joo. |
| | | **yeah.** |
| 24 M1930': | | kun kaikki sanoo et kylähä sinun pitäs ymmärtää sitä norjaa |
| | | **because everybody says that you should understand Norwegian** |
| 25 | | ku sä oot (.) ruotsia (.) paahtanu kaheksan vuotta t(h)u(h)ol, .hh |
| | | **as you have learned Swedish for eight years over the(h)re(h)** |
| 26 Int: | | joo |
| | | **yes.** |
| 27 M1930': | | oppikoulussa niin tuota, #eeee# ei, ei mä en ymmärrä mitään |
| | | **at school well #eeee# no, no I do not understand anything** |
| 28 | | mitä ne puhuu tuolla kaupassa. |
| | | **that they are saying over there in the shop.** |
| 29 Int: | | joo. |
| | | **yes.** |
| 30 M1930': | | mä kysyin noilta kauppatytöiltä ja -pojilta et miten te ymmärrätte mitä toi |
| | | **I asked those shop girls and boys, how do you understand what that** |
| 31 | | sanoo. |
| | | ***[person] is saying.*** |
| 32 Int: | | no, |
| | | **well,** |
| 33 M1930': | | (--) |
| 34 Int: | | mitäs ne sano. |
| | | **what did they say.** |
| 35 M1930': | | no sitä vaan jotenki oppii et ne kysyy yleensä samoja asioita. |
| | | **well one just somehow learns as they usually ask the same things** |
| 36 Int: | | nii nii, |
| | | **yes yes,** |
| 37 M1930': | | hhh |
| 38 Int: | | jo(h)o(h). |
| | | **y(h)es(h).** |

First, the interviewer asks about languages M1930' hears in his everyday life (l. 1–2). The question is formulated first in general terms ('one hears'), and then it is directed more personally ('if you think about – your normal life'). The interviewee does not respond immediately, and the interviewer gives Finnish and English as self-evident examples before hinting that there must be something else ('what else', l. 4). M1930' first mentions hearing only Finnish, and the interviewer starts a new question in overlap with him. The interviewer leaves her question unfinished as M1930' announces that he hears Norwegian. He continues the topic

with the new information that he does not understand a word of it (l. 15). The interviewer responds to this self-initiated declaration with slight surprise by first producing the particle *aijaa* (l. 16), which orients to the newsworthiness of the prior talk (cf. Koivisto, 2015, p. 370). This is also highlighted by its higher onset that can be seen to express special interest (Koivisto, 2015, p. 370; Thompson et al., 2015, p. 67). As an immediate continuation, she also makes a clarification containing the assumption that knowledge of Swedish would be helpful (l. 16). M1930' responds in overlap, which gives his answer more weight, and then he uses an authority's voice to prove that understanding Norwegian in the North is not possible on the basis of Swedish (l. 17–22). After this, M1930' repeats the interviewer's assumption, with slight amusement, that he should understand Norwegian on the basis of his knowledge of Swedish as they are related languages, and states that 'everybody' regards this kind of benefit as self-evident (l. 24). Thus, the voice of a professional contrasts with this, and 'everybody' seems to refer to a common opinion. The assumption reflects how languages are categorised and how their actual understandability is overestimated through the generalisation, not taking into account the variability of the named languages—as discussed in Sect. 2.4.1, understandability is also not self-evident between Finnish dialects. In some cases, Norwegian can be easily comprehensible if one has a knowledge of Swedish. M1930' disproves the assumption on the basis of his own experience while visiting the shop, and he underlines the view that the knowledge of Swedish is useless in understanding Norwegian: He repeats the non-understanding, making it clear categorically (l. 27).

However, he continues to report his experiences and unravel the challenge of how other Finnish-speaking people understand Norwegian. He had asked the staff about the issue and received the explanation that they learnt to get along as a context-bound practice: Customers tend to ask similar questions. This can be seen as a 'truncated repertoire' (Blommaert & Backus, 2013): Certain bits of the language are enough in the specific context, and the speakers are not necessarily competent speakers of Norwegian in any other area. Elsewhere M1930' gives an example of himself using Norwegian: He sometimes reads a Norwegian newspaper and understands the written variety that is used in it, and in that case, his previous experience with Swedish seems useful. In addition to M1930', three other informants compare Norwegian to Swedish, commenting especially on their comprehension of it.

How languages are tied to practical situations, and how linguistic resources are seen differently depending on context, is illustrated also by F2010'. When talking about her experiences in the shop, F2010' expresses her indifference towards Norwegian frankly: 'let them speak what they want'. Contrary to M1930', she does not show special interest in Norwegian; she does not state any assumptions regarding its potential understandability, and this can be seen to be connected to her young age. However, in the following Extract (3), F2010' shows interest towards the Norwegian language in another context: when she needs it during her visits to Norway.

(3)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 01 Int: | | onks siellä, kuulee-, kuuleeko siellä sitten paljon sitten sitä norjaa ja, hh. |
| | | **is there, hear- does one then hear a lot of Norwegian there and, hh.** |
| 02 F2010': | | joo, |
| | | **yes,** |
| 03 Int: | | joo. |
| | | **yes.** |
| 04 F2010': | | ja jos mul on jotain asiaa norjalaisille, ku mä en hirveesti sitä, osaa |
| | | **and if I have something to say to the Norwegians, as I don't know much** |
| 05 | | sitä norjaa, |
| | | **Norwegian,** |
| 06 | | niin, ku, mun kaveri Alina voi kääntää sen(h) hhm, |
| | | **I mean my friend Alina can translate it(h) hhm,** |
| 07 Int: | | ↑ai[jaa. |
| | | **↑oh yeah.** |
| 08 F2010': | | niinku se on puol norjalainen ja se osaa, todella hyvin norjaa, |
| | | **because she's half Norwegian and she knows Norwegian really well,** |
| 09 Int: | | ↑okei |
| | | **↑okay** |
| 10 F2010': | | se on mulle opettanu sitä? |
| | | **she's taught me it?** |

The interviewer's question (l. 1) about hearing Norwegian while visiting Norway gets an affirmative reply (l. 2). F2010' immediately continues to provide more information on her language use there. While filling in her languages in the background information sheet (see Table 2.1 in Sect. 2.3.1), F2010' reports Norwegian as one of the

languages she knows; however, here in the interview, she admits that she does not know a lot in practice (l. 4). This evaluation is produced as an argument for why she needs her friend 'to translate' Norwegian for her (l. 4–6). Here, the interviewer produces, in a manner similar to that in the previous Extract (2), the particle *aijaa*, which here also underlines the newsworthiness of the statement and in addition functions as a go-ahead particle without any further elements. F2010' continues partly in overlap to explain why her friend is able to help: She is half Norwegian. The interviewer receipts this again with marked pitch (↑*okei*, l. 9), thus constructing an impression that the information is of particular relevance. F2010' adds that her friend has also taught her Norwegian, so the benefit is not restricted to getting by in the language; F2010' also shows an interest in using the language herself. Elsewhere she emphasises that they do not have any formal language lessons but the friends teach them, which is in line with Lilja's (2018, p. 206) findings on young adult immigrants who expressed that language learning happened through using the language in practice and friends were a crucial part of it. F2010' is in the 1st grade at the moment of the interview, which naturally affects her experiences: Language lessons have not yet begun as a part of the school curriculum. It becomes clear that Norwegian is a natural part of everyday life, and involvement is a joint endeavour that is adjusted according to one's needs.

F1950', who uses Norwegian at work, describes how her situation has changed, saying that she nowadays understands Norwegian better than Swedish, whereas ten years ago it would have been 'absolutely' the other way round; this is due to her practical encounters with the language. She describes Norwegian as obligatory in the locality (*tässä niink(ö), kylä N:ssä on nyt tietenki pakkoki osata sitä norjan kieltä*, 'here in Village N, of course one must know the Norwegian language'), and this might refer to her own occupation in tourist services. Despite her knowledge of Norwegian, she provides a more critical aspect to this language. In the following Extract (4), she expresses her views on Norwegians and their language use. The interview was conducted outside the locality.

(4)

| | |
|---|---|
| 01 Int: | minkälaisia tilanteita ne sitte, on, miten paljon, sitä norjaa sitte |
| | **what kind of situations are they then, how often, do you speak** |
| 02 | tulee puhuttuu esimerkiks tuolla Kylä N:ssä että o-, onks ne |
| | **Norwegian for example there in Village N, are they** |

| 03 |  | semmosia niinku ohimeneviä,<br>**like passing by,** |
|---|---|---|
| 04 | F1950': | no sillon ku oli sitte sitte on sit taas semmosia norjalaisia (jo-),<br>**well at the time there were these Norwegians** |
| 05 |  | joita tuntee tietää niin niitten kans sitte vähä enemmän puhuthaan,<br>**whom one knows so with them you speak a bit more,** |
| 06 | Int: | joo,<br>**yeah,** |
| 07 | F1950': | mene- melkeen se on sitte sitä (hommaa) ja semmosta,<br>**it's mostly like *[for]* (business) and stuff,** |
| 08 |  | (0.7) |
| 09 | F1950': | mitä työn (.) puolesta tullee,<br>**for work that *[Norwegian]* ends up being,** |
| 10 | Int: | joo,<br>**yeah,** |
| 11 | F1950': | puhuttua.<br>**spoken.** |
| 12 | Int: | kyllä.<br>**yes.** |
| 13 |  | (0.6) |
| 14 | F1950': | ja (.) sitte monesti tullee myöskin semmonen asia ko,<br>**and then often also such a thing happens when,** |
| 15 | Int: | (-) |
| 16 |  | (0.2) |
| 17 | F1950': | tai, itte, ihan tietosestikki et e,<br>**or, myself, just consciously,** |
| 18 |  | (0.6) |
| 19 | F1950': | haluan olla että en ymmärrä (kuka), joku norjalainen joka pittää<br>**that I pretend not to understand (who), some Norwegian who considers it** |
| 20 |  | ihan itsestäänselvänä että totta kai te ymmärrätte no,<br>**self-evident that of course you understand (like),** |
| 21 | Int: | nii?<br>**yes?** |
| 22 | F1950': | .hhh meitä kun me tulhaan tänne,<br>**us when we come here,** |
| 23 |  | (1.0) |
| 24 | Int: | joo?<br>**yeah?** |
| 25 | F1950': | niin (.) me olhaan nyt Suomessa puhukaa nyt suomea, .hhh<br>**yes, we are now in Finland, now speak Finnish, .hhh** |

The interviewer's question (l. 1–3) concerns the situation where F1950' uses Norwegian, as it has already become clear that this language is part of her repertoire. F1950' describes speaking more Norwegian with

the more familiar visitors to the village (l. 4–5). She begins by using the past tense, but in Line 5 generalises this in the present tense and current situations. She proceeds to describe her stance on the use of Norwegian which challenges its role as a common resource: She sometimes pretends that she does not understand the language (l. 19). F1950' produces the turn as a continuation of her reply to the use of Norwegian, and as this contrasting and disaffiliating stance is produced when it is not expected (i.e., the interviewer has not asked about avoiding languages), it has even more weight. The topic has already been answered, but as the interviewer does not move on to another question, F1950' continues after a brief silence (l. 13). She uses the expression *tietoisesti* 'consciously' (l. 17) to show her determination and displays irritation that the Norwegians assume that everyone speaks Norwegian even though they are in Finland. This is, of course, a very local phenomenon, and in this village the existence of the shop can be seen to be highly dependent on visitors from Norway, a situation also mentioned by F1960'. F1950' seems to wish that visitors would orient to the national borders and have a greater awareness of being on foreign ground ('yes, we are now in Finland, now speak Finnish', l. 25), and this reflects a nation state and national language ideology (cf. Shohamy, 2006). This ideology extends to concern frequent visitors, not only inhabitants of the country. Using a 2nd person address form, directed to the visitors (*puhukaa*, 'speak'), is one way for F1950' to underline her stance with a strict and demanding tone. In F1950's opinion, requesting Norwegian-speaking service is somehow invasive, leading her to strike back. F1950's defensive attitude becomes evident also after this extract as she continues to criticise the visitors' adherence to the Norwegian time zone that is one hour behind Finland. Thus, the question about encounters in which the interviewee uses Norwegian leads to the interviewee-initiated disclosure that she does not always want to use Norwegian as well as a complaint about the undesirable attitude of the visitors. The disaffiliation of F1950' is not connected to a lack of resources as she gets by well in Norwegian, but her attitude is bound to the negative value that she ascribes to Norwegian due to its users (cf. Busch, 2017a).

### 2.4.3 From Observations to the Desire to Be More Involved—Saami

In addition to Norwegian, Saami as a local heritage language is commented on by all interviewees. As with the background sheet (see

Sect. 2.3.1), both the interviewers and interviewees use the term 'Saami' with no specification when talking about North Saami in the interviews. Following this, I will also use only Saami here even though there are many Saami languages. With the exception of two informants, F1950' and F1960', Saami seems to be a remote but also self-evident part of the surroundings that the informants can hear or notice. Two of the children mention having learnt some of it at school, and one of them (M2000') mentions it as one of the languages he knows (see Sect. 2.3.1). Saami-ness has gained a new kind of 'peripheral cool', and Saami languages are gaining new domains and users (Pietikäinen et al., 2016, p. 13). However, the questions about Saami ownership are complicated and also reflected in the data. F1950' does not mention Saami when filling in the background information sheet but reveals in the interview that this language has been familiar to her somehow; her attitudes reflect the sensitive relations between the Saami and the other local people.

The change in attitudes becomes visible through F1960', whose parents chose not to speak Saami at home and who was teased at school because of her background. The lived experience of the language caused the family to stop speaking their heritage language (cf. Busch, 2017a, p. 353). However, the situation has changed as the linguistic atmosphere has improved. In Extract (5), when discussing the use of Norwegian, F1960' describes Saami to be a more relevant language for her as her relatives in Norway are speakers of it. The example reveals again how assumptions on languages are handled and sheds light on the complexities of language attitudes.

(5)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 01 Int: | | ja tota, onks sulla ollu mu- muita kieliä mitä oisit halunnu oppii |
| | | **and well, have you had ot- other languages that you would have liked to learn** |
| 02 | | tai miten tää norjan kieli täällä esimerkiks ni, (.) o- onks sitä, |
| | | **or how about this Norwegian language here for instance so, (.) i- is it,** |
| 03 | | (0.4) |
| 04 Int: | | miten su (.) siellä (.) [sukulaiset, |
| | | **how yo- (.) there (.) relatives,** |
| 05 F1960': | | [no meillähän (.) niin no (.) s, (.) |
| | | **well, we have (.) so well (.) r, (.)** |
| 06 | | ne minun sukulaiset |
| | | **those relatives of mine** |
| 07 | | mitä nyt siellä Norjassa on niin ne on kaikki saamenkielisiä, |

|        |         | **who are there in Norway they are all speakers of Sámi,** |
|--------|---------|---------------------------|
| 08 | Int: | okei (.) niinpä (.) joo, |
|    |      | **okay (.) oh yes (.) yeah,** |
| 09 | F1960': | sitte (.) jotkuʔ tietenk tai ymmärtääki suomen, |
|    |      | **then (.) some? of course or understand Finnish** |
| 10 |      | mutta meil on niinku pääasiassa saamenkielisiä, |
|    |      | **but we have like mainly speakers of Saami,** |
| 11 | Int: | nii justii et |
|    |      | **exactly so they** |
| 12 |      | he saamea sitte heidän kanssaan myös hjoo, |
|    |      | ***[speak]* Saami then with them also yeah,** |
| 13 | F1960': | nii (.) joo, |
|    |      | **yes (.) yeah,** |
| 14 |      | (0.8) |
| 15 | Int: | joo, |
|    |      | **yes,** |
| 16 |      | (0.5) |
| 17 | F1960': | tai he puhuu saamea mie vastaan £suomeks£, |
|    |      | **or they speak Sámi I respond in £Finnish£** |
| 18 | Int: | £ai↑jaa ↑vai niin£ (.) nii et sillee su- |
|    |      | **alright ↑okay↑ (.) so like that** |
| 19 | F1960': | [hmhm. hmh |
| 20 | Int: | silleehän se käy [ihan ku, |
|    |      | **like that it goes like** |
| 21 | F1960': | [£nii-i,£ |
|    |      | **yes** |
| 22 |      | (0.4) |
| 23 | Int: | hyvin sitte päinsä, |
|    |      | **it goes well then** |
| 24 | F1960': | [mm |

The interviewer asks F1960' which languages she would like to learn and suggests Norwegian as an example. After a small pause, the interviewer begins to reformulate her question, referring to the interviewee's relatives (l. 4). F1960' begins to reply in overlap and explains that her relatives who live in Norway are speakers of Saami (l. 5–6). This way, Norwegian is relegated to the background, and Saami, her heritage language, is elevated as the more relevant language in the discussion. F1960' clarifies that some of her relatives understand Finnish, which is her strongest language, but then she returns to the fact that they are mainly Saami speakers (l. 9). The interviewer affiliates and displays understanding: First she talks about 'they', excluding F1960' (l. 10, *he saamea sitten,* 'they Saami then'), but then she reformulates her reply to include

the interviewee in the group of Saami speakers as well (l. 11, *heidän kanssaan myös hjoo,* 'with them also, yeah'). In the beginning of the overlapping reply, the particle chain *nii justii,* 'exactly' displays strong alignment with the previous information, but the turn is also an independent claim (cf. Vatanen, 2017): The interviewer interprets the fact that F1960's relatives are Saami speakers to also lead to Saami-language (only) conversations, which turns out to be incorrect. An ideology of one language in one situation can be seen here, and mixing languages is seen as unexpected. In addition, this is reminiscent of a situation in the past, for example, from the Kven community when parents changed their language to Norwegian but their children in many cases acquired passive competence in Kven and could understand it well while they themselves spoke Norwegian (Bull et al., 2021, p. 11).

First, F1960' agrees with the assumption (l. 12), but as the interviewer does not continue with her questioning, F1960' utilises the opportunity to correct the earlier misunderstanding of the matter: She clarifies that she responds in Finnish while her relatives speak Saami (l. 16). This turn functions as a revelation or self-disclosure; the information is designed as being volunteered, and it is not expected in the run of talk (Antaki et al., 2005) as F1960' has already confirmed the previous information (l. 12). This calls for evaluation: In which light does this new, seemingly unexpected information present the interviewee now? The knowledge of languages is in this context highly sensitive: Not only is the oppression of the Saami languages in the past well known, but so are the questions of authenticity, as knowledge of Saami has been seen as evidence of genuine Saaminess (cf. Pietikäinen, 2018). The receptive multilingualism described above opens up different aspects of language practices: On the one hand, both parties can speak their stronger language as they are able to understand the other (this has been reported as one practice in the case of Saami; see Pietikäinen, 2018, p. 186), and in this respect F1960' has equal status with her relatives in Norway. On the other hand, she reveals that contrary to the expectation (l. 11), she does not speak Saami herself, which can evoke a sense of inferiority in her. In a later part of the interview, she tells that she would rather know Saami than Finnish, and furthermore, she explains how her nieces and nephews 'force' her to use Saami herself.

How the interviewee and interviewer treat the revelation on Line 16 can be interpreted in the light of these personal preferences and circumstances, and it inevitably adds an aspect of delicacy and even sorrow about

the language loss to the interpretation. F1960' begins to smile during her turn (l. 16). The interviewer receipts the information as newsworthy with a marked pitch and smiling as well (l. 17; cf. Koivisto, 2015, Example 3). The interviewee laughs slightly at the same time (l. 18) and continues affiliating with a smiley voice (l. 20, *£nii-i,£*). The shared affective stance functions as a way to soften the information conveyed and strengthens the view that this way of behaving is acceptable as well, and that the interviewee has not misled the interviewer.

### 2.4.4   Getting Along—English and Other Resources

All interviewees mention English in their interview; their knowledge of it varies from a couple of words to having a strong command of the language. F2000' sometimes speaks English with her friend 'just for fun' and uses it with her mother when she wants to say something that her younger siblings cannot understand. M2000' likes to watch English-language programmes on television, whereas the youngest interviewee F2010' says she does not watch television in English because the subtitles in Finnish go by too fast for her to read.

For the adults in the study, English is used in different work contexts. F1960' describes her use of English as compulsory with the visitors to the place where she works, but she indicates that English is not easy or even pleasant for her. Thus, she has a rather different stance to English in comparison to Saami in that even though Saami is not easy for her, it is nevertheless a language that she would like to know better. For their part, M1950' and F1950' acknowledge the strong role of English: Although they know Norwegian, they sometimes use English with the Norwegians they meet.

M1930', who is retired, speaks English willingly in a professional context, but when taking a broader perspective, he sees it as a threat and undesired resource like F1950' (cf. Leppänen et al., 2011). According to M1930', the reason for giving English names to the cafés is because 'we want to please tourists'; he hints that the use of Finnish should be promoted in the naming of companies, and tourists could learn the meanings of the Finnish words used. F1950', on her part, wonders why Finnish people are ashamed of using their own language. Thus, this again illustrates how views on languages vary depending on context.

Finally, I explore an example that challenges the assumption that English is always a sufficient resource for communicating with foreigners.

M1950' describes such an encounter in Extract (6). Before that, he has told that his German knowledge is not good enough to communicate with tourists, and English is more useful. Then he continues to describe that sometimes even English is not sufficient and focuses on a specific case involving a French couple with whom he has been in contact.

(6)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 01 M1950': | mutta kyllä nyt on paljon tavannu sellat et niinku Ranskasta | |
| | **but I have indeed met many such [people] that such [people]** | |
| 02 | tulee semmonen niin niillä se englannin kielen | |
| | **come from like France so they have hardly any English** | |
| 03 | taitokaa oikee mitää että, | |
| | **skills that** | |
| 04 Int: | mhyhh .h | |
| 05 M1950': | se on vaikia niinku tehä että, | |
| | **it is difficult I mean to do that** | |
| 06 Int: | joo. joo. | |
| | **yes. yes.** | |
| 07 | (0.4). | |
| 08 M1950': | no tässä oltiin nyt, y- yks pariskun- nuorempiki paruskunta ni | |
| | **well now we had here, o- one coup-, younger couple and** | |
| 09 | eei. | |
| | **no.** | |
| 10 | (0.3) | |
| 11 | ei niitten kans pystyny ei niille (.) voinu mittään oikeen. | |
| | **one couldn't [communicate] with them, for them, one could do nothing really,.** | |
| 12 Int: | no mites te toimitte sitte. | |
| | **well how did you act then.** | |
| *m1950'* | *points the cell phone at the table* | |
| 13 M1950': | no sitte onneksi ku (me olim niin) kuskina niin, | |
| | **well then fortunately as (we were) the chauffeur so,** | |
| 14 | tuo Helena oli ja (.) niin seh h, | |
| | **that Helena was and so h h** | |
| 15 | (0.5) | |
| *m1950'* | *points the cell phone* | |
| 16 | Google-kääntäjälä. .hhh | |
| | **with Google Translate.** | |
| 17 Int: | ↑no ni. | |
| | **alright.** | |
| 18 M1950': | hehe .hh | |
| 19 Int: | ootko ite käyttäny sitä Google-kään[täjää. | |
| | **have you used Google Translate yourself.** | |
| 20 M1950': | oon mie jotaki sanoja hakenu sitte | |
| | **I have looked up some words then** | |

| 21 | | mutta en ole täällä niinku a-, |
| | | **but I haven't here I mean** |
| 22 | Int: | joo, |
| | | **yes,** |
| 23 | M1950': | (tai), ne puhu tuossa niinkö laitto ja sitte ne käänsi sen, |
| | | **(or) they talked over there like they put** *[in the word]* **and then they translated it,** |
| 24 | | (0.4) |
| 25 | M1950': | ja näytti näin tuolla niinku kahvilassaki Norja- Ruot- Norjan |
| | | **and showed** *[the text]* **like this over there also in the café in Norway- Swed- in Norway** |
| 26 | Int: | justi, |
| | | **ok,** |
| 27 | M1950': | puolella oltiin ni, |
| | | **we were so,** |
| 28 | | (0.3) |
| 29 | Int: | joo. |
| | | **yes.** |
| 30 | | (0.2) |
| 31 | M1950': | eikä muuten (sano-) saanu sitä asiaa läpi sitte n(h)iille, |
| | | **and didn't otherwise (say) manage to get through to them** |
| 32 | Int: | no mut silläkö te sit pärjäsitte sit kuitenki. joo. |
| | | **well but was it what you then got by with anyway. yes.** |
| 33 | M1950': | ↑joo. se meni ihan hyvin |
| | | **yes, it went quite well** |
| 34 | | sitte °he°. |
| | | **then °he°.** |
| 35 | Int: | joo. |
| | | **yes.** |

M1950' underlines the difficulties with language (l. 11) and describes how a lack of common resources first hindered communication with French tourists—even though they were young, an understanding could not be reached in English. However, the other Finnish person who was there on the trip began to use Google Translate. She is presented as an innovator who saved the difficult situation. M1950' displays special attention to the communication via machine, which can be seen in how he produces the noun. He gives a brief pause and points to the cell phone on the table (l. 15) before uttering Google Translate, and laughs shortly after the interviewer responds with the particle chain *no ni* ('alright', l. 17). The interviewer's response signals acceptance, and M1950's responding laughter is a resource to describe his stance to the invention and the method of communication in the reported situation. Thus, they both

construct this information as newsworthy and positive: A difficult situation found a new direction, as the interaction was enacted using machine translation. The interviewer continues to inquire whether M1950' himself has used this kind of translation method. He admits to having looked up individual words but returns to the specific occasion where he followed the conversation via Google Translate from the side. He describes the actual event, how talking required visual showing of the phone, and again, how this was the only solution to be understood (l. 31). With the interviewer's question about getting along (l. 32), M1950' does not only affiliate to it but also evaluates the encounter as good, thus upgrading the interviewer's assumption of the situation. He highlights the positive aspect of this kind of communication, and his use of a higher pitch (↑*joo*) also adds emphasis to his statement. After this extract, the interviewer summarises the episode by concluding that necessity forces one to find new solutions, and M1950' aligns with it, but he still continues describing the vocabulary of the tourists and underlining that they did not reach any understanding in English. This way, English as the easiest solution is downgraded and the interviewee underlines that the common linguistic resources were successfully found elsewhere than turning to English. Even though not knowing English seems to be an obstacle to getting along and a cause for amazement, M1950' shows a positive stance to new technology as a solution to understanding problems.

## 2.5    Conclusion and Discussion

This study has shown how residents of a Northern location describe their relationship with the languages that have become relevant to them during their social and cultural itinerary (Blommaert & Backus, 2013). This was studied by exploring their attitudes and affective stances while describing their experiences in an interview. All of the informants describe their relationship with Finnish, Norwegian, Saami, and English, and in particular their involvement with them that revealed affiliation and disaffiliation. Each subsection provides examples and descriptions that illustrate the variety of stances between participants, but it is also shown how affiliation varies according to the context. The personal experiences are bound to wider historical and ideological factors such as borders of languages, the status of national languages, the oppression of the Saami languages, and current global trends of English as a lingua franca. The varying ages of the participants were naturally visible in their experiences. The interactional

analysis conducted showed how values ascribed to languages and language practices revealed subtle nuances and how assumptions were challenged, and the stances were clearly bound to the personal experiences of the informants.

First of all, the participants' descriptions of using Finnish and its dialects revealed something about their relationship with the locality. They all had Finnish as their strongest language but varying linguistic backgrounds that affected their relationship to the local way of speaking. In the case of the adults, those who did not identify so strongly with the place expressed less orientation to using the 'local' dialect (cf. Vaattovaara, 2009). Among the children, two of them had received comments on their way of speaking in certain situations, and they made it clear that this was due to their personal history and contacts with speakers of different regional backgrounds. On the interactional level, the dialectal differences were presented as clearly separating the speaker from other Finnish speakers she met in her work.

The presence of Norwegian is typical of this locality. Many of the informants have used it themselves in some way, be it by attending courses, reading the newspapers, or communicating with Norwegian speakers with the help of a friend as an interpreter. Differences within a language (between its varieties) become explicit through one's own experiences, and the assumption about the possibility to understand Norwegian on the basis of Swedish was questioned. Practical encounters proved to increase interest in one's language use. One interviewee shows distance and irritation regarding the self-evident role of the language in the village and connects her evaluation to the people and their character.

Saami was a heritage language for F1960', even though negative experiences in the past had caused partial language loss, but others discussed it as part of their surroundings, recognising or knowing some words of it. On an interactional level, it has been shown how this complex relationship is reflected and negotiated and the desires and reality contrast. The use of receptive multilingualism was presented as an unexpected means for communication, and its characteristics as self-disclosure marked it as a delicate issue. The historical background and speaker's life story strengthen this interpretation. However, the interviewer shows acceptance of the description.

English was portrayed to be a practical and also personally important resource for communication, but in addition it was despised as an overly

self-evident resource threatening Finnish, and it evoked unpleasant feelings of being forced to use it. In the interactional analysis, an example was shown that dealt with a case where English proved to be insufficient. Machine translation was presented as a functional solution that not only helped the speakers to get by but was also even satisfying. The occasion was portrayed in interaction as a special innovation.

The nuances of language contacts were negotiated in micro-level interactions. When language choices other than those first assumed or asked are brought up in interviews, they are worth considering and might indicate that the language holds special importance in the personal trajectory of the informant. This is also the implication if an interviewee presents an independent claim, for example if, sequentially, (s)he has already answered the question but still adds new information, or if (s)he resists the interviewer's assumption. Differences were highlighted in this way.

In addition, contradictions in the informants' descriptions draw attention to the specific situation in question. The difference between one's own use of a language and one's passive knowledge or observations of a language was sometimes visible, for example in the case of Norwegian (hearing the language in the shop vs. having a friend as an interpreter; not understanding the spoken variety but being able to read) and English (using it in a professional context vs. evaluating its use in public in comparison to Finnish). It is worth keeping in mind that in interviews, it is expected that the assessments of the interviewee are not dealt with disapproval, but the interviewer is assumed to encourage the informant to speak. However, sometimes the reactions of the interviewer (e.g., using a certain pitch, exclamations) reveal that certain information is especially interesting, newsworthy, and valuable.

In the study, stances on languages were constructed in interaction, and they were also interpreted through personal experiences. They were shown to contain varying levels of affectivity. In their relationships to languages, the interviewees emphasised aspects that were important to them and expressed interest, rejection, but also self-evidence or surprisingness. Distance and affiliation towards the same named language varied, and the interactional analysis combined with the content analysis proved to be fruitful in showing the complexities of language attitudes and in understanding what determines them (cf. Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2017).

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CHAPTER 3

# 'Somewhere Between Engineering and Humanities': Discourses of Investment in Additional Language Learning Among Students of Higher Education in Finland

*Tiina Räisänen*

## 3.1 Introduction

From the global perspective, Finland is geographically located in the Far North, on the outskirts of global hubs. Despite this location, processes of globalisation, digitalisation, and migration enable people living in the North to establish transnational networks, contacts, and relations across traditional borders. Finland's multilingualism is reflected on both individual and societal levels (Blommaert et al., 2012). Having contacts between people from different linguacultural backgrounds is common, the population in Finland is becoming increasingly multicultural, and people are exposed to and need to master different languages in various domains of life (e.g., Karlsson, 2017). For example, in many working

T. Räisänen (✉)
Research Unit for Languages and Literature, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland
e-mail: tiina.raisanen@oulu.fi

life sectors and in higher education, people need knowledge of not only the majority national language, Finnish, but also other languages. Most often the main other language needed is the global lingua franca, English, which is also the foreign language that most pupils in Finland choose to study (Hakulinen et al., 2009; Leppänen et al., 2011; Statistics Finland, 2019). As a result of the multilingualism of Finnish society, education is influenced by multilingualism, too (Szabó et al., 2021). This is apparent in the multicultural backgrounds of the pupils and manifests in the foreign language learning domain and in Finnish pupils' learning of foreign languages, both compulsorily and voluntarily. Optional language learning (Kangasvieri, 2019) refers to the learning of those foreign languages that are offered by schools, but which are not compulsory subjects (hence excluding Finnish, Swedish, the Saami languages of Finland, and Finnish Sign Language). Additional language learning is a related concept, and it has been used to refer to the learning of language in later years, such as adulthood (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In this chapter, additional language learning is used to refer to both situations: optional language learning in basic education and additional language learning in adulthood.

Even though most Finnish schools offer foreign languages in their curricula, Finns' investment in additional language learning has decreased over the years, and this presents itself as a societal problem because the language reservoir of Finns has started to deteriorate (Pyykkö, 2017). Various reasons have been attributed to the decreasing interest in additional language learning in research and public discussion. One major reason lies in the status of the English language as a global lingua franca which has dominated education in foreign language learning to the extent that fewer individuals choose to learn other foreign languages (Pyykkö, 2017). Research also shows that pupils tend to be more motivated to study English, the compulsory language, rather than optional languages (Kangasvieri, 2019). The language proficiency of Finns is a common topic in public discussion and in the media where one perspective argues that English is enough to build and maintain contacts with people from different linguacultural backgrounds. A counter-perspective highlights the value of multilingualism and knowledge of multiple languages as fostering intercultural understanding and, for example, enabling closing business deals more effectively than with the use of English as a lingua franca (Confederation of Finnish Industries, 2014a, 2014b). Although English is the most common language pupils choose to learn, many individuals do have an aspiration to learn additional languages and want to invest in

language learning. However, the possibilities to pursue these additional language learning aspirations may be limited due to various reasons. From the individual point of view, this creates tensions and difficult choices that affect one's entire life span and future. Although an individual may be interested in and may have started to learn a language, they encounter a structural barrier that prevents them from pursuing their aspirations. These barriers are not only individual-level problems but also societal problems (the deterioration of Finland's language reservoir, cf. Pyykkö, 2017) which should be considered in the design and development of foreign language education and language policies across different levels. This chapter addresses these problems and aims to find out how individuals, namely higher education students with several years of educational background, talk about their investment in additional language learning in the past, present, and future and the possibilities and constraints they encounter in language learning. This knowledge sheds light on the discursive construction of additional language learning in Finland and further adds to our understanding of the dialectal relationship between individual (micro) and contextual (macro) practices that socially construct our society (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

In order to link the micro and the macro to further our understanding of discourses of additional language learning in Finland, this chapter draws on recent sociolinguistic literature, including critical sociolinguistics (Heller et al., 2017) and the sociolinguistics of globalisation (Blommaert, 2010) as well as the concepts of *scale* (Canagarajah & De Costa, 2016), *discourse* (Blommaert, 2005; Gee, 1990, 2005), and *investment* (Norton, 1997; Darvin & Norton, 2015). In particular, this chapter investigates what kinds of discourses students of higher education draw on when talking about their investment in additional language learning and what scales are entangled with the discourses. In addition to being a category of analysis, scale should be seen as a category of practice, which means that scales emerge from people's actual practices and orientations (Moore, 2008; Canagarajah & De Costa, 2016). Moreover, scales are in a dynamic relationship with one another and they can be redefined and renegotiated. For example, language policies permeate at national and local scales; practices on the local scalar level can contribute to practices on the national-level scale and vice versa (Canagarajah & De Costa, 2016). Scales can help understand discourses, that is, the ways of representing ideas about something, such as language learning (Gee, 1990, 2005) and learners' commitment to language learning to achieve their aspirations

(here referred to as investment, Darvin & Norton, 2015). The analysis in this chapter focuses on interviews of 18 higher education students coming from different parts of Finland and studying in various fields of technology, and it examines what kinds of scales are at play when individuals talk about foreign languages in general and their investment in additional language learning in particular. The chapter thus examines the role and meaning of languages for the individuals and the ways in which their talk about languages and the learning of them echoes different discourses and their associated scales. The chapter demonstrates how discourses of profit, drawing on neoliberal values of 'skilling up the self' (e.g., Allan, 2013; Urciuoli, 2008, 2010), are juxtaposed with discourses of personal growth, humanism, and motivation (e.g., Ryan & Deci, 2000; for L2 learning motivation, see e.g., Dörnyei 1994). The neoliberal principles of late capitalism that emphasise economic growth have permeated into individual lives in which individualistic, competitive, and entrepreneurial values are also driving forces in language learning (Flubacher & Del Percio, 2017; Salomone, 2022), and, as this chapter demonstrates, are part of the discursive construction of additional language learning in Finland. This chapter thus provides insights into how these discourses related to languages and multilingualism reflect and (re)create the context for linguistic encounters in the Far North.

The chapter begins with a review of the sociolinguistic discussion on language as a resource with value and the concept of investment, followed by an introduction to multilingualism and foreign language learning in Finland. The sections that follow introduce the interview data and analytical approach used in the study and comprise an analysis of the interview data. The chapter ends with a discussion and conclusion.

## 3.2    LANGUAGE AS A RESOURCE WITH VALUE

Sociolinguists have emphasised the need to conceptualise language as a resource that can enable, or restrict, an individual's participation in certain spheres of life (e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Heller, 2003, 2010). Part of this discourse is the understanding of language as a gateway to intercultural understanding; this discourse is specifically related to foreign language learning. In the context of working life, the conditions of which have largely shifted from production-based jobs to a globalised economy involving various types of knowledge work including immaterial, entrepreneurial, digital, collaborative, and knowledge-focused skills

(Iedema & Scheeres, 2003; Nissi et al., 2023), language is seen as a symbolic resource (Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Heller, 2003). As a resource in globalised economy, language becomes a marketable commodity, the use of which determines one's productivity for example in the way and extent of phone calls taken, words translated, products and services sold, or successful interactions carried out with tourists (see Chun, 2016; Duchêne & Heller, 2012, p. 326; Heller et al., 2017). The exchange value of a language on the market of symbolic goods plays a role in individuals' desire to learn that language (Kramsch, 2019, p. 50). Multilingualism—which includes translingual practices—is becoming a resource to manage these new task structures (Canagarajah, 2020, p. 561).

Critical sociolinguistics has shown how discourses of neoliberalism circulate around language use in the working life (see Canagarajah, 2020; Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Duchêne et al., 2013; Garrido & Sabaté-Dalmau, 2020; Flubacher & Del Percio, 2017). According to neoliberal logic, in order to meet the demands of the changing working life and economy, workers should engage in '(re)skilling' themselves and constantly 'up-grade' their repertoires in order to be valid (Canagarajah, 2020, p. 7; see also Duchêne & Heller, 2012). As Urciuoli (2016, p. 32) points out, all contemporary work life is embedded in this global capitalist discourse where 'any capacity for action that gives workers a market edge becomes a "skill"'. Workers with multi-competences in languages and genres thus acquire new forms of symbolic capital (e.g., Duchêne and Heller, 2012). Neoliberal discourse involves values that organise late capitalist societies and ideals of what work means from the societal point of view and how individuals should adapt to it. From the societal point of view, this creates a discourse that underscores the need for multilingualism where it is emphasised that multilingual competence becomes a competitive edge enabling citizens to engage in global encounters and discussions with people from different backgrounds and to understand multiple perspectives in global crises (Salomone, 2022). From the individual point of view, this discourse manifests in the need to take responsibility for one's own development and enskillment to remain competitive in the globalising working life where one's competitiveness determines one's individual market value (Urciuoli, 2008, 2010) and the market value of languages (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991; see also Blommaert, 2010). Central in this discourse of enskillment and building of one's capital and competence are language and communication skills (Allan, 2013), the development of which can (and, as the discourse often maintains, 'should') begin early on

in the childhood as conscious choices in formal education and continue throughout the lifespan as life-long learning across various socialisation trajectories (Duff, 2019; Räisänen, 2018) and formal and informal education and learning. However, not all languages and communication skills have equal market value, and the market value of languages may clash with the market value of other skills (e.g., Bourdieu, 1977; on language ideologies in the Finnish context see for example Criss, 2021; Nikula et al., 2012; Nuolijärvi, 1986). This inequality creates a tension from the individual point of view, as will be discussed later.

As part of their desire to become successful employees, individuals invest their time and effort in skilling themselves by means of learning. A key mechanism in the skilling process is the capitalist notion of *investment*. Investment refers to a commitment to developing one's skills to achieve one's aspirations (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton, 1997). Norton's investment theory that draws on Bourdieu's (1991) work combines metaphors from economics and social approaches to second language learning. By implication, by investing in and committing themselves to developing and learning specific skills and semiotic resources such as languages, individuals expect to gain returns on their investment—that is, an accumulation of their capital. These expected returns can be instrumental ones; they can also relate to identity and the aim to become part of a(n imagined) community (see Iikkanen, 2019; Karhunen et al., 2023; Ros i Solé, 2013). The returns may come in the form of career advancement, an imagined identity, and aspired community membership (Darvin & Norton, 2015). For example, a language learner may invest time, effort, or money in learning a foreign language with the hope to gain a desired job or a career, or the learner may envision an imagined identity gained through access to the language (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Kanno & Norton, 2003). Wishing to be a part of the global worker community requires investment in language learning. The notion of investment hence closely relates to discourses on skills and upskilling oneself in the new economy (Urciuoli, 2008, 2010). Although English is the language of global business and knowledge work and a key resource of global professionals' repertoires (Louhiala-Salminen & Kankaanranta, 2011; Räisänen & Kankaanranta, 2020), this chapter shows that many individuals want to invest in other foreign languages in order to cope in different environments. This neoliberal skilling of the self for the globalising marketplace characterises education today, where individuals

make choices in their investment efforts. Investment in language learning (re)constructs discourses of multilingualism as something desirable.

However, as sociolinguistic research has shown, language in many ways functions as a constraint—a problematic resource—that can restrict an individual's capabilities and opportunities to participate in certain aspects of life or engage in a specific type of action. Not everyone has equal access to language resources or can use and develop them in desired ways. What is particularly important here is that not everyone is able to invest in language learning in desired ways and not all languages are equally valued and therefore offered to be studied, as shown for example by a report of Finnish universities' language policies (Ylönen, 2015). The values attributed to languages point to power and inequality, and they matter to people socially, politically, and economically (Blommaert, 2010; Heller et al., 2017). This chapter addresses the discourses related to investment in additional language learning and traces the possibilities and constraints that are involved.

## 3.3   Multilingualism and Foreign Language Learning in Finland

The two national languages of Finland, Finnish and Swedish (see Frick, Räisänen & Ylikoski, this volume), are the main media of mainstream education, while English has become a language of instruction (referred to as English-medium instruction, EMI, see Macaro et al., 2018) in higher education in various programmes (Ylönen, 2015). As society has become increasingly multilingual through immigration, all levels of education have had to adapt to this change (Szabó et al., 2021; see also Kalaja & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2020).

According to Szabó et al. (2021), pupils have traditionally studied various languages in Finnish schools. Most of this learning is mandatory, since pupils are required to learn at least one foreign language and the national language of Finland that is not the students' first language (Swedish for students who take part in Finnish-medium education, starting from grade six at the latest, and similarly, Finnish for those students studying in Swedish-medium programmes) (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2019). Before 2020, foreign language learning started at the age of 9–10, in grade three, but since 2020 when an education renewal was introduced, it is already at the age of 6–7, in grade one, when pupils start to learn their first foreign language (Finnish National

Agency for Education, 2019). One of the reasons for this renewal is the goal to expand the language repertoire of Finns, since the recommendation is for the first foreign language chosen to be some other language besides English (Pyykkö, 2017)—an interesting recommendation, considering that English has enjoyed the status of the most studied, and offered, foreign language. Indeed, English has been the most often chosen foreign language, and up to 90% of pupils studied English as their only foreign language (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2019). As the renewal is so recent, its long-term repercussions remain to be seen, as does the question of whether it has actually created the desired effects on Finland's language reservoir. Even before the reform, Finnish pupils have had the possibility to learn optional languages in addition to the mandatory foreign language—the A1 language (most often English)— and Swedish. In grades four to five, pupils could choose an A2 language from a selection of languages decided on the local level. It is here important to note that children are assigned to schools automatically based on their home address, which in practice may mean that the language selection tray may be limited even for pupils living in large cities. While in major cities and densely populated areas the pool of languages available for selection can be relatively large (ranging from European/Germanic languages such as German, Spanish, and French to Asian languages such as Chinese; but this is not a given), in smaller towns and sparsely populated areas there may only be a few options available, and these may even vary between different years. Despite the availability of languages to choose from, groups may not be formed every year if there are too few students who have selected a specific optional language. Another selection point for additional language learning has been in the upper level of comprehensive school, in grades 7–9, when students can choose a B2 language. Even after that, in high school and in tertiary education there are further opportunities to start learning additional languages.

What is common in all these curricula, old and new, is freedom of choice. Now, at as early an age as six to seven, pupils, and most likely their parents, need to decide the future of the children in terms of foreign language learning, and they weigh between different options: What is good for the child and what is useful for them? This trend continues throughout one's lifespan. How individuals make their choices regarding their investment in foreign language learning—what motivates them to choose, or not choose, foreign languages—is an interesting and important question. The question has been addressed by Kangasvieri (2019,

2022) and Kangasvieri & Leontjev (2021) in their L2 motivation research on Finnish comprehensive school students. These studies show that the reasons behind choosing, or not choosing, optional languages are manifold. According to Kangasvieri (2022), Finnish students choose optional languages based on their own or their parents' choice, or due to seeing the language as obligatory (English). The reasons may also be structural, and students may not choose languages because the language is not offered at school or there are no language groups. It may also be that the students do not want or manage to study more languages (Kangasvieri, 2022). As English continues to enjoy a special status as a global lingua franca, one can also ask how much room there is for additional language learning. The statistics show that interest in optional language learning was at its highest in Finland in the mid-1990s. In 1997, 41% of 5th graders studied an A2 language, while in 2017 the number fell down to 27%. As for B2 language learning, 43% of 8th and 9th graders studied it in 1996, while only 17% studied it in 2017 (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2019). Recent statistics and research have shown that high school students in particular select optional languages less than before (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2019; Kiehelä & Veivo, 2020). According to Kiehelä and Veivo's (2020) survey study, the reasons behind this decrease are structural: The two most common reasons high school students attribute to this have to do with the lack of time and the number of other subjects to be studied. Moreover, high school subjects have their specific scores and weights that matter when students apply to tertiary education, especially to university. Voluntary languages have not traditionally scored very high in the system compared to other subjects. This chapter takes an in-depth approach to the question of investment in additional language learning and examines how students of higher education talk about their language learning in the past, present, and future and what discourses are drawn on in their talk.

## 3.4   Interviews and Multiscalar Approach

This chapter is part of a research project on the development of professional communicative repertoires funded by the Academy of Finland in 2016–2019. The data used in this chapter include 18 interviews with engineering students enrolled at a university in Finland where their education was fully or partly in English. The interviewees were selected on the basis of their work experience: They had to have at least some work

experience. Participation in the study was voluntary. The interviews were conducted in 2016. The interviewees signed a consent form and gave permission for the use of the data for research purposes. All personal details have been changed and pseudonyms are used to protect the participants' identities. All participants except two had Finnish as their mother tongue. One participant had lived abroad and studied Finnish after returning to Finland. Table 3.1 illustrates the participants' field of study, language learning background in formal education (all levels), work experience, and languages used at work. The preliminary results of the study have been published in Räisänen and Karjalainen (2018).

Table 3.1 illustrates a wide range of fields of study among the participants. All the participants had studied at least English as a foreign language at school, and most of them also Swedish (Swe). Most of them had also studied an additional language: German (Ger), French (Fre), Spanish (Spa), Italian (Ita), Russian (Rus), Italian (Ita), Chinese (Chn), or Korean (Kor), or a combination of these. Table 3.1 illustrates that while some students clearly had an aspiration to learn multiple languages, most of them had studied only one additional language. The students' field-specific work experience ranged from none to 15–20 years. At work, Finnish was their most used language, especially with colleagues, and English was mostly used in documentation, meetings, and with customers. Other languages were used for example with a supervisor or with colleagues. It should be noted that only some interviewees had contacts with customers at work.

The interviews were semi-structured, with the main themes consisting of the participants' language learning background, languages used in education and at work, intercultural and multimodal communication, and their future plans. The interviews were conducted in Finnish and they lasted between 1–1.5 hours. The interviews were roughly transcribed in order to identify instances in which the learning and use of additional languages were mentioned. After collecting these instances, they were analysed in their content and language choices. In the instances, the participants reflected on their choices in additional language learning and discussed their success in the past and present as well as future plans. They also told stories about their language learning and use. The interview examples in this chapter are provided in both the original language, Finnish, and in English as a translation.

The analysis applies a discourse analytical approach called multiscalar analysis (Canagarajah & De Costa, 2016) and considers the multiple

**Table 3.1**  Participants

| Participant | Field of study | Languages studied | Work experience (+ = company in their own field of study / job description / duration) | Languages at work (and their primary functions) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | information technology | Eng, Swe, Spa, Fre | + / coding / 1–2 yrs | Fin (colleagues) Eng (coding), Spa (supervisor) |
| P2 | information technology | Eng, Swe, Ger | + / coding and management / 1–2 yrs | Fin (colleagues), Eng (customers) |
| P3 | information technology | Eng, Swe, Rus | – / communications / 2–3 yrs | Fin (all communications), (Eng) |
| P4 | information technology | Eng, Swe, Fre | + / coding / 1–2 yrs | Fin (colleagues), Eng (meetings, documents) |
| P5 | physics | Eng, Swe, Fre | + / research / 3–4 yrs | Fin (meetings), Eng (documents), Fre (colleagues) |
| P6 | physics | Eng, Swe, Ger, Rus | + / coding and research / 3–4 yrs | Fin (colleagues), Eng (documents + meetings) |
| P7 | telecommunication | Eng, Swe, Ger | + / technical expert | Fin (colleagues), Eng (documents) |
| P8 | mechanical engineering | Eng, Fin, Ger | + / product development / information not available | information not available |
| P9 | mechanical engineering | Eng, Swe, Fre, Ger | + / product development / 1–2 yrs | Fin (colleagues), Eng (documents), Ita (supervisor) |
| P10 | mechanical engineering | Eng, Swe, Fre, Ger, Chn | – | Fin (all communications) (Eng) |
| P11 | machine automation | Eng, Swe, Ger | + / project management/ 15–20 yrs | Fin (colleagues), Eng (customers + documents) |
| P12 | material technology | Eng, Fin | + / research | Fin (colleagues), Eng (documents) |

**Table 3.1**  (continued)

| Participant | Field of study | Languages studied | Work experience (+ = company in their own field of study / job description / duration) | Languages at work (and their primary functions) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| P13 | production economy | Eng, Fin, Swe, Ger | + / consulting | Fin (colleagues), Eng (documents, customers) |
| P14 | material sciences + IT | Eng, Swe, Kor | + / database planning, 1–2 yrs | Fin (documents, meetings), Eng (random) |
| P15 | electrical engineering | Eng, Swe, Fre, Ita | + /planning / 4–5 yrs | Fin (colleagues, documents), Swe (colleagues) Eng (documents) |
| P16 | electrical engineering | Eng, Swe, Rus | + / product development / 2–3 yrs | Fin (colleagues), Eng & Rus (documents) |
| P17 | water and environmental engineering | Eng, Swe, Fre, Ger | – / events | Fin, Eng (information not available) |
| P18 | urban planning | Eng, Swe, Ger, Chn | + / urban planning / 4–5 yrs | Fin (colleagues, documents), Swe (documents) |

intersecting scales circulating the interview instances where additional language learning is discussed. The multiscalar approach considers scales to be categories of practice that manifest in interactions (Blommaert, 2015; Canagarajah & De Costa, 2016; see also Moore, 2008). Discourses are being shaped and are shaping scales that reach beyond the inter-actions. Discourse refers to ways of using language that reflect certain worldviews and reconstruct them at the same time (Fairclough, 2003, p. 124). How we talk about additional language learning and thereby the discourses we draw on are tied to the ways in which we construct social identities and relationships and participate in various groups and institu-tions (see Blommaert, 2005). Multiscalar analysis thus provides a dynamic approach to investigating discourses that can be seen to operate on various scalar levels—temporal and spatial—and should thus be seen as deriving from various assemblages of human and non-human actors, materials, and ideologies (e.g., Canagarajah, 2018). Using the multiscalar approach,

the analysis focuses on the interviewees' answers in the interviews and investigates what kinds of word choices, explanations, and descriptions they provide when talking about their investment in additional language learning. In their talk, the participants draw on discourses related to their investment in additional language learning. Moreover, their word choices and references to time and space reveal the scales on which discourses operate. For example, based on a participant's answer, a discourse of personal motivation to invest in an additional language may be persistent across the life trajectory of an individual (temporal scale), while local communicative practices at the workplace (spatial scale) play a role in what other discourses emerge related to additional languages. Scales can thus help understand the dynamic interplay of the factors behind learners' investment, or lack thereof, in language learning.

In practice, using multiscalar analysis means examining how the students' interview accounts entangle them with multiple temporal and spatial scales of discourse beyond the here and now. The multiscalar analysis aims to show how, at the same time, the interviews reflect local- and individual-level investment as well as macro-level global flows related to human mobility, technology, and economy (see Appadurai, 1998 on flows; see also Räisänen, 2018). In essence, this approach enables the understanding of the discursive construction of additional language learning in Finland. The students' accounts of their additional language learning are entangled with temporal scales (past, present, future) and local, institutional, and transnational scales. These scales emerge from the practices of the participants and the institutions they are affiliated with.

## 3.5 Findings

Regarding the use of foreign languages, all the interviewees talk about the use of English as an everyday practice in their free time, during their education, and partly at work, while their talk about the learning and use of other foreign languages provides a more complex picture of their practices. All the participants had started learning English in the third grade at the latest, with some of them even learning it earlier due to having lived abroad, having gone to an English-speaking day care, or having had basic education in English. One interviewee mentioned how having basic education in English was their 'parents' invention' (*vanhempien keksintö*). The following analyses focus on discourses related to investment in the learning of additional languages in the past, present, and

future. The analysis is illustrated with examples from interviews in which the interviewees discuss when, how, and why they had started learning additional languages, what learning additional languages means for them, and what challenges there have been, continue to be, and may come to be that involve studying and using them. The analysis is divided according to the three main emerging discourses: language learning as pleasure/enjoyment, language learning as a struggle, and language learning as an instrument to gain profit. Although these discourses are discussed separately in the following sections, the examples show that these discourses and the intersecting scales do not have clear boundaries, but rather that discourses are embedded with each other and various scales could be identified in them.

### 3.5.1    Discourses of Language Learning as Pleasure/Enjoyment

Some interviewees seemed to have a general interest in and fascination for languages. Their talk about learning being fun and motivating in its own right points to the emergence of a discourse of language learning as pleasure/enjoyment. For instance, Hannes (P18) describes himself as being somewhere in between the engineering sciences and humanities when he explains his interest in languages.

Hannes
*kyllä mua kielet kiehtoo ihan yleisesti*
*että vaikka opiskelen insinööritieteiden korkeakoulussa täällä virallisesti*
*niin en pidä itseäni täysin insinöörinä*
*tää kaupunkisuunnittelu on kuitenki jotain insinööritieteiden ja humanismin puolimaastosta*
*tavallaan ihan luontevasti tulee opiskeltua erilaisia asioita*
*ja ehkä myös ton lapsuuden takia kielet on ylipäänsä kiinnostanu*
*että opiskelisin kyllä mielellään ihan mitä tahansa kieltä mikä tulee vastaan*

*I am fascinated by languages just in general*
*although I study in a higher education institute of engineering sciences officially*
*I do not consider myself as an absolute engineer*
*this urban development is after all somewhere between engineering and humanities*
*it comes sort of naturally to study different things*

*and perhaps also due to my childhood I have been interested in languages*
*in general*
*I would be glad to study any language I encounter*

Hannes' explanation for his curiosity towards languages is interesting. He categorises himself as 'not an absolute engineer' (*en ... täysin insinöörinä*), which implies that 'an engineer only' would not be interested in languages. Hannes also provides his field of study (urban planning) as an explanation for his self-categorisation, that is, being somewhere between engineering and humanities, and mentions that it is natural for him to study different things. The distinction between seeing oneself as an engineer and a humanist is significant and reflects the overall tension between the investment in engineering and the core sciences and the investment in languages, that is, humanities subjects.

In addition to having developed a general interest in languages, some interviewees mentioned the influence of other people on their choice to start learning additional languages. This was clear in Aimo's (P1) interview where he explained how his brother invited him to join Spanish classes at university:

Aimo
   *espanjaa aloin lukee [yliopistossa], veli sano että tuu kans, mä olin eka*
   *et öö, se oli sit oikeesti ihan kivaa, luin kaikki kuus kurssia*

   *I started studying Spanish at [university], my brother said come along,*
   *I was first like aa, but it was actually quite nice, I studied all six courses*

Aimo's reaction to his brother's invitation to join him in Spanish classes seems to be that of surprise or hesitation based on his description of his reaction (*mä olin eka et öö*—'I was first like aa'). This indicates that perhaps Aimo had not really considered studying the Spanish language before, but having a close person, a brother, give the first push made a major difference in his choice to start and eventually continue studying all the university courses available for the language. From the point of view of investment, this indicates the importance of other people in the development of motivation for language learning and thus reflects a local scale in language choices. Aimo seemed to have developed a steady motivation to study Spanish for a longer time, and this indicates that the temporal scale for investment has extended to longer timescales.

Another example of other people's influence in additional language learning comes from Aatos (P3), who had studied Russian in high school. An incentive had come from his acquaintances who had started learning Russian earlier.

> Aatos
>> *no tää oli oikeestaan pari mun kielistä kiinnostunutta tuttavaa oli*
>> *alottanu vuotta aiemmin venäjän opinnot lukiossa*
>> *ja mäkin aattelin että olis hyvä ja hauska opiskella useampaa kieltä*
>>
>> *well actually two acquaintances of mine interested in languages had*
>> *started Russian studies in high school a year before*
>> *and I also thought that it would be good and fun to study more languages*

Aatos not only mentions how it would be 'fun' to study more languages, but also says how it would be 'good', which implies yet another different discourse than that of language learning as pleasure/ enjoyment. The word choice 'good' here may be taken to signal the word 'useful', which would imply a discourse of profit which will be discussed more in a later section. Nevertheless, there are implications to different discourses here. In addition to other people's initial push, a channel through which some interviewees had developed an interest in additional language learning was their hobbies. An example of this is Kari (P14), who had become interested in Korean through his taekwondo hobby. Perhaps not surprisingly, several participants mentioned that they initially developed an interest in English through gaming.

### 3.5.2    *Discourse of Language Learning as a Struggle*

As discussed previously, some participants seemed to have a genuine interest in languages and language learning, thus reflecting a discourse of language learning as pleasure/enjoyment, and some of them described themselves as having a talent for languages. However, there were participants who did not see themselves as good at languages at all, but wanted to study them in order to upskill themselves for the future, for example for the global job market. Many of them reflected on their personal struggles in the learning of additional languages. These struggles illuminate the circulation of different intersecting temporal and spatial scales in the emerging discourses. In this section, Aksel (P8) and Pekka (P7) describe

their struggles in the learning of German over time. Aksel explains how his relationship to German is that of 'love and hate':

Aksel

> *saksaan mulla on tämmönen love-hate relationship heheh*
> *alotin lukee sitä ala-asteella ja lopetin*
> *ja alotin taas yläasteella ja lopetin*
> *ja sit yläasteella alotin uudestaan*
> *ja sitä mä oon opiskellu nyt semmonen neljä kurssii*

> *towards German I have this kind of love hate relationship heheh*
> *I started learning it in elementary school and stopped*
> *I started again in upper comprehensive and stopped*
> *and then in upper comprehensive I started again*
> *and I have now been studying it for about four courses*

Aksel describes how he has started and given up on the study of German twice at different times (elementary school and upper comprehensive school), while at the time of the interview he was enrolled in German courses again. He explains elsewhere in the interview how his interest in additional languages was related to his aspiration to work in an international environment, abroad, and in different cultural contexts. Clearly here the relevant scales reach beyond the local to the transnational level, which plays a role in Aksel's language learning efforts. It seems that for him, work in global contexts requires an investment in language learning even though learning may mean personal struggles, as illustrated by the metaphor 'love and hate relationship'.

Pekka's interview answer also points to his challenges with German. Similar to Aimo earlier, his parents' decision to enrol Pekka in German classes from grade five onwards, and his brother's example, were crucial in the initial investment efforts. In the following, Pekka describes his motivation to study German and his self-evaluation of his German proficiency.

Pekka

> *ajatuksena kun englanti tulee kuitenkin, niin jotain lisäkielitaitoa kuitenkin,*
> *emmä koskaan hyvä ollu saksassa, kyl mä sen (pitkän saksan) lukiossa kuitenki kirjotin, just ja just läpi*

> *the thought behind [everything] was that English will come anyway so
> some additional language competence anyway*
> *I was never good at German but I did take the matriculation exam in
> it (advanced/long German) in high school anyway and barely passed it*

In the interview, Pekka describes himself as not being good at German. Despite this, he had eventually (*kuitenki*, 'anyway') taken the matriculation examination in long German, which is the most demanding German test in the matriculation programme. Pekka further describes that he just barely passed the exam, which indicates that his scores were low. Hence, despite the self-evaluation of not being good in the language, Pekka had succeeded in the exam to the extent of passing it. Thus, his investment, initially launched by his parents' choice, had paid off when considered from the point of view of testing. As the interview example suggests, Pekka had experienced personal struggles during his studies, which shows in his devaluing of his competence and his description of his performance in the test in somewhat negative terms: 'barely passed' (*just ja just läpi*). The importance of the local, family-level scale thus shows in Pekka's investment in additional language learning in the past, as do the ideas of 'English will come anyway' (*englanti tulee kuitenkin*) and 'additional language competence anyway' (*jotain lisäkielitaitoa kuitenkin*) as the mentioned reasons for learning German.

### 3.5.3   *Discourse of Language Learning as an Instrument to Gain Profit*

The most prominent discourse related to the investment in additional language learning emerging in the interviews is that of language learning as an instrument in order to gain profit. Traces from the neoliberal discourse of skilling the self by means of additional language learning were visible in all the interviews, although the individual explanations and descriptions were different.

Olavi (P10) is a particularly interesting case in the way the discourses are reflected in his talk. He had already studied English, French, German, and Swedish by the time he finished high school. When I asked how his language studies had gone in basic education and in high school, he discusses a tension between his lack of interest and proficiency and the usefulness of additional language learning competence.

Olavi

> *niin no tässä on nyt vähän tämmönen henkilökohtainen, miten sen nyt sanois*
> *että mä en itse pidä kielten lukemisesta enkä mä oo niissä hyvä*
> *mutta mä oon aina tykänny et ne on hyödyllisiä ja aina yrittäny niitä lukea*
> *mut ei oo menny mitenkään hirveen hyvin koskaan kielet*
> *[---] emmä tiiä, ei oo mitenkään niinku vanhempien pakottamaa*
> *[---] en mä koskaan aatellu että ois semmonen vaihtoehto että ei valitsis*
> *sit mä olin ihan ihmeissään ku muut sano että ei ne ottanu mitään*
>
> *well here there is this kind of personal, how should I say it*
> *I myself don't like studying languages and I'm not good at them*
> *but I've always thought that they are useful and always tried to study them*
> *but languages/language learning hasn't gone very well*
> *[---] I don't know I wasn't in any way forced by my parents*
> *[---] I never thought that I had a choice of not choosing*
> *then I was really astonished when others said that they hadn't chosen anything*

Olavi's interview clearly demonstrates the way different scalar forces are at play in the discourses of additional language learning: Olavi makes a distinction between his personal qualifications (not good at languages, *enkä mä oo niissä hyvä*) and interests and the usefulness of knowing languages (*mä oon aina tykänny et ne on hyödyllisiä*, 'I've always thought that they are useful'). The word 'useful' (*hyödyllinen*) is explicitly mentioned and by implication it refers to the idea of seeing languages as useful, or instrumental, in order to gain something. Olavi's talk can be seen to point towards the discourse of profit. What is interesting here is that Olavi explicitly mentions his parents as not having forced him into choosing languages: The fact that he does this indicates that parental decision (or force) is a wider phenomenon, and this was indeed mentioned by other interviewees as the reason behind their additional language learning selections. This example is also interesting in terms of the amount of negation it contains: It seems that Olavi positions himself through these negations (not liking language studies, not being good at them, not having succeeded in them, not being forced by parents, not having thought about not choosing any languages, others didn't select anything), through which he identifies himself as a somehow deviant case.

The notion of the 'usefulness' of additional languages emerges in other students' interviews as well, and it is often attributed to work contexts especially if the participants already had more field-specific work experience. Harri (P2) explains how German would be useful with German-speaking customers.

> Harri
>> *jooo se [saksan opiskelu] on ihan hyödyllistä ja ihan omasta innostuksesta*
>> *mut sen oon niinku tuol töissäkin huomannut että tota*
>> *koska meillon aika paljon saksalaisia tai Keski-Euroopasta asiakkaita ja näin*
>> *niin tota on ollu joitai tilanteita missä ois ollu ihan*
>> *et asiakkaalta vaik tulee joku dokumentti*
>> *tai sitte on sähköpostikeskustelu tai joku*
>> *ois ollu ehkä kiva et ei ois tarvinu tukeutuu siihen et joku saksaa osaava kaveri kääntää*
>>
>> *yes it [studying German] is quite useful and also from my personal enthusiasm*
>> *but I have also noticed at work*
>> *because we have quite a lot of Germans or customers from Central Europe and so on*
>> *so there have been some situations where it would have been quite*
>> *so you get a document from the customer*
>> *or there is an email exchange or something*
>> *it would have perhaps been nice if you wouldn't have had to resort to having someone who  knows German translate it*

Harri, after having experienced concrete situations at work, is able to explain the actual usefulness of German: At work, for example when reading a document or an email, it would be nicer if you knew German yourself compared to asking for another colleague's help in translation. This demonstrates that with additional languages, one is more capable of handling work situations. Harri had a colleague to turn to, but such a resource is obviously not always available. In his talk, Harri speaks from the point of view of the local scale of the workplace, which he uses as an explanation for the need for languages. German is mentioned also by Matti (P11), who explains how it would have been of use many times, and the same applies to French. Matti had several years of working experience

in an engineering company. I asked him what other languages (besides English) he had studied and this is what he responded:

Matti:   *no ruotsia oon opiskellu*
Tiina:   *mikäs rooli sillä sitten on*
Matti:   *ei oo tarvetta ollu koskaan,*
          *mulla on ollu projektei ruotsiinki ja kaikki ollu englanniks,*
          *itse asias mulla on kollegoita jotka puhuu hyvin ruotsii niin*
          *ne on sanonu että jos puhut ruotsiin ruotsii niin ne vaihtaa*
          *englanniksi*
          *että ei ne haluu puhuu ruotsii,*
          *se on hukkaan heitettyy aikaa meille periaatteessa opettaa*
          *kaikille ruotsii*
          *saksalle ois ollu käyttöö kyllä monesti*
          *se on semmonen minkä oon pannu tässä merkille että saksa ja*
          *jopa ranska ois ollu*
Matti:   *well I've studied Swedish*
Tiina:   *what kind of a role has it had*
Matti:   *never needed it*
          *I've even had projects in Sweden and all of them have been in*
          *English*
          *in fact I have colleagues who speak good Swedish and they've told*
          *me that if you speak Swedish to Sweden they switch to English*
          *that they don't want to speak Swedish*
          *it is a waste of time for us basically that everyone is taught*
          *Swedish*
          *German would have been of use many times though*
          *it's something I've paid attention to that German and even*
          *French would have been*

Matti is rather strong in his manifestation of his opinion regarding the values of languages. First of all, he says how he has never needed Swedish and provides an example from work: He says how he has heard from his Swedish-speaking colleagues that their Swedish colleagues had switched to English and that they do not want to speak Swedish with them. Matti even says that teaching, and by implication also learning, Swedish is a 'waste of time' (*hukkaan heitettyy aikaa*). According to him, better value for the time would be gained by learning languages that

matter and are of use, that is, German and French. Matti thus explicitly ascribes values to German and French but not to Swedish, which is a compulsory subject for Finnish school children due to its status as a national language in Finland. Matti's interview points to the timescale of the past when he had learnt Swedish in basic education, as well as the local scale of the workplace where he has not needed Swedish but where he has noticed (*semmonen minkä oon pannu tässä merkille*, 'something I've paid attention to') the usefulness of other languages. Both Harri's and Matti's talk indicates the importance of the workplace and experiences therein in terms of determining the need for additional languages.

### 3.5.4    Tensions in Discourses of Profit

Although all the participants saw the investment in additional languages as worthwhile and as something that will enable them to be part of the global work community and participate in various working life situations, their talk reflected tensions in the profit discourses. As all the interviewees were students of engineering, their primary education was technology-focused and education in languages was secondary from the point of view of their degree. English was an exception to this as it enjoyed a special role in their lives: Their education was fully or partly in English, they used English in their free time, and all of them also used English at work. The status and role of additional languages varied between the participants, although similar tendencies could be identified, as discussed in the earlier sections. Despite many participants' interest in investing in additional languages, the structural conditions of their education and the fact that most of their degree credits had to be earned in technology-focused subjects and courses meant that the students have had to withdraw from additional language education in order to expand their field-specific expertise. Profit is seen elsewhere than in language learning.

The following examples illustrate the challenges faced when attempting to invest in additional language learning. This is how Pinja (P6) explains the situation:

Tiina:    *entäs sitte ooksä opiskellu muita kieliä*
Pinja:    *no ruotsin tietysti ja sit vähän venäjää niinku yhen kurssin lukiossa et ne aakkoset oppi*
          *ja näin,*

> *seki oli ihan mukavaa mut siinä vaiheessa ois tullu niin*
> *hirveesti kursseja lukioon et piti vaan karsia jotain pois*
> *niin ja keskittyy just näihin luonnontieteellisiin*

Tiina: *so have you studied other languages*

Pinja: *well Swedish of course and then a little bit of Russian like one*
*course in high school so that I learnt the alphabet and so on,*
*it was quite nice too but at that point I would have had so many*
*courses in high school that I just had to cut something*
*yeah and focus on these natural sciences*

Pointing to her past studies in high school, Pinja explicitly mentions how she has enjoyed learning an additional language—Russian—but then juxtaposes her enjoyment with the structural constraints: Due to the large number of courses in high school she would have had with additional language learning courses, she had to 'cut something' (*piti vaan karsia jotain pois*). This cut meant not learning any more Russian but instead focusing on natural sciences, which she began to study at university later on. Pinja's interview demonstrates that despite individual aspirations, the system is designed in a way that there is no room for learning additional languages especially if you are going to specialise in natural sciences.

Another example comes from Anita (P9), who not only mentions the lack of time for language studies but also introduces yet another structural problem:

Tiina: *onko sulla sitte käyny mielessä että ois pitäny opiskella vaikka*
*aikasemmin jotain muuta kieltä [--] oisko sitä aikaa ollu joskus*
*mutta ei oo vaan tullu sitte*
*että onko sellasta käyny mielessä*

Anita: *no ei oo oikeestaan että ei mulla silleen oo ollu aikaa,*
*sillon ehkä ku täällä alotti niin sillon ois ehkä kiinnostanu lukee*
*kieliä enemmän mut sillon oli tosi hankala mahtuu mukaan*
*mihinkään niistä*

Tiina: *so has it crossed your mind that you perhaps should have studied*
*another language earlier [---] would you have had the time*
*sometimes but you just haven't has anything like this occurred*
*to you*

Anita: *well not exactly since I sort of haven't had the time,*

> *perhaps when I started (studying) here I perhaps was interested*
> *in studying languages more*
> *but it was really difficult to get into any of them*

In my question I specifically ask Anita to reflect on her choices and whether she has ever reconsidered her past choices in terms of language studies. The temporal scale is clearly introduced by the interviewer, who also leads the interviewee to reflect on her choices. Anita provides a negative answer and then reflects on the beginning of her studies at the university when she had some interest in studying languages more, but had encountered a problem of 'not getting in' (*oli tosi hankala mahtuu mihinkään niistä*). Although it is not exactly clear what she refers to here, she seems to point to the limited size of language groups meaning that not everyone is accepted into those groups. Hence, despite an individual's interest, the institutional scale intervenes with individual investment and prevents them from expanding their repertoire by means of additional language learning. Anita does not mention any specific language here. Olavi, on the other hand, mentions the Chinese language when he discusses the possibility to study additional languages:

Tiina:   *eli minkä verran sä ehdit sitä kiinaa*
Olavi:   *no hyvin vähän,*
         *että en väittäis että osaan kiinaa*
         *mutta kuitenki sen verran että tajuan miten se kieli toimii*
Tiina:   *haluaisiksä opiskella sitä vielä*
Olavi:   *ehkä joskus,*
         *tässä vaan tulee ajankäyttö taas vastaan että mistä on oikeesti*
         *hyötyä itelle*
Tiina:   *so how much have you studied Chinese*
Olavi:   *well very little,*
         *I wouldn't say I know Chinese*
         *but at least that I know how the language works*
Tiina:   *would you like to study it more*
Olavi:   *maybe at some point,*
         *it's just the use of time again and what is actually useful for*
         *myself*

Olavi starts to describe his Chinese studies with negation: When asked how much he had studied Chinese, Olavi answers 'very little' (*no hyvin vähän*) and adds that 'I wouldn't say I know Chinese' (*en väittäis että osaan kiinaa*). After this, he shifts his stance with 'but' and says 'at least enough to know how the language works' (*kuitenki sen verran että tajuan miten se kieli toimii*). I then ask him whether he would like to study Chinese more. His answer ('maybe at some point', *ehkä joskus*) implies that there is a possibility sometime in the future to study the language. After this, Olavi again makes a shift in this stance: The word choice *tässä vaan* ('it's just') indicates this shift, and it is followed by an explanation of time constraints in terms of doing something that is useful for oneself. By implication, this points to Olavi's own decisions on what to choose and what not to choose. All of these are related to the timescale of the future and Olavi's aspirations and what is eventually beneficial for oneself. Olavi thus mentions investment possibilities which, when juxtaposed with the usefulness discourse (what is useful for myself), seem more hypothetical. The temporal scale is clearly mentioned here (use of time), which interestingly is entangled with the idea of usefulness and profit: the *use* of time. Hence, time is critical and determines what kinds of investment choices to make. These are the ways in which discourses of profit emerge in Olavi's interview. Additional languages are not seen as valuable enough for one's investment. There thus seems to be tension between the restrictions of time and the value of one's investments.

One of the explicit interview themes was plans for the future. When participants were asked about their future plans and how they envisioned the role of languages in their future, all of them mentioned that both Finnish and English will have a major role especially in their working life in various forms: speaking with colleagues and customers, reading and writing documents, and using different applications and software. Other languages were also mentioned: For example, if there is a work trip to Spain, Spanish will be needed, or if a longer job opportunity arises in China, the need for the Chinese language will become evident. Although many participants mentioned the lack of time available for language studies, some of them developed their language competences in their free time for example by studying German, Spanish, or French via the Duolingo application or by reading in the specific language while taking a bus. These practical examples demonstrate some of the participants' personal interest towards languages and their concrete investment efforts in language study during their free time.

## 3.6    Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter has examined discourses of investment in additional language learning in Finland among 18 students of higher education. The multi-scalar discourse analysis of interview data resulted in the emergence of three main discourses: language learning as pleasure/enjoyment, language learning as a struggle, and language learning as an instrument to gain profit where various types of spatial and temporal scales circulated. On the spatial scale, local, institutional, and transnational scales could be identified as connected to the discourses, while on the temporal scale, the participants' talk pointed towards the past, the present, and the future. When the participants talked about their past and their early days of schooling, they referred to the investment in additional language learning that they had made by themselves (e.g., Olavi) and that were influenced by other people (family members; friends in the case of Aatos, Pekka, and Aimo for example). On the timescale of the more recent past, namely high school and current studies at the university, the discourse of profit emerged more specifically, as did the need to make selections on the basis of the usefulness of additional languages for example at work and on the basis of time constraints. Olavi's answer shows explicitly how the scale of time was entangled with the discourse of profit: Time should be used wisely to gain the most profit from one's investment.

The interviews showed different discourses at play at the same time as well as tensions between them: On the one hand, a student may enjoy language learning in its own right and have a personal aspiration for it, while on the other hand, they may struggle in their learning efforts and view their skills in negative terms (not being good at it, not having done well at it, not knowing the language) while simultaneously seeing the benefits and profits to be gained from their investment. The investment in additional language learning is hence a multifaceted phenomenon which should be understood in relation to various scales and where the analysis of individuals' own accounts and their reflections of their past, present, and future aspirations becomes important (see also Iikkanen, 2019).

The findings of this study resonate with those found in earlier research and provide in-depth, individual perspectives to the topic of investment in additional language learning. The challenges in additional language learning across various levels of education are clear, and many students in Finland are not able to choose an additional, optional language even if they wanted to (see also Kangasvieri, 2022). As also highlighted in Kiehelä

and Veivo's (2020) study, the main reason for this is structural: High school students specifically simply do not have the time to study languages because the curriculum forces them to study many other subjects as well. Based on the present study, the same pattern seems to persist in higher education. Notably, as shown in the present study, the value ascribed to natural sciences in high school and later on to technology and engineering-focused subjects and courses in engineering fields, is a major hindrance to individuals' abilities to invest their time and effort in additional language learning. One solution that some students have found is to invest in language learning during their free time, using language learning phone applications that allow them to engage in learning for example during their trips to school, work, or hobbies. This may be one solution to expand one's repertoire, but more policy-level measures are needed to foster the development of the language reservoir of Finns.

This chapter on individuals' experiences of additional language learning in different educational levels has provided discourse analytic insights into how individuals encounter foreign languages in Finland through formal education and how they describe their investment in language learning. The investment in additional language learning has presented itself as a multiscalar phenomenon: Investment choices are made on various temporal and spatial levels. The study has shown the importance of pupils' and engineering students' contacts with other people, family, friends, acquaintances, and colleagues in their investment efforts and aspirations in additional language learning in particular. Overall, the participating engineering students had multicultural contacts and they saw the value of foreign languages. However, despite the aspirations to study and learn languages, reality sets constraints that are structural and temporal. Also, due to the fact that English works as a shared language, there fails to be a real need to study additional languages. Although there are national-level calls for the development of the language reservoir of Finns (see Pyykkö, 2017) and educational renewals have lately been implemented, there should be more support for individuals' language learning efforts (see also Kiehelä & Veivo, 2020). Individuals are now subject to structural constraints, and they need to navigate amidst the tension between discourses of profit and pleasure (see also Singleton & Záborská, 2020) and amidst imagining the profit gained by investing in languages compared to investing in technology-focused subjects that seem to be more supported by the educational systems. The local community, especially parents, families, and friends, has a crucial role in encouraging initial

efforts in language learning and in helping pupils and students keep up in their language studies despite their struggles.

Although this study has been able to demonstrate how individuals describe their investment opportunities and aspirations for additional foreign language learning, it has its limitations. Due to its focus on students of higher education in engineering fields only, the findings cannot be seen to reflect a popular opinion. Nevertheless, with its focus on individuals' stories of their language learning histories and future endeavours, this chapter has provided insights into the discursive construction of additional language learning in Finland and how different discourses related to languages reflect, reinforce, and (re)create the context for linguistic encounters in the Far North where neoliberal values and logic permeate language learning practices and individual motivations. While the future is unpredictable, it is hoped that future children, students, and professionals could see themselves as multilingual also in terms of their additional language competence.

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# The Effects of the Beginning of University Studies on the Language Revitalisation of Skolt Saami as Seen from the Perspective of Students and the Language Community

*Marjatta Jomppanen*

## 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine how the beginning of university studies has affected the language revitalisation efforts of Skolt Saami from the perspective of both students and the language community. Skolt Saami is one of the three Saami languages spoken in Finland, along with Aanaar Saami and North Saami; for a general introduction to the Saami languages and their relation to Finnish, see the introductory chapter of this volume. Today, the majority of Skolt Saami native speakers (ca. 300) live in Finland, some 20–30 speakers in Russia, and only a few in Norway (Kolttakulttuurikeskus, n.d.; Koponen et al., 2022, p. 196). In addition to North Saami and Aanaar Saami, Skolt Saami is one of the official Saami

M. Jomppanen (✉)
Faculty of Humanities, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland
e-mail: marjatta.jomppanen@oulu.fi

languages in the municipality of Inari in Finland. After World War II, speakers of Skolt Saami were resettled from the Soviet Union to Finland from an area which was a part of Finland for 24 years (1920–1944) but was lost to the Soviet Union in the war. The Skolt Saami have maintained their traditional Orthodox religion with close ties to Russian Orthodox traditions, whereas the other Saami groups in Finland are mainly Lutheran (Koponen et al., 2022, p. 196).

Since the year 2020, the status of the language has been equal to that of North Saami and Aanaar Saami, if measured by the availability of university-level education. At the University of Oulu, it has been possible to study North Saami as a major subject since 1980, Aanaar Saami since 2011, and Skolt Saami since 2020.

I approach the research topic from the perspective of *reversing language shift*, which refers to a situation in which, due to various active measures, a language shift from a minority language to a majority language is successfully halted or decelerated. This process has been conceptualised, for example, as a *positive language shift* or as *language revitalisation*. My primary focus will be on a situation in which a minority language acquires the status of a language taught as a major subject at university. In addition, I aim to find out whether and how the rise in the prestige of the Skolt Saami language is seen in the everyday life of students after their studies.

The research data consists of semi-structured interviews with students of Skolt Saami at the University of Oulu. The interviews are based on a questionnaire (see Appendix 4.1). Although Skolt Saami acquired the status of a major subject in 2020, it has already been possible to study the language with a non-degree study right since January 2015. Basic studies were offered at first, and intermediate studies followed a year later. The purpose of this study is to first review the current situation of the Skolt Saami language and then to answer the following questions based on the student interviews:

- Has the students' own language background influenced their decision to begin the studies?
- What kinds of expectations did students of Skolt Saami have about studying the language?
- How have these expectations been met?
- How and where do students of Skolt Saami use the language after their studies?

Plans to start the Skolt Saami studies at the University of Oulu were long in preparation. For the purposes of language revitalisation, it is important to increase the number of speakers and to conduct timely research on Skolt Saami. The Saami languages spoken in Finland involve a great deal of legislation and rights that are different in a certain restricted area in Lapland than elsewhere in the country. Because of this, I will start by discussing some relevant background information in the first subsection, including some laws and regulations that affect the status of the Saami languages in Finland.

The topics of this study and their order of presentation are as follows: At first, in Sect. 4.2, I explain the linguistic rights associated with the Saami languages in Finland. Linguistic rights are also linked to the question of who is considered to be a Saami. In Sect. 4.3, I discuss the legal definition of a Saami. In the next sections, I focus on the Skolt Saami language, at first by discussing how it became a visible language (Sect. 4.4) and then by examining the language path of Skolt Saami in terms of opportunities for learning the language (Sect. 4.5). In Sect. 4.6, I discuss the terms *reversing language shift* and *ideological clarification*. The next two Sects. 4.7 and 4.8 focus on the university studies of Skolt Saami and the student interviews. The final Sect. 4.9 presents a summary and discussion of the findings of this study.

### 4.1.1   *Position of the Researcher*

I have been following the beginning of the university studies of Skolt Saami through my work. I am a university lecturer in North Saami at the University of Oulu. In addition, I have acted as a contact person and tutor teacher for the students of Skolt Saami. Like some of the informants of this study, I began school in Lapland during a time when the Saami languages were not taught at school. I have learnt North Saami, the native language of my father and his family, as an adult at the University of Oulu.

## 4.2   Linguistic Rights of the Saami Languages in Finland

In Finland, the status and prestige of the Saami languages have been influenced, in addition to the government's assimilation policy, by, for example, the church, the evacuation period during the Lapland War, the

school, and the dormitory system. While some of the bishops and ministers serving in the Saami-speaking regions valued the Saami language, others were indifferent to it. During the Lapland War of 1944–1945, the Saami were evacuated mostly to the Ostrobothnia region, to a Finnish-speaking environment (Lehtola, 2012, pp. 370–380). When elementary schools with in-school dormitories were built in the Saami region (from 1921 onwards), the schoolchildren were placed in a Finnish-speaking environment and had to change their language from Saami to Finnish, because most teachers could not speak Saami. In some cases, it was even forbidden to speak Saami (Lehtola, 2012, pp. 280–297).

Early childhood education and comprehensive education in the Saami languages offered in the Saami homeland are governed by many laws and regulations. The status of the Saami languages is more secure in the Saami homeland than elsewhere in Finland. The Saami homeland covers the municipalities of Inari (*Aanaar*), Utsjoki (*Ohcejohka*), and Enontekiö (*Eanodat*) as well as the northern areas of the municipality of Sodankylä (*Soađegilli*), effectively the village of Vuotso (*Vuohčču*) (Fig. 4.1). However, a large and constantly growing number of Saami live outside the homeland: 38% in 1992 and 65%—already more than half—in 2011 (Saamelaiskäräjät/Sámediggi, n.d.a). Approximately 70% of Saami children live outside the homeland (Suurpää, 2010, p. 116).

The laws and regulations concerning Saami languages are closely connected to a Saami ethnic background when it comes to early childhood education and the teaching of Saami languages in schools outside the Saami homeland. In Finland, the linguistic rights of the Saami as an indigenous people are divided in nature, because they are realised differently depending on whether one lives in the Saami homeland or outside of it. This is the case, even though the United Nation's declaration, article 14, clearly states:

> *States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, **particularly children, including those living outside their communities**, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.* (The UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples)
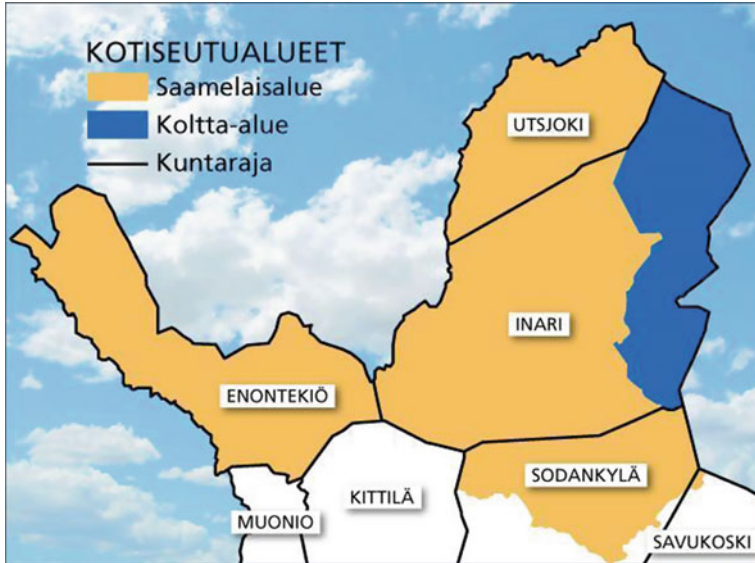
**Fig. 4.1** A map of the Saami homeland, depicting the Saami region (*Saame-laisalue*) and the Skolt region (*Koltta-alue*) within it, and the municipal borders of the area (*Kuntaraja*) (*Source* Saamelaiskäräjät/Sámediggi, n.d.b)

With respect to Finnish legislation concerning education, the Act on Early Childhood Education and Care (Varhaiskasvatuslaki, 13.7.2018/ 540) is the only one that is the same for all children. This act ensures the right of a child whose native language is Saami to daycare services both in the Saami homeland and outside of it (Varhaiskasvatuslaki, 13.7.2018/ 540 § 8). This means that if Saami has been registered as a child's native language, the child is entitled to daycare in the Saami language in any part of Finland. It has been possible since 1994 to officially declare Saami as one's native language (Arola, 2014, p. 3). However, when a child reaches school age and wants to be taught in Saami or learn Saami at school, the situation changes dramatically. In the Saami homeland, the Saami have constitutional self-government in matters pertaining to their language and culture (Laki saamelaiskäräjistä, 974/1995 § 1). This means that, in accordance with the Basic Education Act, Saami-speaking pupils are enti-tled to have most of their compulsory education in the Saami language. In practice, Saami can be the language of instruction at a school, or it

can be taught as a separate subject, either as a mother tongue or as an optional foreign language. But when a school-age child lives outside the Saami homeland, they are entitled to Saami language education only for two hours per week, similar to a child with an immigrant background. However, the Saami language cannot be considered to be in an equal position with immigrant languages, because only very few languages are endangered in their native countries in the same way the Saami languages are (Aikio-Puoskari, 2009, p. 38).

Because most Saami children live outside the Saami homeland, it was suggested that teaching Saami languages remotely could be one solution for reaching these children and getting them involved in learning Saami. In 2015, the Ministry of Education and Culture started looking into this possibility (Aikio-Puoskari, 2016, p. 69). This work resulted in a distance learning project that offers distance education in Aanaar Saami, Skolt Saami, and North Saami for those pupils in comprehensive and general upper secondary schools who are Saami but live outside the homeland. The distance learning project runs from 1 August 2018 to 31 August 2023. In 2018, 53 pupils started in the project, and 16 of them began learning Skolt Saami (Saamen kielten etäopetushanke, n.d.).

## 4.3    Who Is a Saami?

As discussed above, certain linguistic rights are closely connected to a person's Saami ethnic background. This is reflected in the current, legal definition of a Saami. In Finland, the criteria for defining who is a Saami are stated in the Act on the Sámi Parliament (Laki saamelaiskäräjistä, 17.7.1995/974 § 3), and they are as follows:

> *Section 3—Definition of a Sámi*
> *For the purpose of this Act, a Sámi means a person who considers himself a Sámi, provided*:
>
> (1) *That he himself or at least one of his parents or grandparents has learnt Sámi as his first language;*
> (2) *That he is a descendent of a person who has been entered in a land, taxation, or population register as a mountain, forest, or fishing Lapp; or*
> (3) *That at least one of his parents has or could have been registered as an elector for an election to the Sámi Delegation or the Sámi Parliament.*

This definition is broad and has caused disputes over, for example, who has the right to be listed in the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament. Only the Saami have the right to vote in the Sámi Parliament elections. The Sámi Parliament (*Sámediggi*), legislated in 1996, is the representative self-government body of the Saami (Saamelaiskäräjät/Sámediggi, n.d.b). Researchers maintain that the broad definition of a Saami violates people's legal safety and causes disputes. In cases of dispute, the Supreme Administrative Court has had to settle in the end who is a Saami and who is not. Researchers have also observed that the judicial decisions made by the court do not appear to be based on any consistent principles (Heikkinen, 2017). It has been proposed that the definition of a Saami should be modified, and a committee has been preparing an amendment to the Act on the Sámi Parliament to this effect. The progress of the amendment to the Act on the Sámi Parliament can be followed on the webpages of the Ministry of Justice (Oikeusministeriö, n.d.a).

Outside the Saami homeland, the availability of Saami language education at the comprehensive level is closely connected to ethnicity. This is another reason why it would be desirable to reach a common agreement on the definition of who is a Saami.

## 4.4   How Skolt Saami Became a Visible Language

The majority of Skolt Saami speakers live in the eastern regions of the municipality of Inari, on the shores of Lake Inari (Fig. 4.1). Together with Aanaar Saami, Kildin Saami, and Ter Saami, Skolt Saami belongs to the eastern group of the Saami branch of the Finno-Ugric (Uralic) languages. After World War II, during 1949–1952, most of the Skolt Saami community was resettled from the Soviet Union (present-day Russia) to northern parts of Finland, to the villages of Nellim, Keväjärvi, and Sevettijärvi. Some were also resettled in Norway and Russia (Lehtola, 1994, pp. 170–188).

The year 1972 was significant for the Skolt Saami language. The regional radio in Lapland made a decision to start regular broadcasts in Skolt Saami, and the language began to be taught at school in Sevettijärvi. Moreover, systematic work began for developing a literary language of Skolt Saami. For a long time, it had existed only as a spoken language. It was decided that the literary language would be based on a dialect spoken in Suonikylä, because the majority of the Skolt Saami who were resettled in Finland had lived in that area. In 1973, a guide on Skolt

Saami orthography was published. Sevettijärvi has remained the centre for teaching Skolt Saami from the year 1972 to this day. The school has been in danger of being closed down like many small village schools in Finland. Two other schools that offered teaching in Skolt Saami were closed down in the villages of Nellim and Akujärvi. The Sevettijärvi school was saved, because without it, the nearest cluster of schools in Inari would have been too far away, at a distance of more than 100 km. It would not have been possible for the school pupils to travel such a distance on a daily basis or to have them live in dormitories, as was the case only a few decades ago because of poor road connections. A road to Sevettijärvi was built in the 1970s (Kolttakulttuurikeskus, n.d.; Lehtola, 1997, p. 44; Moshnikoff, 2006; Pasanen, 2015, p. 148; Sarjas, 2010; Semenoja, 1995, p. 83).

In 1992, Skolt Saami acquired an official language status in the Saami homeland together with North Saami and Aanaar Saami. A law was enacted on the use of the Saami languages before the authorities (Pasanen, 2015, p. 148). This was later followed by the Sámi Language Act of 2003, which contains provisions on the right of the Saami to use their own language before the courts and other public authorities, as well as on the duty of the authorities to enforce and promote the linguistic rights of the Saami (Saamen kielilaki, 2003). The Skolt Saami are traditionally Orthodox Christians, which is why the Orthodox Church of Finland wants Skolt Saami to be the working language of its most northern parish. Founded at the beginning of 2022, the new parish, the Orthodox Parish of North Finland, expects its officials (the priest and cantor) to know Skolt Saami. If a person applying to these positions lacks the necessary skills in Skolt Saami, they are offered an opportunity to study the language (Gauriloff, 2021).

## 4.5   The Language Path of Skolt Saami

In 1993, a language nest was opened in Sevettijärvi. A language nest is a daycare service for children under school age who have no opportunity to learn Saami at home. The language nest operates on the basic principle that the children learn a language through a language immersion method while receiving care, which means learning a language through everyday activities and communication. The language to be learnt is a minority language and is spoken to the children right from the beginning. The staff of the language nest can also speak the children's first language, which the children themselves are allowed to speak freely. The main goal of

the language nest is to pass on an endangered minority language to the next generation because it cannot be passed on sufficiently or at all in the home. This is why a child should spend as much time as possible in the language nest, at least seven hours a day each weekday (Pasanen, 2015, pp. 204–205). More information on early childhood education in the Saami languages and on language nest pedagogy can be found in the doctoral dissertation by Äärelä (2016).

In 2020, there were two Skolt Saami language nests in Finland. One of them, Kuuskõõzz, operates in Sevettijärvi in the Skolt Saami homeland area and the other, Pe′sser, in Ivalo, the largest village in the municipality of Inari. In June 2018, the language nest in Ivalo celebrated its 10th anniversary. During these years, the language nest has brought up 30 new Skolt Saami speakers (Wesslin, 2018). More information on the language nest in Ivalo can be found in the master's thesis by Laihi (2017). The language nest in Sevettijärvi accepts children whose parents (both or one of them) belong to a language minority or an indigenous people. At least one of them must speak Saami as a native language or have a Saami ethnic background. The language nest in Ivalo offers municipal, early childhood education and care in the Skolt Saami language. Their webpage does not mention specific application criteria (Inarin kunta, n.d.).

In the school year 2020–2021, the Sevettijärvi school had altogether 23 pupils in preschool and in lower and upper levels of comprehensive school (J. Nieminen, personal communication, 7 October 2020). In the Sevettijärvi school, Skolt Saami is taught as a mother tongue subject, while other subjects are taught in Finnish. In addition, the school provides distance education in Skolt Saami on the comprehensive level to the Inari and Ivalo schools (M. Porsanger, personal communication, 14 October 2020). It can be observed that the situation of the Skolt Saami language has taken a radical turn for the better during the last ten years or so. In 2006, the youngest native speaker of Skolt Saami was over 30 years old. In that same year, there were only a few children under school age in Sevettijärvi (Moshnikoff & Moshnikoff, 2006).

In addition to the comprehensive level, Skolt Saami can also be studied in the general upper secondary school (in Finnish *lukio*). In the matriculation examination, the candidate can take a test in Skolt Saami either as a foreign language exam or as a mother tongue exam. In 2005, three candidates took the foreign language exam in Skolt Saami for the first time (T. Sanila-Aikio, personal communication, 9 February 2021). Since the spring of 2012, it has been possible to take a mother tongue exam

in Skolt Saami, and in the first year, one student took this exam (Saijets, 2012).

Skolt Saami can also be studied in the municipality of Inari in the Sámi Education Institute (*Saamelaisalueen koulutuskeskus*, SAKK), which is a post-secondary-level college that provides vocational education. The educational programmes centre around Saami handicrafts, reindeer herding, and Saami languages spoken in Finland. A study programme on Skolt Saami language and culture, which takes one academic year to complete, started in 2012. Since then, the programme has been organised every academic year, with the exception of 2015–2016 and 2019–2020. (R. Jomppanen, personal communication, 23 March 2021.)

## 4.6   Reversing Language Shift

I approach the research topic from the perspective of *reversing language shift* (RLS), through the theoretical concept of *ideological clarification*. In his monograph, Joshua A. Fishman (1991) examines reversing language shift from the point of view of national and minority languages. An example of a national language is Irish in Ireland, which is, in addition to English, an official language in the country (Fishman, 1991). Reversing language shift, however, is most typically referred to in connection with a minority language of a country and often also with the language of an indigenous people. Reversing language shift requires active measures in order for the shift from a minority language to a majority language to end or decelerate. Ideological clarification requires that the attitudes of a language community towards the language being revived are positive. Moreover, the language users need to acknowledge their own responsibility for the language and take an active role in the process of language revitalisation (Pasanen, 2015, p. 46).

Ideological clarification is part of the larger theoretical concept of *linguistic culture*. It involves, among other things, the social and regional-historical circumstances in which the language has been and is being used, the language community's own attitudes towards the language, and the stereotypes, customs, values, beliefs, and myths associated with it. The concept of linguistic culture also contains *language ideologies*, such as the values, beliefs, and feelings towards the language (Pasanen et al., 2022, p. 78; Pasanen, 2015, pp. 43–46). Language ideologies are not permanent but, rather, change and transform at different times (see, e.g., Mäntynen et al., 2012, p. 337; Pietikäinen, 2012, p. 412).

Paul V. Kroskrity (2009) emphasises the fact that in language revitalisation efforts, ideological clarification is just as important as linguistic documentation such as grammar books, dictionaries, and the pedagogics of language revitalisation. One must identify and solve any ideological conflicts that may hinder local efforts at language revitalisation. Revitalisation is connected not only with the language community but also with the authorities. In order for ideological clarification to succeed, it is important to be aware of possible challenges beforehand rather than only after the fact. Kroskrity's team ran into a conflict with the Western Mono language community while preparing a dictionary of the language. The Mono language is spoken in a few towns in Central California. The Western Mono community has 1,500 members, with approximately 200 members who have some knowledge of the language and 40 members who speak the language fluently. While the oldest speakers were of the opinion that the language cannot be written at all, middle-aged speakers disagreed with the dictionary writers on how the language should be written. Eventually, a solution was found through a series of compromises (Kroskrity, 2009, pp. 71–73, 77–78, 80).

Mastering a language enhances positive feelings towards that language. Torkel Rasmussen (2014) has studied the language situation of North Saami in the river valley of Deatnu (Tenojoki) in Norway and Finland. In the interviews, the young interviewees reported that the better the command they had of the language, the more they liked listening to it. They supposed that they would speak Saami also in the future. However, it is possible to value a language even without knowing that language, as was shown by the interviews of the young people's parents. They all wanted their children to learn North Saami, regardless of whether or not they knew the language themselves (Rasmussen, 2014, pp. 271, 277).

A completely opposite view was expressed in a Kven-speaking community. The Kvens are people who emigrated from Finland to northern Norway in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The parents reported that they wanted what was best for their children and, for this reason, did not speak Kven, their own native language, to the children. They felt that it was in their child's best interest in school and later in life to master the majority language well. The parents spoke Kven as their native language and lived in northern Norway in a small community in which Kven is a minority language and Norwegian is the majority language (Räisänen, 2014, pp. 97, 105). The situation was the same in Finland among parents of North Saami and Aanaar Saami speakers (Pasanen et al., 2022, p. 72).

The revitalisation of Aanaar Saami is a good examples of successful measures taken for reviving a language. The number of speakers has kept increasing since the 1990 because of active language revitalisation efforts (Pasanen, 2015; Olthuis et al., 2013). An Aanaar Saami language nest was opened in 1997, at which time there were no children under school age who would have spoken Aanaar Saami as their mother tongue. This was later followed by a situation in which there were children who spoke Aanaar Saami but no adults who could speak the language, so that it was difficult, for example, to find teachers. To help the situation, a one-year-long complementary education programme in Aanaar Saami was developed for the 2009–2010 academic year. The programme was organised by the Giellagas Institute of the University of Oulu and the Sámi Education Institute in Inari, and it targeted adults in working life, who were not required to have a Saami ethnic background. The students came from heterogeneous backgrounds: Many had no previous knowledge of Aanaar Saami, but there were a few students who had learnt Saami as their first language in their childhood home but had since forgotten it. Almost all of the 17 students who participated in the study programme (two students excepted) were using Aanaar Saami in their work in 2014 (Pasanen, 2015, pp. 119, 133, 137; Olthuis et al., 2013). It can be said that the goals set for the course were accomplished extremely well. The positive attitude of the native speakers towards new language learners has further contributed to the revitalisation of Aanaar Saami. Matti Morottaja has a long history of engaging in active language work, such as teaching and writing textbooks. His motto is: *It is better to speak a language poorly than to be silent* (Morottaja, 2007). More information on the revitalisation of the Saami languages spoken in Finland can be found, for example, in Sarivaara et al. (2019), Pasanen (2015), Rasmussen (2014), Olthuis et al. (2013), Olthuis (2017), Lindgren (2000), Aikio-Puoskari (2007), Aikio-Puoskari and Skutnabb-Kangas (2007), Äärelä (2016), Huss (1999), and Aikio (1988, 1994).

## 4.7   Skolt Saami Studies
## at the University of Oulu

At the University of Oulu, basic studies of Skolt Saami started at the beginning of 2015 for the first time. This was also reported on the Saami radio news (Holopainen, 2014). A criterion for applying to the studies was that the applicant should have Skolt Saami language skills. They

should either have mastered the basics of written Skolt Saami (reading and writing) or have native-like skills in spoken Skolt Saami (speaking and understanding the spoken language). There were 12 applicants, all of whom were accepted. They began their studies with a separate, non-degree study right. The lessons were planned in a way that also allowed students who were working to attend them on weeknights. The studies were organised online and therefore not tied to a specific location. The responsible teacher was Eino Koponen, acting professor of Saami languages, and Miika Lehtinen, a North Saami major, acted as an assistant teacher. Koponen has no family history in the use of Skolt Saami but has studied the language at the University of Helsinki. Lehtinen is also a native speaker of Finnish but has studied Skolt Saami at the Sámi Education Institute in Inari. In 2018, Lehtinen wrote the very first master's thesis in history in the Skolt Saami language.

In 2016, it was possible to continue after basic studies to intermediate studies of Skolt Saami. Eight students continued their studies. In 2017 and 2019, it was still only possible to apply to study Skolt Saami with a separate, non-degree study right. **In 2020**, however, Skolt Saami finally acquired the **status of a major subject**, that is, of studies that lead to an academic degree. The beginning of the major subject studies was reported on the national news of the Finnish Broadcasting Company, *Yle* (Wesslin, 2019). Thus, Skolt Saami complemented the Saami language degree studies at the University of Oulu, as the studies opened up the possibility to complete a degree in all three Saami languages spoken in Finland, namely, in Aanaar Saami, Skolt Saami, and North Saami. In 2020, in the first application of all time for major subject studies of Skolt Saami, four applicants applied, three of whom started their studies in the Skolt Saami bachelor's degree programme and one in the master's degree programme.

## 4.8   Interviews with Students of Skolt Saami

I sent an interview request via email to all of those 28 students who had applied to Skolt Saami studies during 2015–2020, and 15 of them agreed to be interviewed. It should be noted that not all applicants have started their studies. In addition to basic information such as date of birth, first language learnt, and so forth, I wanted to collect information on the students' reasons for applying to the Skolt Saami studies, on their time during their studies, and on their use of Skolt Saami after their studies.

Based on the date of birth, I was able to conclude whether the student had had a possibility to study Skolt Saami at school. With the question *What language did your grandparents speak to each other?*, I wanted to ascertain whether Skolt Saami was the language of the extended family, and, thus, I was able to map out the language background of the students.

Because the number of students (informants) is small, I refrain from profiling them in order to preserve anonymity. I make only one exception to this when I use numbers to identify the informants as I describe the language background of their grandparents. I do not give out specific details about the languages spoken by the grandparents on the father's or mother's side. If either one of the grandparents is a native speaker of Skolt Saami, I have reported this but without specifying which one is the native speaker. I have also left out information on the individual language backgrounds of the informants' parents and only report the language they speak to each other.

### 4.8.1    Basic Information on the Students

The informants are in many ways a heterogeneous group. Because university studies of Skolt Saami were offered for the first time, it is only natural that many people interested in the language seized the opportunity. They are of very different ages. I have divided the informants into age groups based on different decades: Five of them were born in the 1970s or earlier, six were born in the 1980s, and four in the 1990s. For some, Skolt Saami is the language of the extended family (Table 4.1). In four cases, one of the informant's grandparents on the mother's side was a native speaker of Skolt Saami, and in seven cases, one of the grandparents on the father's side. Five informants had grandparents with no language background in Skolt Saami. In two cases, the grandparents both on the mother's and father's side were native speakers of Skolt Saami, and Skolt Saami was also the language spoken in their homes. One of the informants also reported that their grandmother had not learnt Finnish. The grandmother had moved from the Soviet Union (present-day Russia) to Finland after World War II. Out of the cases in which the parents' common language at home was Finnish, five informants had still learnt Skolt Saami as their first language, four of them alongside Finnish. In these cases, Skolt Saami had been passed on to the informants over one generation, from their grandparents. In the case of informant number three, Skolt Saami was the native language of three consecutive generations, from grandparents

to the informant. In sum, it can be observed that for over half of the informants (9/15), Skolt Saami is the native language of the extended family, while for less than half of them (6/15), it is not.

Skolt Saami was not taught in schools until the 1970s, so only some of the informants had had the opportunity to learn the language at school. It was taught in the schools of Sevettijärvi, Akujärvi, and Nellim, of which the two latter ones have since been closed down (Semenoja, 1995, p. 83; Moshnikoff, 2006; Sarjas, 2010). According to an informant who went to school in Sevettijärvi, the language of instruction was mostly Finnish, with only some occasional subjects being taught in Skolt Saami. Fortunately, school is not the only place to learn a language. Five of the informants had studied Skolt Saami at school, seven had learnt the language at home or from their family, and three had learnt it from the village community. In practice, however, learning the language had not been tied to any one specific location but had taken place in many different, overlapping domains. As related by one informant, an interest in the language

**Table 4.1**  Language background of Skolt Saami students and their families

| Informant | Language used by grandparents | | Language used by parents | 1st language(s) learnt by informant |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mother's | Father's | | |
| 1 | F | S | F | S + F |
| 2 | F | S | F | F |
| 3 | S | S | S | S |
| 4 | F | F | F | F |
| 5 | E | E | E | E |
| 6 | F | F | F | F |
| 7 | S | S | S + F | S + F |
| 8 | AS | S | F | S + F |
| 9 | F | F | F | F |
| 10 | F | F | F | F |
| 11 | S | F | F | F |
| 12 | F | F | F | F |
| 13 | F | S | F | F |
| 14 | S | F | F | F |
| 15 | F | S | F | S + F |

S = Skolt Saami
F = Finnish
E = English
AS = Aanaar Saami

may develop, for example, through one's spouse. At first the informant had studied the language at home and, from there, their territory for language use had expanded outside the home to the village community. Four informants had studied the language at the Sámi Education Institute in Inari and one at the University of Helsinki. All informants who had started their Skolt Saami studies at the University of Oulu had known the language already before their studies.

When asked whether they knew other Saami languages, the informants' answers were very similar. Nearly all of them (13/15) knew, or at least understood, some North Saami. One informant said that North Saami was still their stronger language. For some, North Saami had been, or still was, the language spoken at home alongside Finnish. Three informants said that they had studied North Saami at school. A considerable number (10/15) of the informants knew or understood Aanaar Saami. One informant had learnt to understand Aanaar Saami because, in their village community, Skolt Saami, Aanaar Saami, and Finnish were all spoken and mixed together. One interviewee also knew the Kildin Saami language spoken in Russia. In the interviews it further came up that studying Skolt Saami had awakened an interest in the students also for other Saami languages spoken in Finland.

Understandably, North Saami is the language cited as the most widely spoken of all the Saami languages. For a long time, it was the only Saami language that could be heard on Finnish radio—for the first time already in 1947 (Lehtola, 1997). Traditionally, the Saami region has been a multilingual area in which people speak more than one Saami language (Lindgren, 2000, pp. 23–24; Olthuis & Seurujärvi-Kari, 2017). The inhabitants are used to moving across state borders to visit family and to engage in trading. The common language was usually North Saami. Earlier, trading was largely based on a barter economy, in which language skills were an asset. Trade items, for example, from Finland to Norway included reindeer meat, preserves, and handicrafts. These were traded for flour, salt, margarine, and sealskins.

### 4.8.2   *Studying Skolt Saami*

News on the beginning of the basic studies of Skolt Saami (in 2015) and of the major subject studies (in 2020) were reported in the local newspapers in northern Finland, on the website of Yle Sápmi news (https://yle. fi/sapmi), and on television and the radio. Moreover, the author of the

present study went to Inari and gave an information session to the Skolt Saami students at the Sámi Education Institute (SAKK). Seven informants had in fact received information about the studies through SAKK, in the information session, via email, or from the teachers of the institute. Other information channels were the local newspaper and seminars. The role of SAKK in Skolt Saami education has been, and still is, important. Eleven of the informants had studied the language in SAKK, either by completing the one-year programme or by taking individual courses.

To the question *What were your thoughts when you found out about the university studies of Skolt Saami?*, the answers were divided. If the informants did not have a Saami ethnic background, their answers were brief and matter-of-fact. However, if the informants had a Saami ethnic background, their answers conveyed a feeling that it was high time to have the studies because they allowed Skolt Saami to have an equal status with North Saami and Aanaar Saami. The news about the beginning of the studies also evoked some feelings that are nicely exemplified by the following answers.

> *Se oli onnellinen, lämmin tunne. Oli mahdollisuus syventää oppia ja syntyi toive, että kielenelvytys etenee.*
>
> 'It was a happy, warm feeling. It gave an opportunity to deepen my learning and raised a hope for the progress of language revitalisation.'
>
> *Totta kai on hieno asia, että nämä kaikki Suomen saamenkielet on niinku samalla viivalla. Ja sitten sekin että omaa äidinkieltä, mitä en äidinkielisenä puhu. Sitä jos pystyy opiskelemaan korkeimmalla asteella, antaa positiivista kuvaa siitä asiasta. On tarve selkeästi.*
>
> 'It's of course wonderful that all these Saami languages in Finland are, like, on an equal footing. And then the fact that [it is] my own native language which I don't speak as my first language. If it can be studied at the highest level, this contributes to a positive image about it. There's clearly a need for it.'

The opportunity to learn one's own native language as an adult was welcomed. The fact that the studies were organised as online lessons in the afternoons made it possible to attend them. One family had contemplated the continuity of Skolt Saami studies with respect to their children. Now that it was possible to even write a master's thesis in the language if one so wished, parents felt confident in having their children attend Skolt Saami language classes at school. This decision resulted in the family's mother wanting to learn the language to be able to support the

children in their language studies. From the point of view of language revitalisation, knowledge about the Skolt Saami university studies caused a chain reaction that touched more than one generation all at once. The students were motivated by the knowledge that Skolt Saami could be used within the family circle. In Rasmussen's (2014, pp. 271, 277) study, all parents wanted their children to learn Saami, even in those cases where the parents did not know the language themselves.

> *Aattelin että halusin nuihin hakkee, mulla oli aluksi se, että voisin olla siinä lasten kielen oppimisen tukena. Ajatus oli myös, että oppisin sen kielen niin hyvin että voitais vaihtaa kotikieli pikkuhiljaa saameksi.*
>
> 'My thought was that I wanted to apply to those [Skolt Saami university studies]. At first, it was so that I could be there to support the children in their learning [of Skolt Saami]. The idea was also that I would learn the language so well that we could, by and by, start speaking Saami instead of Finnish at home.'
>
> *Nyt kun ite on oppinut ja sisko on oppinut ja siskon poika jonkun verran, niin kyllä se isä sitä kannustaa puhumaan siskon pojalle ja keskenään. Sitä pidetään tärkeänä myös.*
>
> 'Now that I myself have learnt and my sister has learnt [Skolt Saami] and my nephew has learnt some, too, our father [whose first language is Skolt Saami] does encourage us to speak it to my nephew and between ourselves. It's also felt to be important.'

However, in addition to enthusiasm and positive feelings, the news about the studies also evoked some mixed feelings in the students. One informant living in the Saami homeland said that even the word *university* made them question whether they had what it takes to be a university student. This concern is very understandable, because the university has been a very distant institution, both mentally and physically, when looked at from the perspective of the Saami homeland. Few families have academically educated members, and the nearest university is many hundreds of kilometres away in the city of Rovaniemi. Another concern was who would teach Skolt Saami. It was known that no native Skolt Saami who knew the language was working as a university teacher in any of the universities in Finland. In other words, the teacher would be Finnish-speaking. On the one hand, students who were native speakers of Skolt Saami had misgivings about a Finnish-speaking teacher, and on the other hand, students who were native speakers of Finnish had doubts about their ability to cope with the students who were native speakers of Skolt

Saami. As mentioned earlier, the teacher was in fact Eino Koponen, a Finnish native speaker from Helsinki, because there were no teachers who would have spoken Skolt Saami as their native language. The informants' answers revealed that the students had doubts at the beginning of their studies.

> *Ajattelin vain ettei minusta ole yliopisto-opiskelijaksi.*
>
> *Sitten minä mietin, mitenhän siellä opettaja, mitenhän tää nyt menee kun ihan vaan suomalaissyntyisiä jotka siellä opettaa. Miten se kaikki tämmöinen tulisi toimimaan.*
>
> 'I just thought that I don't have what it takes to be a university student.
>
> Then I thought, how about the teacher there [at the university], how is this going to go when only native Finns teach there. How is all this going to work.'
>
> *Olisi ollut välillä opettaja, joka olisi ollut siinä. Mutta koltan kielessä ei ollut sellaisia. Oli siinä monta ongelmaa. Itkosen kirjasta alotettiin ja oli mielenkiintoista, että oppi lukemaan Itkosen kirjan.*
>
> 'If only there had been a [native-speaking] teacher there from time to time. But there were none in the Skolt Saami language. There were many problems there [at first]. We started from the book by Itkonen, and it was interesting to learn to read the book.'

### 4.8.3 Expectations About the University Studies and How These Were Met

I asked the informants about their expectations before starting their Skolt Saami studies and, also, whether the studies had been what they expected. The expectations were clearly different between those students for whom Skolt Saami was their native language or the family language (9/15) and those students who had no Skolt Saami background in their family (6/15). Some of the native-speaking students needed Skolt Saami in their work, so they expected the studies to give them more confidence in their language use. Some of the things that were specifically mentioned were the wish to learn to write and to derive words. One answer also conveyed a sense of frustration because of exercises that were too easy: In the words of the informant, *they bored me*. Native-speaking students found their Skolt Saami studies to be necessary and found it useful to learn the language through theory. One informant mentioned that they finally started to understand grammar. In school, they had

been compelled to learn things by heart, whereas now they were learning through understanding. Informants who had a family background in Skolt Saami had positive expectations, even though they lacked knowledge about the demands of university studies. In general, the students were happy to be able to strengthen their language skills and gain confidence in their language use. Several informants noted that it was challenging to study after work. The majority of the informants (11/15) were studying while working full- or part-time. One informant answered the question of whether studying Skolt Saami was what they expected with: *Se ylitti odotukseni* 'It exceeded my expectations'. In particular, those informants who were using Skolt Saami in their work during their studies found them highly necessary.

> *Ajattelin että tarvitsen sitä. On minulle hyvin tarpeellista, helpottaa minun elämää. Teoreettinen kielen opiskelu. Halusin kovasti olla mukana ja oppia. Oli elämäni tilaisuus. Toi sellaista turvallisuuden tunnetta… Pidin sitä elämäni tilaisuutena. Vihdoin! Ja koin opinnot hyvin tarpeelliseksi.*
>
> 'I felt I need it. It's highly necessary to me, makes my life easier. Theoretical language studies. I wanted very much to be involved and to learn. It was the opportunity of my life. It brought a sense of security… I regarded it as the opportunity of my life. Finally! And I found the studies highly necessary.'

It is noteworthy that those students for whom Skolt Saami was not the family language (6/15) had different expectations than the others. Studying the language turned out to be more challenging than they thought it would be. Pronunciation, word inflection, and speaking were felt to be particularly challenging. Several students had expected to learn to use the language in everyday situations, but this turned out to not be the case, because there were no separate classes for conversational Skolt Saami in the curriculum. The students did, however, enjoy the opportunity to learn about the Skolt Saami culture in addition to the language.

> *Oletus oli että 60 op:n jälkeen osaisi jo sujuvasti puhua ja kirjoittaa koltansaame. Mutta ei se ihan niin mennyt. Teoriassa kyllä mutta käytännössä kielitaito ei ole niin hyvä että osaisi heti taivuttaa muodot oikein. Oli toivonut enemmän käytännön harjoittelua erilaisista äänteistä. Teoriaa oli kyllä, mutta olisi kaivannut enemmän ääntämisharjoituksia ja puhumisen kursseja.*

'I assumed that after 60 study credits I would already be able to speak and write Skolt Saami fluently. But that's not quite how it went. In theory, yes, but in practice my language skills were not so good that I would have immediately known the correct inflection forms of words. I had hoped for more practical exercises on different speech sounds. There was theory, but I would have wanted more pronunciation exercises and conversation courses.'

*Positiivisesti, yllätti iloisesti. Olikin paljon jotenkin, kovaa työtä, mutta kun opinnoissa oli paljon kulttuuria myös. Se kevensi, siivitti ja helpotti opiskelua. Hyvin vastasi ennakko-odotuksia.*

'Positively; they were a pleasant surprise. They did turn out to involve, like, hard work, but then the studies included a lot of culture as well. This made the studies less heavy and easier to manage and helped them along. My expectations were met well.'

To sum up, the questions about the students' expectations and how these expectations were met clearly divided the students into two groups: Those for whom Skolt Saami was the language of the extended family expected the studies to strengthen their language skills. Additionally, they specifically named those areas of language in which they wanted to develop their skills, such as writing. This group also contained those students who needed to use Skolt Saami in their work. They had very positive expectations about studying the language, and these expectations were also met well. The students who had a family background in the use of Skolt Saami expressed strong emotion when discussing their expectations. They truly appreciated the opportunity to study Skolt Saami at a university level. The students who had no family background in the language, however, mostly answered these questions briefly, some with only one or two words. Understandably, for these students, Skolt Saami was simply one language to be learnt among other languages.

### 4.8.4    *Reasons for Studying Skolt Saami*

All informants had already previously studied the Skolt Saami language, because it was a prerequisite for beginning the studies. Everyone therefore knew what they were embarking on. The reasons for beginning or continuing the studies were manifold. One informant wanted to become a Skolt Saami teacher. Their comment reflected a strong desire to learn Skolt Saami so well that, after the studies, they would be able to teach others. Another motivator was learning to write. The informant already

mastered the spoken language and also wanted to learn how to write. The teacher was a Finnish native speaker, and so the informant found themselves teaching pronunciation to the other students.

> *Halusin opintoihin mukaan jo ennen kuin tiesin niiden olevan olemassa.*
>     'I wanted to take part in the studies even before I knew they existed.'
>     *Välillä tuntui niin että minäkö se oon joka opetan. Se oli myös raivostuttavaa ku minä olin ite tullu oppimaan. Siis välillä.*
>     '[The student helped the teacher to teach pronunciation.] Sometimes I felt like, am I really the one doing the teaching. It was also infuriating because I myself had come there to learn. Sometimes [it was infuriating], that is.'

One informant wanted to learn the native language of their father. Already earlier, they had taken a year's leave from work to study Skolt Saami in Inari, in the Sámi Education Institute. Now the informant wanted to continue the studies at university, so that they could develop their language skills. In prior research, it has come up that Saami language skills are considered important for a Saami identity. It has been questioned whether one can even call oneself a Saami without knowing the language. One can also feel left out of the Saami community when one is 'languageless' (Jomppanen, 2019, p. 20; Mustonen, 2017, pp. 47, 52). For two informants, Skolt Saami was the native language of their spouse and therefore important to learn. One of the answers conveyed the informant's sense of wanting to get to know their spouse better. Another informant also wanted to support their children's learning of Skolt Saami and to learn the language so well themselves that the family could change the language they spoke at home from Finnish to Saami. Both informants therefore had a practical need to learn the language. According to Korpilähde (2015, pp. 143–169), Saami language skills play an important role in the Saami family community. A practical need to learn the language motivates one to study it.

> *Halusin oppia tuntemaan hänet ja kyllä niin kuin huomaan, että innostun edelleen hänestä kun saan tutustua häneen paremmin kielen kautta ja jopa kielen rakenteen kautta…mutta sillä tavalla näkee siitä ihmisestä uusia puolia.*
>     'I wanted to learn to know them [my spouse], and I do notice that I still get excited about them as I get to know them better through language

and even through the structure of the language... but in that way, I get to see new sides of this person.'

One informant's language awareness of Skolt Saami had been raised when they noticed differences in the stories told by their father and grandmother. Even though both had learnt Skolt Saami as their first language, the same story was told by the father in Finnish and by the grandmother in Skolt Saami. The grandmother's story had been more precise and detailed than the father's story. Language ideologies change and transform in different times (see, e.g., Mäntynen et al., 2012, p. 337; Pietikäinen, 2012, p. 412; Pasanen, 2015, pp. 43–36). The grandmother and the father represented different generations, and, moreover, the grandmother had grown up in the Soviet Union (present-day Russia) and the father in Finland. After the war, circumstances had compelled the grandmother to move to Finland, which also meant that the majority language of her state of residence changed from Russian to Finnish. Skolt Saami and the old story remained an important link to her past life and feelings experienced therein.

For those informants for whom Skolt Saami was not the language of the extended family or the spouse, learning the language was motivated by a general interest in languages and, moreover, by an interest in Saami languages in general and in a smaller Saami language in particular. One informant had become interested in the language after taking a beginners' course and wanted to continue further with Skolt Saami studies. Five informants were using Skolt Saami in their work and wanted to deepen their knowledge of the language. One informant was motivated by the desire to be employed in language work after the studies. All these six informants wanted to learn more Skolt Saami and, in that way, gain more confidence in their work. That is why this opportunity was worth seizing, now that university studies of Skolt Saami were finally available. It is noteworthy that most of the informants (11/15) were born in the 1970s or 1980s. Only now were they able to learn the language at university. For one informant, the most important thing was to learn to write Skolt Saami. When the university studies became available, the status of the language was elevated. This affected the Skolt Saami language community positively. An example of this was one informant's need to build their own Skolt Saami identity. They received support from their immediate and extended family, who encouraged the informant to study Skolt Saami. In the end, the studies affected the whole family, as the family members

started to speak Skolt Saami to each other. The university studies of Skolt Saami and the elevated status of the language resulted in the reactivation of Skolt Saami. Two informants mentioned in the interview that the prestige of the language rose the moment it began to be taught at university. The prestige of the Saami languages spoken in Finland has risen during the last few decades (Aikio-Puoskari, 2016, p. 15; Rahko-Ravantti, 2016, p. 115). However, Skolt Saami has not been on the same level hierarchically with Aanaar Saami and North Saami until the university studies began.

### 4.8.5    Passing on Skolt Saami from One Generation to the Next

Four informants had children who could speak Skolt Saami. Skolt Saami had been spoken to some of them from birth. In one family, the children had been bilingual when they were small, but at some point, their language had changed exclusively to Finnish. The children would reply in Finnish when Skolt Saami was spoken to them. This illustrates the impact of a Finnish-speaking environment. One informant gave an explanation as to why they did not speak Skolt Saami to their child. To them, it would have felt strange, because the family lived in an entirely Finnish-speaking environment and had no contacts with the Skolt Saami language community. Then again, another informant who did not yet have children said that they would want their children to learn Skolt Saami—provided, however, that they would live in the Saami homeland, where the children would have access to activities in Skolt Saami, such as to a language nest or other daycare service in Skolt Saami. Use of the language appears to be strongly connected to the environment: If one lives outside the Skolt Saami language communities, there is no practical need to use the language.

As discussed earlier, reversing language shift requires active measures, and ideological clarification requires the language community to have a positive attitude towards the language being revived. Language users need to be aware of their own responsibility for the language and take an active role in the language revitalisation process (Pasanen, 2015, p. 46). The beginning of Skolt Saami studies at the University of Oulu elevated the status of the language and gave hope for its future. One informant stated that, now that it was possible to study the language at university, they felt confident in having their children attend Skolt Saami classes at school. Everyone who began to study Skolt Saami at the university already had

a positive attitude towards the language. For some, Skolt Saami was the language of their extended family, while for others, it was not. Those for whom Skolt Saami was not the language of the extended or immediate family nevertheless valued it as a small minority language and wanted to learn it.

### 4.8.6    Using Skolt Saami at the Time of the Interview and Maintaining the Language After Studies

Nearly every informant (13/15) reported that they would be using Skolt Saami in their work or were already, at the time of the interview, doing work in which Skolt Saami language skills were needed. This indicates that there are plenty of work opportunities for those who know the language. Ten informants spoke Skolt Saami at home or with acquaintances. One informant, when asked where they would be using the language in the future, replied with one word: 'everywhere'. Some informants lived in a Skolt Saami-speaking environment, and Skolt Saami was also the language they spoke at home. One informant living in the Helsinki metropolitan area lamented the fact that they knew the language in theory but had no opportunities to speak it. At the time of the interview, all informants were already, or wanted to be in the future, active users of Skolt Saami. As Rasmussen (2014) observes, mastering the Saami language enhances positive feelings towards it. The better the young informants in his study knew Skolt Saami, the more they liked listening to it, and they supposed that they would be speaking Saami also in the future. This could be called a positive cycle: The attitudes of the language community towards the revived language were positive, which is also a necessity for ideological clarification.

All informants believed that active and diverse use of language is important for maintaining language skills. In addition to writing, reading, and speaking, one can also think in Skolt Saami, listen to spoken language, or follow radio or TV shows. One informant reported listening to audio recordings of past radio programmes in Skolt Saami, published in the *Jie'lli arkiiv* ('Living archive') on Yle Sámi Radio (accessible at: https://yle.fi/aihe/jielli-arkiiv).

Every informant's answer revealed an active use of language through various means. One informant had made a pact with their Skolt Saami-speaking friends that they would always speak Skolt Saami when they met each other or talked to each other on the phone. Informants also

brought up the fact that when teaching others or translating texts into Skolt Saami, they also ended up learning themselves. Other ways to learn include playing with language in different ways, trying out new materials, audio picture books and games, and, in addition to these, following and participating in discussions in Skolt Saami on social media. An informant who wrote Skolt Saami translations felt that developing the language was important—in their own words, *koska koltansaamen kehityspaineet ovat valtavat* 'because there is enormous pressure to develop the Skolt Saami language'.

At the end of the interview, the informants answered a question about how actively they were using Skolt Saami, that is, how often, where, and with whom. While some were studying the language at the time of the interview, others were working in jobs in which Skolt Saami was needed (e.g. in translation work) or spoke the language with their spouse and children. These different domains of language use overlap and are not mutually exclusive. The majority of the informants (11/15) used Skolt Saami on a daily basis (Table 4.2), with ten of them using it at work. As observed earlier, many informants felt that the studies gave them confidence in their own language use and helped them to strengthen their language skills needed in working life. Skolt Saami skills also brought employment opportunities such as translation work for those who had not previously done work involving the language.

Skolt Saami was least used when dealing with the authorities (Table 4.2). If one wants to use Skolt Saami, for example, when visiting

**Table 4.2**  Skolt Saami language use at the time of the interview

| I use the language | Not at all | Seldom | A couple of times a week | Daily |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| How often | | 1 | 3 | 11 |
| Speaking with family | 4 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| Speaking with friends | | 5 | 9 | 1 |
| Reading the papers and browsing the internet | | | 9 | 6 |
| Writing messages | | 5 | 7 | 3 |
| Following the media | | | 7 | 8 |
| Dealing with authorities | 6 | 9 | | |
| Using at work | | 3 | 2 | 10 |
| Using in studies | 2 | 2 | 7 | 4 |

the tax office, this is possible anywhere in Finland by using an interpretation service (Yle Lappi, 2009). The Sámi Language Act (1086/2003) contains a section that entitles the Saami to use their own language before the authorities (Oikeusministeriö, n.d.b). Despite this, Saami language use can be limited only to certain situations, as was revealed to be the case in the interviews with North Saami speakers (Sara, 2016). The informants reported using the language only in connection with their private lives, such as within the immediate and extended family and with acquaintances, while in the public sphere, the used language was Finnish (Sara, 2016, pp. 57, 64).

When examining Skolt Saami language use in general, the emphasis appears to be greatly on usage on a daily basis or at least a couple of times a week. The language is used when there is an opportunity to do so, such as at work or with friends and family. All informants followed the media in Skolt Saami either daily or a couple of times a week. This is possible because *Yle Sápmi*, a regional indigenous radio channel in Finland, publishes news online in three Saami languages, namely in Skolt Saami, Aanaar Saami, and North Saami (https://yle.fi/sapmi). Thus, current, local news of the Saami-speaking regions can be followed anywhere at any time.

## 4.9   SUMMARY

This chapter has examined the language revitalisation of Skolt Saami in the context of university education. Skolt Saami is a severely endangered language. Out of the three Saami languages spoken in Finland, it has the smallest number of speakers. The beginning of major subject studies of Skolt Saami has had an impact on the entire language community and beyond.

The linguistic rights of Saami children are realised differently in the Saami homeland than elsewhere in the country. In the homeland, a child has the right to receive an education in Skolt Saami, whereas in areas outside the homeland, Skolt Saami cannot be studied for more than two hours a week. The situation is the same as with immigrant children. The situation of the Skolt Saami language has improved gradually since the beginning of the 1970s. It was only then that a literary language began to be developed for Skolt Saami. Until then, it had only existed as a spoken language. In 2006, there were only a few children under school age in

Sevettijärvi, and the youngest native speaker was over 30 years old (Mosh-nikoff & Moshnikoff, 2006). At present, the Sevettijärvi school operates as the centre of Skolt Saami education. During the last 50 years, many things have taken place as part of the language revitalisation process. In addition to the measures mentioned above, Skolt Saami can be studied after comprehensive school also on the general upper secondary level (in Finnish *lukio*). In the matriculation examination, it is possible to take a test in Skolt Saami either as a foreign language exam or as a mother tongue exam. Skolt Saami can also be studied via adult education in the Sámi Education Institute (SAKK) in Inari during a one-year programme that has been available since 2012. Many informants in my data had studied Skolt Saami in SAKK prior to their university studies.

It is important for the Skolt Saami studies offered by the University of Oulu that, also in the years to come, there will continue to be students interested in learning the language. One must have some prior knowledge of Skolt Saami to know about the studies and apply to them. At present, Skolt Saami can be studied, regardless of one's place of residence, in a distance learning project that organises online classes in Skolt Saami, as well as in Aanaar Saami and North Saami, for pupils of comprehensive and general upper secondary schools. In the academic year 2020–2021, there were 81 pupils, out of whom 16 were studying Skolt Saami. Children who participate in the distance learning project must have a Saami ethnic background.

The research material for this study consisted of interviews with students who have studied, or have been accepted to study, Skolt Saami at the University of Oulu. There were altogether 15 informants, for most of whom (11/15) Skolt Saami was the language spoken in the extended or immediate family, while for some, it was simply a foreign language to be learnt. Five informants had been born in the 1970s or before, six in the 1980s, and four in the 1990s. Because Skolt Saami began to be taught at school in the 1970s, not everyone had had the opportunity to study the language when they were in comprehensive school. One infor-mant said that they would have wanted to have this opportunity. When it became possible to study the language at university, they seized the opportunity. The informants' answers clearly showed that the prestige of the Skolt Saami language rose when it began to be taught at the univer-sity. In one informant's case, the rise in prestige was manifested by them changing the language they spoke at home to Skolt Saami. The immediate family and grandparents started to speak Skolt Saami with the informant.

Another indication of the rise in prestige is the willingness to reclaim a lost language back into use (Aikio-Puoskari, 2016, p. 15; Rahko-Ravantti, 2016, p. 115; Rasmussen, 2014, pp. 271, 277). One family wanted their children to attend Skolt Saami language classes after the news about the university studies of Skolt Saami came out. Now, the children's language studies would not have to come to an end after comprehensive school or general upper secondary school but could continue at university as major subject studies. Skolt Saami skills also led to some positive surprises. One informant had discovered new sides in their spouse as their language skills grew. The spouse had learnt Skolt Saami as their first language.

Ideological clarification requires for the language community to have a positive attitude towards the revived language. Mastering the language increases positive feelings towards it. The informants' answers conveyed an appreciation of, and positive feeling towards, Skolt Saami. This positive attitude was also realised through actions, as the majority of the informants reported using the language on a daily basis. This result differs from those of Räisänen (2014) regarding a Kven-speaking community. In the study by Räisänen, the parents did not speak Kven to their children because they only wanted their children to learn the majority language (Norwegian).

The revitalisation of Aanaar Saami is a good example of successful actions taken for language revival. Due to active measures, the number of speakers has increased, but the work is still ongoing. As for Skolt Saami speakers, even though similar opportunities for complementary education as for Aanaar Saami speakers have not been organised for them, they use the language actively, and the number of Skolt Saami speakers will continue to increase in the future because of this. This study shows that the different domains of language use overlap and do not mutually exclude each other. Through their studies, many informants had gained more confidence in their own language use and were able to strengthen their language skills needed in working life. Mastering the language also brought employment opportunities for those who had not been previously employed in work involving the language.

The beginning of Skolt Saami studies at the University of Oulu has made a difference on many levels. The studies provide a basis for a revitalisation process, in which those who have lost the language of their family can reclaim it, and those who speak it can strengthen their language skills. The university studies have elevated the status of Skolt Saami to the same level with other Saami languages spoken in Finland. Attitudes

towards the language have become more positive also in the language community. Skolt Saami will have more speakers now that also those for whom it is a new, foreign language to be learnt are interested in studying it. The studies are organised as online classes in the afternoons, which makes it possible for those who are interested to attend, regardless of their work or place of residence. In addition, an institution, namely the Orthodox Church, has started to require Skolt Saami language skills from their employees in their most northern parish in Finland. The university studies of Skolt Saami have been the catalyst for a positive change, the significance of which will be seen, at the latest, after the next couple of decades.

In the future, this research could be continued further by tracing in more detail the students' use of the Skolt Saami language in different domains. It would also be worthwhile to investigate in more detail how the university studies have influenced the Skolt Saami language community and the domain of working life. Another interesting issue is what will happen when, starting from the year 2023, the university studies of Skolt Saami can be started from an elementary level. Perhaps this will lead to new speakers of the language in the future.

*Research Data*

    Informant interviews on Zoom.
    The recordings are in possession of the author.

## Appendix 4.1: Questions for Skolt Saami Students

### *Basic Information*

1. Year of birth, place of birth?
2. What is the first language you have learnt?
3. What language did your parents speak to each other? How about your grandparents?
4. Where/from whom have you learnt Skolt Saami?
5. Can you speak other Saami languages? If so, which ones?

## *Skolt Saami Studies*

6. From where did you learn about Skolt Saami studies?
7. Have you studied Skolt Saami in SAKK (the Sámi Education Institute)?
8. What were your thoughts when you found out about the university studies of Skolt Saami?
9. What kinds of expectations did you have about studying Skolt Saami at the university?
10. Were the studies what you expected?
11. Did you do/are you doing the studies while working full/part-time?
12. Why did you/do you want to study Skolt Saami?

## *After the Studies*

13. Have you already thought about where you will be using Skolt Saami in the future?
14. Do you want your children to learn Skolt Saami? Can your children speak Skolt Saami?
15. How can language skills be maintained in your opinion?

| I use the language | not at all | seldom | a couple of times a week | daily |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| how often | | | | |
| speaking with family | | | | |
| speaking with friends | | | | |
| reading the papers and browsing the internet | | | | |
| writing messages | | | | |
| following the media | | | | |
| dealing with authorities | | | | |
| using at work | | | | |
| using in studies | | | | |

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# Talkin' 'bout My Integration: Views on Language, Identity, and Integration Among Dutch and Finnish Migrants to the Swedish Countryside

*Ellen Bijvoet and Jan-Ola Östman*

The main heading is an allusion to and adaptation of The Who's 'My Generation'; music and lyrics by Pete Townsend (1965). Cf. *People try to put us d-down (talkin' 'bout my [integ]ration)/Just because we get around (talkin' 'bout my [integ]ration) / Things they do look awful c-c-cold (talkin' 'bout my [integ]ration)*

E. Bijvoet
Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

J.-O. Östman (✉)
University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland
e-mail: janola.ostman@gmail.com; janola.ostman@helsinki.fi

## 5.1    Introduction

Transnational migration to the North of Europe, involving different types of migrant populations typically referred to as labour migrants, refugees, or life-style migrants, is nothing new. Swedish research on language contact due to transnational migration has commonly focused on the challenges that immigrants (typically from outside of Europe) encounter in big cities in Sweden, whereas migration to sparsely populated dialect areas has received less attention (cf. Ryan, 2018). In this study, by contrast, we scrutinise the long-standing intra-European migration process to rural areas in Sweden, with a special focus on migrants from Finland and from the Netherlands who have settled in small countryside villages in the Värmland area. Specifically, the study focuses on how individual Finnish and Dutch migrants themselves view their integration.[1]

Our starting point to get a handle on the 'chaotic concept' (Robinson, 1998) of integration is the conceptual framework developed by Ager and Strang (2008). Based on a thorough literature review and documentary analysis of survey data and fieldwork data in sites of migrant settlements, Ager and Strang identify four overall themes as central to a proper understanding of the concept of integration:

- achievement and access across the sectors of employment, housing, education, and health;
- assumptions and practices regarding citizenship and rights;
- processes of social connection within and between groups in a community; and
- structural barriers to such connections related to language, culture, and the local environment.

Their analyses reveal that in policy documents, attainment of successful integration is discussed mainly in terms of access to employment, housing, education, and health (Ager & Strang, 2008). All of this can also be applied to the situation in Sweden. Recent Swedish Government Official Reports (e.g., SOU, 2020, p. 54; 2021, p. 2) emphasise that knowledge

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[1] In this study we use *migrant* as a catch-all term for people who have moved to the countryside in Swedish Värmland. For different labels, based on type and length of mobility, see Canagarajah (2017).

of the majority language Swedish is the ultimate tool to get access to these sectoral areas. The mantra that language skills in Swedish is *the* key to integration is also constantly brought to the fore in political and public debate.

The increasing housing segregation of migrants is often pointed out as a factor that hampers migrants' opportunities to get in touch with native Swedes and thereby to gain access to the Swedish language. Since housing segregation is an urban phenomenon, this primarily affects migrants who settle in big cities. But what about L2 acquisition among migrants who have settled in rural areas? And what is really the role of language in migrants' aspiration for social belonging in a local, rural community and in their on-going construction of identity? More specifically, how do these migrants experience their own integration? Is successful integration for them only a matter of language competence, a place to live, and a job? Or is it also about achieving an affinity with other inhabitants in the place where they as migrants settle?

Our analyses illustrate the relation between language, identity, and integration from the transnational migrants' perspectives, based on the views and arguments that they themselves present when they talk about language and discuss their relation to their new home country, to their country of birth, as well as to other places where they have lived.

In Sect. 5.2, we give brief overviews of the background and reasons for migration to Sweden from Finland and the Netherlands. Section 5.3 specifies our research questions and presents our method and manner of data collection. Section 5.4 deals with the views of migrants from the Netherlands and from Finland about their 'new community' and, in particular, about the extent to which knowledge of Swedish is crucial for 'feeling at home'. In Sect. 5.5 we explicate how the migrants construct their identity, and Sect. 5.6 deals with pre-migration aspirations and post-migration realities. The study concludes, in Sect. 5.7, with a general discussion of the implications of the findings.

## 5.2   Finnish and Dutch Migration to Sweden

In the present study, we focus on migrants from two Northwestern European countries not unlike Sweden: Finland and the Netherlands. Despite obvious similarities between these countries, the time of and reasons for migration to Sweden differ for people from, respectively, Finland and the Netherlands.

The majority of the Finns migrated to Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s due to high unemployment, housing shortage, and economic instability in Finland. At that time, Sweden was in great need of labour for its expanding industry. Thanks to the Nordic Passport Union, there were no legal barriers to move, settle, and seek employment in another Nordic country. At the peak of migration from Finland (1968–1970), as many as 100,000 Finnish workers migrated to Sweden (Allardt, 1996; Korkiasaari & Söderling, 2003). Many of them settled in the Stockholm and Gothenburg areas, or in smaller industrials towns in southern and central Sweden, and were typically employed in the textile industry, or in forestry, steel, shipbuilding, and other heavy industries (cf. Lainio, 1996).

The Finns had a reputation of being hardworking and silent, and of never complaining (SOU, 1974, p. 70). Swedish companies recruited workers directly from Finland through advertising in Finnish newspapers or via recruitment campaigns in Finland. In addition, recruitment often took place by word of mouth: Finnish migrant workers in Sweden talked friends and acquaintances in Finland into joining the companies they themselves worked in. Working in heavy industry did not require any language skills in Swedish, and for those who wanted to learn the language, possibilities to participate in language courses were often limited due to employees having to work in shifts.

Finnish networks in Sweden were dense: Both in the workplace and outside working hours, Finnish workers mostly socialised with other Finns. Contacts with traditional Swedish society were sparse. Stereotypical and prejudiced views about Finnish workers (as sad and melancholic alcoholics, often involved in knife fights) were common and widespread among the Swedish majority population (cf. SOU, 2005, p. 56; 2012, p. 74; Borg, 2016; cf. also Bijvoet, 1998), and derogatory wordings (e.g., *finnjävel* 'fucking/damned Finn') were typically used to refer to Finns—even in newspaper headlines. Results from a large 1969 survey (SOU, 1974, p. 70) of Swedes' attitudes to different migrant groups showed that Finns were perceived in a very negative way and placed at the bottom of the SOU list, second to last. Under these circumstances, the Finnish associations established throughout Sweden became very important for the Finnish migrants.

The Dutch migration history to Sweden is a different one, both with regard to the number of migrants and to the time of and motives for migration. A general synopsis of the numbers of Dutch and Finnish migrants to Sweden over the last 70 years is given in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1** Population statistics Sweden: Finnish and Dutch migrants in Sweden, 1950–2021, in absolute numbers. (Extracted from data available at https://www.scb.se/.)

| | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population Sweden | 7,041,829 | 7,495,129 | 8,076,903 | 8,320,438 | 8,590,630 | 8,882,792 | 9,415,570 | 10,452,326 |
| Born in Sweden | 6,844,019 | 7,195,250 | 7,539,318 | 7,693,485 | 7,800,185 | 7,878,994 | 8,030,641 | 8,361,823 |
| Born abroad | 197,810 | 299,879 | 537,585 | 626,953 | 790,445 | 1,003,798 | 1,384,929 | 2,090,503 |
| Born in Finland | 44,821 | 101,307 | 235,453 | 251,342 | 217,636 | 195,447 | 169,521 | 136,607 |
| Born in the Netherlands | 1,213 | 2,105 | 2,916 | 3,077 | 3,543 | 4,532 | 8,700 | 13,523 |

While the Finnish migrants were typically referred to as labour migrants, the Dutch migrants are best captured by the concept of *life-style migrant*, that is, 'relatively affluent individuals of all ages, moving either part-time or full-time to places that, for various reasons, signify, for the migrant, a better quality of life' (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009, p. 609).

As in the case of the Finns, migrants from the Netherlands have also been actively recruited to move to Sweden. Due to an extended period of out-migration by young people, many Swedish rural municipalities faced—and still face—population decline and, concomitantly, social and economic stagnation. In order to reverse this process, place marketing campaigns were and have continued to be launched (at the domestic market as well as internationally) to promote in-migration to the Swedish countryside. In the first decades of the twenty-first century, as many as 164 Swedish municipalities (of a total of 290) have been engaged in place marketing efforts in the densely populated and highly urbanised Netherlands, targeting prospective migrants who seek to escape their urban lives.

Participation in the annual Emigration Expo in the Netherlands is one example of such efforts. Since the late 1990s, Swedish rural municipalities, regional councils, migration consultancy agencies, real estate agencies, and other Swedish stakeholders have been present at the Emigration Expo, promoting the Swedish countryside and attempting to attract new residents, enterprises, and investments to the rural region (https://www.emigratiebeurs.nl/). The Internet has also proved to be a useful tool for conducting rural place marketing campaigns (Eimermann, 2015).

After the turn of the twenty-first century, many Dutch citizens migrated to Sweden to set up businesses and 'to live their dream'. Unlike many recent immigrant groups, Dutch migrants generally prefer nature, space, tranquillity, and less populated surroundings over urban areas for settlement (Eimermann, 2013; Hedberg & Haandrikman, 2014). The Dutch migration flow to rural Sweden has attracted positive attention in the Swedish media: Dutch settlers generally have a good reputation, being perceived as 'well educated, highly skilled, hardworking, enterprising and possessing adequate social and language skills' (Eimermann 2015, p. 409). The Dutch are nowadays clearly overrepresented in the private service sector in the Swedish countryside, running camping sites, hotels, and restaurants (Eimermann et al., 2012).

From the overview above, it is clear that many in the large group of Finnish migrants who moved to Sweden some 40–50 years ago have

very different migration histories from the Dutch migrants who came to Sweden in the 2000s.

## 5.3   Research Questions, Data, and Methods

The general topic of this study is if, and to what extent, the Finnish participants in our study differ from the Dutch participants[2] in the way they conceive of integration into their new, rural home location. In what ways and to what extent does the Swedish language—and the local dialect—play a role for them to feel socially included in the new community? And do the differences in migration histories contribute to the development of different post-migration identities among the Finns and the Dutch?

### 5.3.1   Data

Data were collected during two week-long fieldwork trips (autumn 2018–spring 2019) to the sparsely populated Duvbacka,[3] a rural region in western Sweden, bordering on Norway. The region covers two municipalities that are characterised by a strong presence of traditional industries (steel and engineering, forestry, and mass and paper industry). Taken together, the two municipalities have about 15,000 inhabitants with an average population density of 17 people per square kilometre. Foreign-born residents make up 14–15% of the population in both municipalities.

Our data consist of audio recordings of focus-group discussions and semi-structured interviews with immigrants in Duvbacka (esp. Finnish, Dutch, German, Iranian, and Ukrainian immigrants), as well as with members of the traditional local population in the municipalities. In all, 27 participants from Duvbacka took part in the project. Table 5.2 gives an overview of the Dutch and Finnish participants that we will be referring to in the present study.

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[2] In the following we refer to our participants in a condensed manner as 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch', naturally realising that the fact that a migrant has started their journey from a particular nation-state does not mean that they have the same worldview and cultural baggage as others from that nation-state. This is particularly important in the present study, where we specifically want to focus on the individuals' stories and attitudes.

[3] For reasons of integrity, pseudonyms are used for the municipalities and for all participants in this study.

**Table 5.2**   Brief description of the participants in the present study

| Participants | Male/female | L1 | Age (at the time of the focus-group discussion) | Year of arrival in Sweden |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anja | F | Finnish | 64 | 1985 |
| Paavo | M | Finnish | 70 | 1976 |
| Erja | F | Finnish | 85 | 1955 |
| Uskali | M | Finnish | 90 | 1948 |
| Mauno | M | Finnish | 71 | 1966 |
| Janneke | F | Dutch | 49 | 2007 |
| Sandra | F | Dutch | 16 | 2007 |
| Helma | F | Dutch | 69 | 2006 |
| Gerard | M | Dutch | 70 | 2006 |
| Josefien | F | Dutch | 59 | 2011 |

The interviews and focus-group discussions were conducted mainly in Swedish, but codeswitching to Finnish and Dutch occurred frequently throughout our data, no doubt partly because we ourselves have our roots in Finland (Östman) and the Netherlands (Bijvoet) and thus speak Finnish and Dutch, respectively. Codeswitching was thus not an obstacle to analysis.

The Värmland region is well known for its dialects that markedly differ from the spoken Swedish standard. For native speakers of Swedish outside Värmland, some of the Värmland dialects are almost incomprehensible. Preliminary analyses of the data from traditional residents in Duvbacka indicate that some 50 dialect features, comprising all linguistic levels (phonology, syntax, morphology, vocabulary), are found in the speech of members of the local community (with respect to a neighbouring community, cf. Nilsson, 2015). These locals[4] are highly aware of the fact that their way of speaking Swedish may cause problems for people outside the region in general, and for non-native speakers of Swedish in particular, since, among other things, the vowel qualities are different and words are shortened in the local dialect; one of the locals explains, 'we kind-of cut off the words'.

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[4] In this study, we refer to the traditional local population whose ancestors have lived in the area for generations as 'the local population', or 'the locals'. We furthermore use the term '(dialect) community' as a term for the imagined linguistic community Duvbacka (see Anderson, 1983). These terms thus do not refer to actual (linguistic) homogeneity, but rather to popular notions of (linguistic) communities.

To people from other parts of the country, the local dialect sounds so different that it can be mistaken for another language. Still, for the local population, using the Duvbacka dialect is the preferred choice of language; speaking standard Swedish is seldom an option for them. When they talk about the close-to-standard spoken language that they sometimes have to speak, they use descriptions like 'to speak elegantly' (*att prata fint*), 'to pretend' (*att göra sig till*). If you speak that way, you are a 'better-speaker' (*fintalare*). And in connection with the feelings they experience in situations where they have to speak the standard language, they describe these situations as 'extremely difficult' (*jättesvårt*), 'ridiculous' (*löjligt*), 'annoying' (*jobbigt*), 'fake' (*fejk*), or 'artificial' (*konstgjort*). 'The words do not fit my mouth', says a 48-year-old local carpenter, and he points out that he actually prefers to speak English (cf. Røyneland & Jensen, 2020).

### 5.3.2   *Methods and Research Questions*

In order to explore the experiences of the Finnish and Dutch migrants in the Värmland area, the study uses a phenomenological qualitative method, which starts off from an understanding of social phenomena from the participants' own perspectives and describes the world as it is experienced by them—in accordance with the assumption that what *constitutes* reality is determined by what people *perceive as* relevant reality (cf. Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014).

We thus primarily study the opinions that the participants themselves express with regard to issues concerning language learning, integration, and identity construction. Since the participants' views are expressed in different sequences of the discussions, in the company of different constellations of participants, and in relation to different topics that are brought up, we can also take into account the more implicit attitudes they hold by bringing together and comparing the variation in the ways they express themselves under different circumstances. In this way we get a deeper understanding of what factors have influenced their variegated stances and positionings than if we had for instance collected questionnaire data.

Unlike many studies of contact situations in transnational migration that use a constructivist approach (cf. Creese & Blackledge, 2018; Pennycook, 2018), we see it as important to take our participants' own labels and use of identity categories as the basis for our description of their identity, in accordance with our bottom-up approach. As Sallabank (2013,

p. 79) points out: 'Postmodern ideas on the constructed, fluid nature of languages and identity are not well known among "lay" people, so that […] respondents tend to have quite traditional, even "essentialist", views on these matters' (see also Pavlenko, 2018).

In addition to presenting and analysing the views of the Dutch and Finnish migrants—and, where relevant, those of the traditional residents in Duvbacka[5] in relation to the settlement of the Finns and the Dutch—we will also be paying attention to aspects of responsibility: How do our participants talk about who is responsible for the social and linguistic integration of migrants in the community?

In our strictly empirical, phenomenological methodology, we give voice to the participants and their experiences, using extracts from the data in order to illustrate explanations and explications of their attitudes and feelings. With this in mind, the following specific research questions have guided our analysis of the data:

A. What are the views of 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch' about different aspects of their 'new community' (the local community, language learning, life in the village), and in particular,
B. To what extent is knowledge of Swedish a determining factor for migrants to feel that they are integrated into their new society? Furthermore,
C. How is identity constructed by 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch' in the present situation of transnational migration?

## 5.4    Findings: Language and Social Integration

We will deal with the issues covered by questions A and B in Sects. 5.4.1–5.4.5. Identity construction (C) is discussed in Sect. 5.5.

### 5.4.1    The Migrants' Views on the Locals

The focus of this subsection is the extent to which participants in the two migrant groups feel that they are part of the local community; we

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[5] Detailed analyses of the views of the traditional residents are dealt with in Ekberg et al. (forthcoming).

approach this topic by looking at the ways they talk about the local population.

The Dutch participants in our study all agree that it is not easy to get proper contact with members of the local population. Janneke refers to Duvbacka with the negatively charged Dutch word *een gat* 'a den'. According to her, there is a *bruksmentalitet* in the local community, that is, the community is governed by traditional norms and values, including an air of social control and narrow-mindedness: You are not supposed to stick out.

Janneke, who works in tourism, describes village solidarity as a very close one, but whereas the traditional local residents in our study see this as something positive from an insider perspective—you care for each other, and if you haven't seen a member of the community for a while, you check that everything is all right—Janneke, from the perspective of an outsider, sees this as something negative. Everybody is in some way related to everybody else, Janneke says, and the close cohesion among the locals makes it difficult for immigrants to become part of it. In this criticism of hers, she makes herself a spokesperson for other migrants to the area; cf. (1).[6]

(1)

Janneke:  *det är många ställen man kan bo utomlands # det går jättebra kanske # men i* [Duvbacka] *är det väldigt svårt # å det är inte bara vi som eh*
'there are many places one can live abroad # there's maybe no problem # but it is very difficult in [Duvbacka] # and it's not only our opinion'

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[6] We use broad transcription in standard Swedish, but the syntax is that used by the participants. We have retained a number of prominent pronunciation characteristics of the migrants; for instance, the Finns' challenges with initial consonant clusters and both groups' occasional pronunciation of voiced stops and fricatives in Swedish as voiceless. We have also retained possible Dutch and Finnish words when reproducing what is being said. In the transcriptions, codeswitches (to Finnish and Dutch) are underlined, English words are given in boldface and German words in small capitals. We use # to indicate a pause, a break, or a new start in the participants' expression. Pseudonyms, other explanatory material, interlocutors' supports and speaker's asides are given within square brackets, […]. Reported speech and others' voices are given within pointed brackets, <…> .

The *bruksmentalitet* practice in the local school was also the reason why Janneke's daughter Sandra changed schools to a school in the nearest town, which means two hours' travel every day. But she thinks it's worth it: She has made friends with many others in her new school, youngsters who are also the children of transnational migrants.

Janneke tells us that she had a completely different impression of Värmland and its people when she was on holiday there—before she herself moved to Värmland. At that time everybody was open, helpful, and accommodating. Having moved to Sweden, Janneke and her husband started a company in the tourist sector. Their positive experiences during their vacations in Sweden gave them hope that they could cooperate extensively with the local population. But that was not how things turned out (cf. also Eimermann et al., 2020). Janneke feels that the responsibility for the ensuing absence of cooperation is that of the locals, who have shown no interest whatsoever in their tourist company; cf. (2).

(2)

Janneke:    *ingen var intresserad här # sen lägde vi ner hela företaget # vi*
            *sålde alla grejer å […] de säger att de vill jobba tillsammans*
            *å # de bara säga # sen blir det ingenting*
                'nobody was interested here # so we shut down our busi-
                ness # we sold everything and [...] they say that they want
                to work together and # it's just talk # but nothing happens'

Similarly, Helma and Gerard, who run a Bed & Breakfast in Duvbacka, also experienced that the locals are not that interested in newcomers. In Helma's opinion this is due to cultural differences between the Netherlands and Sweden, and she misses what she regards as Dutch openness; cf. (3).

(3)

Helma:    *man är inte så intresserad # eh eh # man är <hallo> # lite*
          *pratad # men men inte verklig intresserad i nya personer ja*
          *# dat is # det är lite svårt för mig jag är mycket open # jag*
          *kommer från centrum från Amsterdam # så […] eh men det är*
          *wat jag missar […] jag tänker det is een een een annorlunda*
          *kultur i Holland #  det är **when** man eh eh är tot de deur en*
          *man sagt snel kom in en eh vi dricker lite kaffe en vi pratar*
          *lite # men dat det är inte svensk kultur så mycket jag tänker*

'people are not that interested # well # they're like
<hello!> # and talk a little # but they are not really interested
in new people # that's # it's a little difficult for me because I
am very open # I come from the centre of Amsterdam # so
[…] but that's what I miss […] I think there's another kind of
culture in the Netherlands # that is, when somebody comes
at the door, they are rapidly told to come in and have a cup
of coffee and a chat # but I don't think that is as much part
of Swedish culture'

By contrast, the Finns' connection to the locals was hardly ever
mentioned or discussed in our data. The Finns did not seem to have much
contact with members of the local population—but this is not something
that disturbs them. Anja and her husband Paavo do not have any Swedish
friends and they are never invited to barbecue feasts or to Midsummer
events, but they also do not have any need for such invitations; cf. (4).

(4)

Anja:  *vi har inte # vi har inga svenska kompisar* [laughs] # *nej men
öh nej nej # å jo, det är helt okej # jag vill inte hoppa där runt
stången å # sjunga små grodorna # å sen äta samma mat både
midsommar å jul å påsk # vi har i alla fall lite annat mat #
eller hur?!*
    'we don't have # we have no Swedish friends [laughs] # no
but, no # and that's perfectly okay # I don't want to be there
jumping around the maypole [at Midsummer] and # sing "Små
grodorna" ['The Little Frogs', a song] # and then eat the same
food both on Midsummer and at Christmas and Easter # at
least we have variation in our food # don't we?!'

As we can see from the examples above, neither the Dutch nor the
Finns in our study feel that they themselves are members of the local
community. But in contradistinction to the Finns, the Dutch see this as a
problem.

### 5.4.2   *The Migrants' Views on Learning Swedish*

As already mentioned, there is a common conception among Swedes
that when people from the Netherlands move to Sweden, they learn the

language rapidly.[7] One of our local participants, who has worked as a teacher in the Swedish-for-foreigners programme, certifies that the Dutch seem to have a special gift (*nåt speciellt språköra*) for learning Swedish fast. But from the Dutch participants in our study we get a somewhat different picture: Some of them do rapidly gain a good command of Swedish, while others, due to their more mature age when starting to learn Swedish, still experience challenges.

This is the case with Gerard. Despite having taken language courses prior to migration, he still experiences challenges with the Swedish language. The lack of concrete contacts with members of the local population has decreased Gerard's motivation to further his Swedish studies; cf. (5).

(5)

> Gerard:  *en det är synd att vi behöver en extra år voor prata mer svenska # efter eh vi vi bor nu permanent tio år i Sverige en du hör också dat vi pratar inte honderd procent nå inte eh nitti procent också inte # en **then** jag kan inte förstår en eh optimalisera wat jag vill säger **when** när vi pratar tillsamman*
>
> 'and it's a pity that we need additional years in order to speak better Swedish # after eh we've now lived ten years permanently in Sweden and you can hear that we do not speak one hundred percent, not even ninety percent [Swedish] # and [even] then, my understanding is not complete, and I can't optimise my talk [to correspond to] what I want to say when I talk with someone'

For the Finnish participants in our study, it often took years before they started to learn Swedish. The need for Swedish was not felt to be that necessary, since all of them were part of dense Finnish-speaking networks in Sweden; cf. (6).

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[7] It is not uncommon for Dutch life-style migrants to study the basics of Swedish in a language course in the Netherlands before they move to Sweden and to continue studying the language in municipality-organised 'Swedish for immigrants' classes as soon as they arrive in Sweden.

(6)

> Anja: *jag hade finska arbetskamrater å # hans släktingar # vi besökte bara hos dom # vi hade inga svenska kompisar # min husmor # jag jobba på hotell Continental då # husmor var finsk # alla som arbetar var finnar # så jag lärde mej typ ingenting # kanske dom som stör- står på paketerna mjölkpaketer och smörpaketer och dom där # men inte mycke*
>
> 'I had Finnish colleagues at work and # his [=Anja's husband's] relatives # we only visited with them # we had no Swedish friends # my Matron # I worked at Hotel Continental then # my Matron was Finnish # all those at work were Finns # so I learnt like nothing # maybe [the text] on milk cartons and butter packages and stuff like that # but not much'

Paavo finally took the course in Swedish that all workforce migrants were entitled to, but in his story, he says that the language course was of little use: All the participants were Finns and all of them spoke Finnish, also during Swedish lessons. In general, there was always someone among the Finns who knew a little Swedish and who could then function as a contact person and interpreter. In Erja's case it was her sister who had the role of interpreter. Erja came to Sweden in 1955, but did not start to learn Swedish until 45 years later.

For the migrants from the Netherlands it was obvious that they would have to learn Swedish before they moved to Sweden; but once in Sweden, they realised and were frustrated that the (standard) variety of Swedish they had acquired in their FL classes did not work as a means of interaction in their new rural community (cf. Van Ommeren, 2010). By contrast, there were no requirements to have a working competence in Swedish at the time the Finns arrived in Sweden. The level of interactive competence in Swedish was thus not an issue for our Finnish participants, nor was their limited knowledge of Swedish experienced as a problem by themselves thanks to their membership in the available Finnish networks.

### 5.4.3  *The Migrants' Views on the Local Dialect*

As pointed out in Sect. 5.3, the local dialect in Duvbacka differs markedly from the spoken Swedish standard. This was also something that the participants in our study had noticed.

Both the Dutch and the Finnish participants in our study indicate that they have major problems understanding the local dialect. Gerard and Helma argue that it is so much easier to understand Swedish guests from the more urban parts of Sweden; cf. (7).

(7)

Gerard:    *men vi har eh mycket svenskar sjutti procent van* UNSERE *eh gäster är svenska en* **when** *de kommer från Göteborg och Stockholm vi tänker ba* <*oh vi pratar mer svenska* **then** *vi tänker på*> # *men* **when** *man kommer från* [Duvbacka] *en man pratar typisk* [Duvbacka] *vi tänker* <*oj oj oj min svenska är inte så bra*>

'but we have a lot of Swedes—seventy percent of our guests are Swedish and when they come from Gothenburg and Stockholm we just feel <oh, we speak more Swedish than we realise> # but when people come from [Duvbacka] and they speak typical [Duvbackish], we think <ouch, my Swedish is not so good>'

Helma:    *de säger ofta bara hälften av ordet*

'they often only say half of a word'

Despite the Dutch participants' desire to become part of the local community, the effort to learn the local dialect seems insurmountable to them. Helma, in (8), suggests that this is due to her lack of contact with the local residents.

(8)

Helma:    *men jag tänker eh* **when when** *man har mer kontakt met met svenskar # det motiferar mer för prata mer svenska # men nu efter många år det # jag säg att det är svårt ha kontakt med svenskar i* [Duvbacka] [...] *eh den eh jag in- jag är inte så motiferat eh dat eh* [...] *men nu det är eh en spiral man men prat- eh har ingen mycket kontakt med svenskar # och* **then** *man inte pratar så mycket svenska #* **then** *kontakt är mer svårt # så det är spiral*

'but I think that if you have more contact with Swedes # that would motivate you to speak more Swedish # but now after many years it is # I say it's difficult to have contacts with Swedes in [Duvbacka] [...] and so I am not so motivated [...] but now it's a spiral ['a vicious circle'] that you don't have

much contact with Swedes # and then you don't speak a lot of Swedish # and then contact is more difficult # so it's a spiral'

Of all our focus-group participants, Uskali has lived the longest in Duvbacka. He says that he has not learnt how to speak the local dialect, but he understands everything that the locals say: *själva meningen förstår man ju och det räcker för mig* 'I do understand the actual contents, and that is enough for me'. Even though Uskali himself says that he does not speak the dialect, a number of dialect features are prominent in his Swedish, like *di* 'they' (instead of standard Swedish *de, dom*), *syster min* 'my sister' (instead of *min syster*), and *boka* 'the book' (instead of *boken*).

Anja works in health care and is the only one of our participants who has actively tried to learn some words in the local dialect, and she feels that Duvbackians do appreciate this (cf. Van Ommeren, 2010). According to her, the locals struggle with standard Swedish and the dialect is important for them. When she needs to communicate with a member of the local community, she uses short, distinct sentences—*det funkar* 'this works'. Paavo agrees with the view that the locals are not happy using standard Swedish. He remembers his encounter with a man in the village whom he knows from work and who only speaks dialect. The first time he met the man, Paavo had asked him: *kan du prata venska?* 'do you know how to speak Swedish?'. The man had tried, said Paavo, but it was not easy for him.

All migrant participants in our study agree that the dialect is 'terrible'. What is especially interesting in relation to all of this is that our migrant participants use exactly the same words when they describe the local dialect as the locals do when they describe standard Swedish: It's 'very difficult', 'awful', 'strange'.

All in all, due to difficulties in understanding the local dialect, the Dutch and Finnish migrants do not feel that they belong to the local language community.

### 5.4.4  The Migrants' Views on Social Integration

The challenge with learning the local dialect is closely connected to social integration generally. The Dutch participants in our study told us that they consciously did not contact other Dutch people—at least during the first years after they had moved to Sweden. They wanted to integrate and

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be integrated and become part of the local village community. There is, for instance, no Dutch association in Duvbacka; cf. (9).

(9)

Janneke:    *nä men det ha- hade de pratit om det när vi flyttade hit #*
            *men jag tänkte <nej jag vill integrera # jag vill inte sitta*
            *tillsammans med alla ostätare>*
            'no but, they talked about it when we moved here # but
            I thought <no, I want to get integrated # I don't want to
            sit together with a bunch of cheese eaters>'
Josefien:   *nej dan ka- dan kan du bättre stanna i Nederlanderna*
            'no, in that case you should rather stay in the Nether-
            lands'

Gerard and Helma have started up a choir and hope to meet locals through choir activities. In order to attract Swedish members to their choir they have adapted their repertoire so that they also sing Swedish songs. The choir performs at festive church events, organises sing-along evenings, and also performs at the retirement home in the municipality. Gerard hopes that being active this way will facilitate their integration.

Janneke has also tried to enter the local fellowship in several ways, for example by participating in a local trade-and-industry group and by functioning as contact person at the Dutch Emigration Expo. In (10) she describes how she has devoted herself to quite a lot of volunteer work. In this way she has herself attempted to take responsibility for her own integration.

(10)

Janneke:    *så det är inte att vi # det är inte så att vi är inte aktivt*
            *# vi vi försöker vad vi kan och jag har varit eh inte bara*
            *på emigrantmässan # jag har gjort sju år har jag gjort allt*
            *frivilligt på skolan å överallt så vi visste inte vad vad kan jag*
            *gör mer [...] hm # och jag var med i företags eh # möte två*
            *gånger i månaden # för vad kan man ändra här i byen #*
            *så jag har gjort mycket # så det är inte att jag satt bara på*
            *soffan*
            'so it's not that we # it's not so that we're not active # we
            try what we can and I've been not only at the Emigration
            Expo # I have for seven years done voluntary work at school
            and everywhere so we didn't understand what else I could

do # and I participated in enterprise # meetings twice a
month # [to discuss] what can be changed here in the village
# so I've done a lot # so it's not as if I was just sitting on
my couch'

But her endeavours have not met with much positive response, so she
is sometimes in doubt with respect to her future in Duvbacka. She tells
us about the time she met a doctor at the Health Centre who had himself
come to the region from the south of Sweden, and who had told her that
he did not think Duvbacka was the proper place to settle in for Janneke
and her family. He assumed that they would not be happy there: *ni passar
inte ihop med* [Duvbacka] 'you simply don't fit in with [Duvbacka]'.

The efforts made for the refugees who came in 2014–2015 and were
placed at the Duvbacka refugee centre were also touched upon in our
discussions. There were very many different kinds of activities organised
in order to facilitate social integration for these refugees: language cafés,
growing vegetables and flowers, knitting cafés, and so forth. Even though
our participants readily acknowledge that there is a difference between
having to flee, and coming of one's own free will, the Dutch point out
how tough it also was for them to arrive in a new country and feel lonely
(cf. Eimermann, 2017). Since the expected social integration has more or
less not taken place, the Dutch in Duvbacka have now started to establish
contacts among each other—despite their initial attempts at not doing so.
You do need social contacts, says Janneke in (11).

(11)

Janneke:    *när man kan prata svenska hela dagen det är också annor-
            lunda # nu är det # ja vi söker kontakt med varann # innan
            sa vi <nej vi vill inte ha för mycket kontakt med holländare #
            vi ska integrera> # men sen om det blir inget*
            'when one can speak Swedish all day long it's also
            different # now it's # yes, we seek contact among ourselves
            # earlier we said <no, we don't want to have too much
            contact with the Dutch # we want to integrate> # but then
            if nothing happens'

There is now a group of between ten to twelve migrants from the
Netherlands who meet regularly to have a sauna and speak Dutch. There
is also a group who meet once a week to have coffee: *det är min svenska
familjen* 'that's my Swedish family', says Gerard.

The Finnish participants in our study also do not have a lot of contact with the local population (cf. Sect. 5.4.1), but as we saw above, this is not something they crave. Anja notes that she almost *känner mera holländare än svenskar* 'knows more Dutch people than Swedes'. When the discussion gets into aspects of social belonging, it is the Finns and the Finnish associations that get mentioned. Old memories come to the fore of times when there were many more Finnish associations than today. Recurring topics include the dance evenings and the superiority of the Finnish way of dancing in comparison to the Swedes' dancing; cf. (12).

(12)

| Erja: | *jaa det är finska tans ja # det är bara finska tans # det är ingen annan det är bara finnar* |

'yes, it's the Finnish dance, yes # it's only Finnish dance # there's no one else there, just Finns'

| Anja: | *det kunde vara liksom tans på Degerfors å Hallsberg å Köping samma kväll # å det var trehundra pers # på varje dans # å det kom artister från Finland # typ Reijo Taipale Eino Krön va* |

'there could like be a dance in Degerfors, in Hallsberg, and in Köping the same evening # and there would be three hundred people # at each dance # and there were artists from Finland # like Reijo Taipale, Eino Grön, y'know'

| Paavo: | *men det är så # finsk och vensk dans det är inte lika # det är bara bugg å sen eh tryckare # [...] det är inge annat # men finsk tans det är olika # så att det är helt annorlunda* |

'but it's like # Finnish and Swedish dancing are so different # [the Swedes] only do the bugg and slowdance # [...] there's nothing else # but Finnish dance has variations # so it's completely different'

There is no Finnish association in Duvbacka anymore, and the nearest town with a Finnish association, Karlskoga, is quite far away. But if they were to live there, they would certainly 'be married to the association', says Anja: *då skulle vi vara gifta med finska föreningen*.

They nowadays gladly take part in celebrations and feasts (like the Day of the Sweden Finns,[8] Finnish Independence Day, etc.) that are organised

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[8] The term *Sweden Finns* was first used in 1970 in a newspaper article. Today, it is the official term for Finnish-speaking Finns living in Sweden (and their descendants), and it is used in laws and other legal documents (e.g., SFS, 2009, p. 724; SÖ, 2002, p. 2).

by some of the Finnish associations in one of the towns, even if far away. On those occasions, there is always a great turnout, and Anja sings in a Finnish choir which typically performs on such occasions.

In short, neither the Dutch nor the Finns feel socially integrated in Duvbacka. However, they respond to their situations differently. The Finns are eager to seek company among and from other Finns—even from Finns living rather far away in different towns, much more so than seeking closer connection to the locals in Duvbacka. The Dutch, on the other hand, make huge efforts to become part of the Duvbacka community, and are frustrated that this is anything but easy.

### 5.4.5   The Migrants' Views on Life in Värmland

Despite their feelings of loneliness and their perception that they have not been let into the local village community, our Dutch participants nevertheless tell us that they like life in Duvbacka. Janneke compares her situation to a set of scales (*våg*): It's about weighing different things against each other; many things are not perfect in Sweden, but then again, there are also many things that are all right and make it worth one's while to stay here. What is greatly appreciated is the feeling of being safe, the tranquillity, the closeness to nature, the cheap housing prices, and the fact that life in the village community is not that stressful. The Swedish social security system is also mentioned. Helma in (13) says she has not even once regretted moving to Sweden during all the years they have lived in Duvbacka.

(13)

> Helma:  *men jag bor här nu i tretton år en eh eh # jag har ingen een dag spijt*
>           'I have now lived here for thirteen years and # I have not once regretted it'

Janneke corroborates that she and her family still love the area and that they would not want to live anywhere else in Sweden.

Helma and Gerard have children and grandchildren in the Netherlands, and they do see moving back to the Netherlands as a possibility, especially if they were to develop health problems. But neither Josefien, Janneke, nor Sandra wants to move back; Josefien tells us that she has not

even once been back to the Netherlands after she moved to Värmland seven years ago.

For Janneke and her family, Sweden is not, however, necessarily their final place of settlement. They have experienced transnational migration before they moved to Sweden, and they can fairly easily move on in case they get tired of life in Värmland. They have already bought a house in another European country, where they regularly stay. Janneke says that she is not 'stuck in one place' (*sitter fast på en plats*). According to her, the most important thing in life is that you feel at home and like it; it doesn't really matter whether you are in Sweden, in the Netherlands, or someplace else.

The Finns in our study unanimously do not want to move back to Finland. *Vad ska jag där att göra?* 'What on earth should I do there?', Anja exclaims. She loves the place where she lives in Duvbacka, which she describes as being 'just like back home in Finland' (*precis som hemma i Finland*); cf. (14).

(14)

> Anja:   *å när vi var här å titta på huset # det var # vi hade ingen mäklare med oss eller nånting # vi bara såg tid- eh huset på tidningen # så vi åkte direkt hit # så jag kände att jag kommer hem # så jag skulle ha köpt huset utan att se hur det var inuti* [...] *jo för att det var som # det var som hemma i* [Name of hometown] *i Finland # det var en liten berg å det var lite skog å det var än å* [...] *ja jag kom hem*
>
> 'and when we were here to have a look at the house # that was # we were not joined by a broker or anything # we just saw the news- the house [advertised] in the newspaper # so we drove here straight away # so I felt I'm coming home # so I would have bought the house without checking what it looked like inside [...] yes, because it was like # it was like at home in [Name of hometown] in Finland # there was a small hill and there was a little forest and there was the stream and [...] yes, I came home'

Erja and her first husband once tried to return to Finland, but they did not like it there. Sweden Finns are not much liked in Finland, according to her: *dom mobba oss mycke* 'they bullied us a lot'. They were regarded as having become too Swedish, so after a year and a half, the family moved back to Sweden. Paavo tells us that people react negatively when they are

in Finland and drive cars that are registered in Sweden. He also does not want to move back to Finland.

Overall, we see that the two groups of migrants are quite happy with Sweden as a country and with Duvbacka as their place of living. The Finns in particular are very much settled in Duvbacka. They even feel that they are not welcome in Finland any more. For the Dutch in our study, the picture is more diverse. They like Duvbacka as a geographic place; the only 'annoying detail' is that the place is populated by Duvbackians. One of the Dutch participants (Josefien) ignores the cons because she likes the place itself so much; others (Gerard and Helma) do see it as a possibility to move back to the Netherlands when they get old, while Janneke and her family are almost in their starting pits, ready to move to another (and to a warmer) country when and if they feel like it.[9]

## 5.5   On Identity Construction

In discussions on identity, none of the migrant participants in our study want to see themselves as Swedish. *Jag ska aldrig bli en svensk nej* 'I will never be a Swede, no', says Josefien flatly, while at the same time she also expresses a sense of insecurity with respect to her identity in relation to her former home country; cf. (15).

(15)

> Josefien:   *eh jag vet inte riktit # jag tror jag inte är en # neder_landska_*
> *# människor längre*
>     'I don't really know # I don't think I am a # Dutch #
>     person anymore'

Sandra describes herself as a European and as international, and Janneke says she doesn't know: It feels different depending on where she is at, but she definitely does not feel Swedish; cf. (16).

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[9] In studies by Ekberg and Östman (cf. in particular 2020), Bosnian migrants to the Swedish-language countryside in Finland were discussed from the perspective of how they narratively position themselves in relation to their migration—as mediators, generic immigrants, or permanent emigrants. With reference to Ekberg and Östman's classification, Janneke and her family could on a general level be characterised as *permanent emigrants*.

(16)

> Janneke: *jag känner mej ingen svensk jag känner mej holländare här men eh jag försöker att eh ja # gör vad alla gör men när jag är i Holland då känner jag mej ingen holländare där längre # ja [...] så jag vet inte vad jag är*
>
> 'I don't feel Swedish, here I do feel Dutch but I try to, yes # do what others do, but when I'm in the Netherlands, then I don't feel that I'm Dutch there any more # yes [...] so I don't know what I am'

None of the Finnish participants in our study distance themselves from what they describe as Finnishness. For Paavo and Erja, there is no doubt that they see themselves as Finns: *jag är finne å jag känner att jag är finsk* 'I'm Finnish, and I feel that I am Finnish', says Paavo, and Erja immediately adds: *jaa jag också* 'yes, me too'.

Mauno explains that you cannot become a Swede if you have your roots somewhere else—even if you live your life as a Swede and if you're used to the political and social system in Sweden; cf. (17).

(17)

> Mauno: *nä jag är inte svensk # rottweiler blir inte schäfer fast han lever med schäfer # [...] om du fattar [...] nä man blir inte svensk # det spelar ingen roll # [...] jag tänker å lever som svenskarna så [här] men men # det har en eh # rötterna är en annanstans [...] # däremot [...] en kroppen är här # rötterna är nån annanstans*
>
> 'no, I'm not Swedish # a Rottweiler does not become a German shepherd dog even though he lives together with German shepherds # [...] if you see what I mean [...] no, one does not become a Swede # it doesn't matter # [...] I think and live like the Swedes, like this but # one has # one's roots are elsewhere [...] # by contrast [...] one's body is here # the roots are somewhere else'

Anja, too, who refers to herself as a Sweden Finn, problematises the question of identity when she introduces a nuance with respect to her identity: She constantly differentiates between the country where she has lived for many years (Sweden) and the country where she was born (Finland); cf. (18).

(18)

> Anja:   *det här är mitt hemland men Finland är min fosterland # hmm # naturligtvis en bit min hjärta är där # det kommer alltid att vara*
>
>   'this is my home country but Finland is my native country # hm # of course part of my heart is over there # it will always be that way'

As we have seen, some of our participants do not have a simple answer to questions about their identity, but argue that identity is variable and dependent on time and place. But they do not experience this as a problem—quite the contrary: This way of thinking can be enriching, according to Anja, who explicitly says, 'I think you are rich that way' (*jag tycker att- jag tror att eh man är rik då*). Janneke and Josefien agree.

Identity construction in general is a difficult issue—both for people seeking or brooding over their own identity and for scholars attempting to investigate how identity construction works. As the examples in this section show, it is mainly the identity category of ethnicity that is made relevant in our participants' interactions. This is, of course, not surprising: Ethnic identity is '[o]ne of the deepest layers of identity that many people feel strongly about' (Horner & Weber, 2017, p. 108), especially in situations of transnational migration (cf. Bauman, 2004). In our data, identity is often talked about in an essentialising way: 'I am a Finn', 'I am no longer a Dutch'. Even in cases where identity is perceived by individuals themselves as something that is sufficiently constant and homogeneous to be named—a perception that is fairly common (cf. Bucholtz & Hall, 2004)—it is important to be aware of the dissimilarities between different individuals' constructions of these 'entities'. Examples (17–18) above nicely illustrate the different ways in which Finns use the very identity category 'Finn'.

Our data show several cases of how the participants in our focus-group discussions link perceived cultural differences to notions of ethnicity. In (3), Helma gives an account of how people in the Netherlands simply call on others in order to have a chat and a cup of coffee; in (4), Anja makes a joke about the monotonous and repetitious food on important holiday celebrations in Sweden: it's the same irrespective of whether it is Christmas, Easter, or Midsummer; and in (12) Paavo highlights the superiority of the Finnish dance in comparison to that of the Swedes, who just do the bugg or slow dance. According to Eriksen (1992, p. 220),

ethnicity is de facto construed when (experienced or imagined) differences are actualised and made relevant in on-going interaction: 'it is not the actual cultural differences between groups that create ethnicity, but rather the insistence of group members, or outsiders, on stressing such differences and making them relevant in interaction' (Cf. also Bucholtz & Hall, 2005).

In the context of the focus of the present study, that is, in situations of transnational migration, we find both the migrants in their new community-to-be and the community's traditional inhabitants frequently making (real or fictive) cultural differences relevant. The incoming settlers in our study use different 'ethnic' labels in their descriptions of the cultural differences they have experienced: *holländare, svenskar, finnar, sverigefinnar* 'the Dutch, the Swedes, the Finns, the Sweden Finns'. These labels are also used to navigate between different cultures and to express one's own group affiliation. The participants' use of different personal pronouns also signals how they identify themselves in relation to the imagined groupings. In order to refer to 'the Others', that is, to participants belonging to the local Duvbacka community, one or several of the following labels are typically used by the migrants: *svenskar, värmlänningar*, [*Duvbackingar*] 'Swedes, Värmlandians, [Duvbackians]' or they use the 3rd person plural pronoun *de* 'they'. For instance, in (4), Anja tells us that she and her husband 'don't have any Swedish friends'; Helma, in (8), describes how hard it is 'to get in touch with Swedes in Duvbacka'; in (2), Janneke complains that 'they' (i.e., the locals) say that they are interested in cooperation, but then nothing happens; and Sandra describes the dialect by saying that 'they [the locals] change all their vowels to [ø:]': *de ändrar typ allt till öööö*. The 1st person plural pronoun *vi* 'we' is used to refer to one's own group, the Finns or the Dutch in Sweden. Paavo in reference to a language course in Swedish says 'there were only Finns there # and we spoke Finnish' (*det är bara finskarna där # å vi pratade finsk*); Erja in reference to her job tells us 'we knew no Swedish at all then # we were just Finns hanging out together' (*vi kunde inte svenska nån alls då # vi bara finnar som är sammans*); and in (11) Janneke describes how the lack of contact with the local population made 'us now seek contact among ourselves'.

Interestingly, though, we do find a couple of cases when the participants use 'they' as a distancing device when referring to others than the locals in Duvbacka—in particular, in stories about the inhabitants in their own former home countries. Thus, Erja uses 'they' to signal her distance

from Finnish people when she tells us about the experience she had of not being accepted by Finns in Finland when they moved back to Finland: 'they bullied us'. And in (19) below, Janneke and Sandra use 'they' to dissociate themselves from others in the Netherlands, while 'we' is used in an including manner for 'we who live in Sweden'.

(19)

Janneke:  *hon sa <alla pratar om varann> och det gör vi inte här i Sverige*
      'she said <everybody talks about each other> and that's not what we do here in Sweden'

Sandra:  *alla jämför sig väldigt mycket med varann # bara # dom bara diskuterar om längd # det gör vi också här ibland men liksom de pratar typ en halvtimme om du är för lång eller du är för kort eller <jag var längre än dig>*
      'everybody compares themselves very much to one another # just # they only discuss how tall they are # we do that here, too, sometimes, but like they can talk for half an hour about whether you are too tall or you're too short or <I was taller than you>'

These voices clearly show that identity is nothing stable in individuals, but instead situated and negotiated in interaction. Our migrant participants' (implicit) positionings thus clearly support an understanding of identity as 'a relational and sociocultural phenomenon that emerges and circulates in the local discourse contexts of interaction rather than a stable structure located primarily in the individual psyche or in fixed categories' (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, pp. 585–586).

## 5.6   Pre-migration Aspirations, Post-migration Realities

Our data show that the Finns and the Dutch in the present study differ markedly from each other in how they experience their integration into their new home country. The Finnish participants feel very comfortable with life in Sweden. They treat Duvbacka as their home and have little inclination to move away from where they are. By contrast, the Dutch participants are frustrated that they cannot seem to get as close contact

with the local population as they had hoped for. They do not feel integrated into the local community and some of them are not sure they want to stay in Duvbacka.

In order to properly understand these results, we argue that we have to take into account the differences in the reasons why members of these two migrant groups moved to Sweden in the first place, including the very expectations they had with respect to their actual migration.

The Finns' main objective for moving to Sweden, that is, to get employment and housing, was quickly fulfilled, and they are satisfied with life in Sweden. Before arriving in Duvbacka, the Finnish participants had worked and lived in other places in Sweden. They have now settled peacefully in Duvbacka, a place they appreciate because it felt like *komma hem till Finland* 'coming home to Finland'. For them and for many other Finnish workforce migrants the motivation to learn Swedish has primarily been of an instrumental nature. The Finnish participants have not aspired to get socially integrated and become part of the Swedish majority population; their strong Finnish community has filled their general need for social belonging (cf. Ager & Strang, 2008). This is also why they are not disappointed at the lack of deeper, long-lasting contacts with the members of the local population. Following the positioning approach advocated in Ekberg and Östman (2020), we could describe the Finns in Duvbacka as *self-marginalised migrants*.

The Dutch participants in our study moved to Sweden in order to get away from what they experienced as negative factors in the Netherlands—stress, the lack of nature, too many people, and so forth. These life-style migrants had high expectations for life in Sweden, which had partly grown and been fuelled on the basis of their positive experiences of previous visits to Sweden. They prepared their migration carefully by taking language courses even before they moved, and by carefully weighing alternative places of settlement in Sweden. For them, the motivation to learn Swedish has been integrative: They specifically want to become socially integrated into the local community and they take initiatives and engage in local activities in the community. They feel that they have themselves taken as much responsibility as possible for their own integration, and they are consequently disappointed when their goal of attaining social belonging is not fulfilled. They are also disappointed that the language they have learnt in language classes does not really function in their contacts with the locals, who 'stubbornly' keep to their dialect and who do not like to

speak what the locals themselves consider to be pretentious language.[10] In other words, their main objective to move to Sweden has not been fulfilled. We thus suggest the term *involuntarily marginalised migrants* for the Dutch in Duvbacka.

The motives behind the migrants' decisions to move to another country shed further light on their own identity constructions. The Finns moved because of the job situation in Finland—and not because they were otherwise negatively inclined toward Finnish society. Even after having spent a long time in Sweden, they still identify as Finns. The Dutch left the Netherlands in order to get away from what they thought did not function well in Dutch society. They no longer identify as Dutch, but rather as 'internationals' or as 'Europeans'.

Our results clearly show that *expectations* play an important role for how migrants view their own integration (cf. also Pitkänen et al., 2019). And we suggest that, in general, causes and reasons for moving are important aspects that need to be taken more seriously in any study on immigrants' social integration.

## 5.7   Concluding Remarks and Discussion

Let us finally return to our research questions (A–C). First, in relation to research question (A) (*What are the views of 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch' about different aspects of their 'new community'?*), we discussed the migrants' views on the local community (in Sect. 5.4.1), showing that they do not feel that they themselves are members of the Duvbacka community. But we also showed that whereas this does not bother the Finnish migrants, the Dutch migrants experience it as a challenge. In Sects. 5.4.2–5.4.3 we gave voice to the migrants and their experience with learning Swedish. Again, the experiences of the migrants were quite different, especially when they met with the local dialect of their new rural community: The Finnish participants in our study were quite indifferent to their relationship with the language(s) around them, whereas the

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[10] Interestingly, there is an (even explicitly mentioned) understanding among the local population that the local dialect is hard for migrants, especially for people with a different mother tongue than Swedish. The locals, too, see this as an aggravating circumstance for language learning: The migrants learn Swedish at school, but they will not hear standard Swedish in everyday life. One of the locals says: 'I can really see # I can see a problem with this because # they learn a language that is not used in [Duvbacka]'.

Dutch experienced their meagre possibilities to interact with the locals as a major drawback. With respect to social integration (Sect. 5.4.4), the Finnish participants in our study are quite happy to be left alone, whereas the Dutch do their utmost to become part of the community—but feel that they most often fail in this endeavour. But in Sect. 5.4.5 we saw that despite all of the challenges of living in a small rural community, neither the Finns nor the Dutch regret that they have moved to Duvbacka.

With respect to research question (B) (*To what extent is knowledge of Swedish a determining factor for migrants to feel that they are integrated in their new society?*), we can note that our Finnish and Dutch participants have very different experiences of the importance of having a working knowledge of Swedish for their integration. The general (and in particular, politicians') mantra (cf. Sect 5.1) that language skills in Swedish is *the* key to integration clearly needs to be variegated and further discussed if it is to be made a society's general agenda. We will return to this in the discussion below.

With respect to (C) (*How is identity constructed by 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch' in the present situation of transnational migration?*), our data confirm that identity is a situated relational phenomenon (cf. Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) which means that there is no straightforward relationship between people's pre-migration country and identity, and how they end up constructing their identity in their new homeland. Our data also confirm that people in general have quite essentialist, ethnicity-based views about how to define 'their identity', struggling with defining themselves as belonging to one pre-defined identity construct rather than another.

### 5.7.1    Discussion

Against the background of the widespread belief and mantra constantly put to the fore in political and public debate that knowledge of the national language is *the* key to integration, we have here presented a number of individual migrants' views on how and to what extent language really plays a role in their feeling of being socially included in their new community.

Our study shows that for the Finns in Duvbacka it took a very long time before they learnt Swedish. But they were rapidly integrated in the Swedish community in the sense that they received jobs and dutifully paid their taxes. In other words, they lived up to the demand, as formulated

in Swedish integration policy documents, that migrants should be able to support themselves (e.g., SOU, 2020:54, p. 17). Moreover, they like life in Sweden, especially because there is a tight Finnish network that they can turn to. They also feel highly valued at their workplace. In this way, they feel integrated—irrespective of their level of competence in Swedish.

The situation for the Dutch in Duvbacka is almost the opposite: Some of them started learning Swedish already when they lived in the Netherlands. Just like the Finns, they promptly became part of the Swedish community in the sense that they got jobs and paid their taxes. But they are ambivalent with respect to life in Sweden. They do not feel integrated—despite their skills in Swedish.[11]

These findings raise a number of important issues. We do not question the importance of language skills for anyone[12] to be able to fully participate in today's society, that is, to get a suitable job, housing, and education (cf. Pareliussen, 2019; Rooth & Strömblad, 2008). Rather, our results show that we have to question how the very term *integration* is used in popular discourse, where the mantra of learning the 'new' language being the key to integration is presented over and over again.[13] What do people actually mean when they talk about 'integration' (cf. Grzymala-Kazlowska & Phillimore, 2018)? In order to avoid 'a simplistic, one-dimensional, "all or nothing" view of migrant "integration"', Ryan (2018, p. 237) uses the concept of 'differentiated embedding' to explore how migrants negotiate attachment and belonging to varied degrees across different domains of society: household, workplace, neighbourhood, and the wider community. Using Ryan's terminology, the Finnish and Dutch participants in our study are (or had been) successfully embedding in the work sector, but they are not embedding at all in the local

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[11] We are very well aware that the empirical data supporting our findings are limited. But the picture that has emerged from our data concurs well with descriptions in other studies of the Finnish workforce migrants and the Dutch life-style migrants in Sweden; cf. the contributions in Lainio (1996), Borg (2016), Eimermann (2017), and Eimermann et al. (2020).

[12] Except for privileged migrants who are employed at companies and institutions where they can manage well in English.

[13] Research on language and integration suggests that answers to questions like 'Are language skills a guarantee for successful integration?' cannot be given in a straightforward manner—not even when one is more specific and distinguishes between social, economic, and political integration (cf. Forsberg Lundell, 2020; Rocca et al., 2020).

community. Our findings point to complex and uncertain 'interlinkages' between different domains of integration.

Furthermore, the study clearly shows that for the individual migrant, language skills are not a guarantee for social inclusion, nor is integration achieved as soon as the migrant has a job and housing. From the migrant's point of view, integration is also about a sense of being part of the new society, a sense of belonging that can take different expressions. It can, for example, as in the case of the Finns in our study, be about feeling needed and appreciated at work or in association life; or as the Dutch in our study hoped for, it can be about being seen and included by members of the local community.

All of this calls attention to the following very important point about integration: Integration is not a one-sided process for which only the migrant can be held responsible. This is so, irrespective of whether we are dealing with urban communities often characterised by housing segregation, or with rural communities with seemingly extensive opportunities to live next door to traditional local residents (cf. Ager & Strang, 2008). In contrast to assimilation, integration is about reciprocity, and thus it is everyone's responsibility: that of the migrants, and that of the members of the receiving country and community. As pointed out by Kamali (2006, p. 20 [our translation]; see also Pötzsch, 2020): 'Integration is a state of society that applies to everyone who lives in that society. Limiting integration to apply only to "the others" must be changed'.

An equally important issue we would finally like to raise is the question of who is responsible for in-migrated community members' second language acquisition. And who is responsible for creating opportunities for the migrants to use, and in so doing, improve their skills in the language of their new home country. In the discussions, Gerard, Helma, and Paavo explicitly crave for increased possibilities to use Swedish with members of the local population in order to further their own proficiency in the language. This crucial role of interaction for second language learning has been brought to the fore in research on SLA throughout the years (for an overview, see Lindberg, 2013). We thus see that, like integration, learning a new language is not a one-sided process for which only the migrant should be held responsible.

In short, both integration and learning the language of the new country require interaction between the migrants and the local population, and are thus everyone's responsibility. It simply takes two to tango.

Aavan meren tuolla puolen jossakin on maa...
Oi jospa kerran sinne satumaahan käydä vois
Niin sieltä koskaan lähtisi en linnun lailla pois[14]

(Unto Mononen, *Satumaa*)

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[14] From the beginning of the Finnish tango *Satumaa* 'Fairy-tale land': 'There is a land somewhere—on the other side of the high seas ... Oh, if I could go to that fairy-tale land, I would never, like a bird, leave it'.

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# Finnish, the Most Difficult Language to Learn? Four German-Speaking Migrants' Ways of Getting Access to the Finnish Language in the North of Finland

*Sabine Grasz*

## 6.1 Introduction

Although German speakers are not anymore among the largest linguistic minorities in Finland, they make up a significant language group, not least from a historical point of view, looking back on several centuries of close cultural, economic, military, and private contacts with Finland. The role of Germans in Finland and German–Finnish relations have been studied relatively broadly from different angles (e.g., Hentilä, 2004; Hentilä & Hentilä, 2016; Hietala, 2017; Junila, 2006; Parry, 2022; Schirrmann & Richter-Vapaatalo, 2014; Schweitzer & Bastman-Bühner, 1998), but only some studies (e.g., Bentlin, 2008; Breier, 2017, 2020; Kolehmainen, 2022; Kortelainen & Kolehmainen, 2022; Martin, 1973; Schweitzer,

S. Grasz (✉)
Faculty of Humanities, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland
e-mail: sabine.grasz@oulu.fi

1993) focus on (socio-)linguistic issues. Breier (2017) sees Germans in Finland as an 'invisible minority', referring to Fortier (2000) and her studies on European migrants in the United Kingdom and Ruokonen-Engler's (2012) study on Finns in Germany. This means that German immigrants do not in general stand out in Finnish society; they blend in rather smoothly, both culturally and due to their physical appearance (Breier, 2017, p. 28). Moreover, the background of Germans in Finland is mostly not stigmatised but characterised by predominantly positive relations—in history as well as today (Breier, 2020, p. 42). This enables Germans in Finland to have 'a freedom of choice concerning their self-representation. They are able to direct how they want to be perceived depending on the situation' (Breier, 2020, ibid.).

The study presented in this chapter analyses interviews of four German immigrants living in northern Finland. The interviews are part of the project '*DNFi: Deutschsprachig(e) im Norden Finnlands*' (*German speakers in northern Finland*), the aim of which is to add more insights into the multilingual practices of German speakers in Finland with a focus on living in peripheral areas by collecting and analysing language biographies of German-speaking immigrants from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland in northern Finland, including the regions of North Ostrobothnia, Lapland, and Kainuu. According to Statistics Finland,[1] a total of 7,611 residents with German as their first language lived in Finland in 2022. In addition to these, there are many more with German as their second language, but they are not statistically recorded. Most of them live in the more densely populated south of Finland and in or around the capital Helsinki, but a large number of them have also settled in other regions. Multilingualism is mainly studied in the context of metropolitan areas whereas rural and urbanised peripheries have received less attention because they are supposed to be less ethnically mixed (Cornips & de Rooij, 2018, p. 3; cf. also Bijvoet & Östman, this volume). However, as Aronin et al. (2013, p. 4) note in relation to what they call current multilingualism—as opposed to historical multilingualism—, 'multilingualism has become an inherent and, arguably, in many ways, the most salient property of post-modern human society as a whole and of large numbers of specific communities, whatever their size'. Because of this development, language practices change and must be reconsidered also by residents in rural and marginal areas (Cornips & de Rooij, 2018, pp. 10–11).

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[1] All statistics derive from the free-of-charge statistical database of *Statistics Finland StatFin*.

This chapter gives insights into the four informants' experiences and views on one central aspect of their language biographies—the way to get access to the local majority language, Finnish. Although the acquisition of the Finnish language is only one topic among others, it takes a prominent place in the interviews and is strongly connected with different pragmatic and affective factors described by the informants. The informants have lived in Finland for different lengths of time and their competences in Finnish vary from a basic level to a good functional command. Two of the informants are young students, members of the so-called Erasmus generation, who came to Finland quite recently and who live in university towns. The other two informants are in their late 50s and early 60s and have stayed in Finland for more than 15 years, most of the time in small villages. The analysis focuses on the informants' description of the process of learning Finnish, on the role different people and communities play in this process, and on their views on and experiences of supportive and hindering factors behind this process. In addition, the analysis looks at the significance of other languages, especially the lingua franca English. In the beginning of this chapter, I give some insights into the sociolinguistic background of Germans in Finland (Sect. 6.2). Thereafter, the data and the research approach will be presented (Sect. 6.3), followed by a summary of the language biographies of the four informants (Sect. 6.4). In Sect. 6.5, I report the results of the thematic analysis of the interviews by presenting the different topics that occur when the informants describe their ways of accessing the Finnish language. Finally, in Sect. 6.6, I summarise and discuss the results.

## 6.2  German Speakers in Finland

The project *DNFi* focuses on German-speaking migrants, primarily from the large German-speaking countries of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Persons who were born in Finland and grew up bilingually (German–Finnish) have not been considered in this study. As Kortelainen and Kolehmainen (2022, p. 9) point out, German speakers belong to the oldest language minorities in Finland, and they were already included in the first language statistics of Finland from the year 1874. Nowadays, German speakers are no longer among the largest foreign language groups[2] in Finland. Although the number of German speakers has grown

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[2] This means people speaking languages other than Finland's official languages of Finnish, Swedish, and Saami. For more on the language situation in Finland see, e.g., Frick, Räisänen, and Ylikoski (this volume) and Latomaa and Nuolijärvi (2005).

steadily since the beginning of the 1990s, the size of other language groups has increased faster during the same period. It is evident that over the past three decades both the number of migrants and the number of individual languages spoken have increased considerably.

According to *Statistics Finland*, in 1990, a total of 24,783 people were registered as speakers of a foreign language in Finland. By 2022, the number had risen to 495,992. In 1990, German speakers (2,427 in total) were the third largest foreign language group in Finland after Russian and English speakers. In 2022, the number of people with German as their first language had more than tripled (7,611 people), but German is now only the 16th most spoken foreign first language in Finland. German has been overtaken by Estonian, Arabic, Somali, Kurdish, Persian/Farsi, Chinese, Albanian, Vietnamese, Thai, Turkish, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Tagalog. While the situation in Finland at the beginning of the 1990s reflects historical multilingualism with relatively clearly defined categories of immigrants, the situation today reflects a diversification of transnational migration as well as linguistic societies, which has led to a strong increase in the nationalities, ethnicities, languages, and religions of migrants (Aronin et al., 2013; Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Vertovec, 2007).

Even though the growth of inhabitants with migration background happens in all parts of Finland, there are regional differences in the number and size of individual language groups, also in the three regions considered in this research. In North Ostrobothnia, the largest of the three regions with a total of 416,542 inhabitants, German speakers are in 13th place of the language groups, while in Lapland (total population 175,757) they are in 5th place and in Kainuu (total population 70,506) in 11th place. In total, 620 people with German registered as their first language lived in these three regions in 2022, with most of them in North Ostrobothnia (293 residents), followed by Lapland (285 residents) and Kainuu (42 residents).

Looking at nationalities (although they do not directly allow conclusions to be drawn about the first language of the migrants, especially in the case of multilingual Switzerland), in all three regions the largest group is made up of migrants from Germany. In North Ostrobothnia, Austrians are the second largest group, while in Lapland and Kainuu, Swiss citizens outnumber Austrians. In addition, Lapland differs from the other two regions in that the German-speaking population is not only found in the administrative and educational centre, which in the case of Lapland is Rovaniemi. There is also a relatively large number of German-speaking residents in the tourist centres of Inari, Muonio, and Kittilä. In

North Ostrobothnia and in Kainuu, on the other hand, the proportion of people living outside their administrative and educational centres, Oulu and Kajaani, is very small and, for the most part, not statistically recorded.

This distribution suggests that the attractiveness of the place of residence does not depend only on the available jobs for knowledge workers in international companies, universities, or alike, which are primarily found in the cities of Oulu, Kajaani, and Rovaniemi. Work opportunities in the tourism industry in Lapland, combined with the appeal of nature and outdoor life, seem to play an important role in the decision of where to live for immigrants from German-speaking countries.[3] In this sense they can be considered as lifestyle migrants for whom the reasons to move to another country are not based on the necessity to get access to better work or education, but on free choice and the availability of the option (cf. Codó, 2018; Lawson, 2017).

There are relatively few studies on sociolinguistic topics within the extensive research literature on German–Finnish contacts. From a historical perspective, the works by Bentlin (2008) on Low German–Finnish language contacts in the Middle Ages and early modern period, and by Schweitzer (1993) and Tandefelt (2002) on the Germans in Vyborg, are interesting. In addition, Breier (2017, 2020) and Kolehmainen (2022) have dealt, among other topics, with language-related questions. Breier's (2017, 2020) analysis of interviews with Germans and German descendants in contemporary Helsinki focuses on questions about (not-)belonging and the boundaries between German- and Finnishness. In these studies, the role of language is one of the topics. According to Breier, language—especially the command of Finnish in the case of first-generation immigrants and balanced bilingualism in the case of the second generation—has a strong impact on the feeling of belonging or not-belonging and German-/Finnishness. Having a good command in both languages creates the opportunity for a 'plural identity that manages to traverse traditional ethnic boundaries' (Bergem, 2000, p. 10, as cited in Breier, 2017, p. 124).

Kolehmainen's (2022) interview study, in contrast to Breier's study, deals with the linguistic impact of mobility outside metropolitan areas and is therefore interesting in the context of the present project. The focus of her research is on national and international migration from various directions to the small industrial town of Varkaus in eastern Finland. Thus,

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[3] Cf. the motives of Dutch migrants to move to Sweden described by Bijvoet and Östman in this volume.

Kolehmainen's study deals with a mobility history that deviates from the mainstream, as the typical migration directions in Finland are from the north and east to the south or west (Kolehmainen, 2022, p. 252; Nuolijärvi, 2020, p. 335). Kolehmainen analyses the linguistic repertoire of older people aged between 71 and 93 years, one of them a German immigrant. German in general played an important role in this community at the time when the informants were active in working life and was, according to Kolehmainen (2022, p. 280), comparable to the position of Swedish at that time, while English, unlike today, was less important. Even though the language biographies of the migrants are not the focus of Kolehmainen's study, it provides a revealing insight into the rich multilingual repertoire outside of typical international centres and the change of status of certain languages over time.

## 6.3    Data and Research Approach

The data of this study consist of four interviews with female immigrants from Germany, audio recorded in autumn 2021.[4] They are part of the corpus collected in the project *DNFi*, which at present consists of 17 interviews with German speakers living in northern Finland.[5] The four interviews have been chosen because they give exemplary insights into the ways the informants of *DNFi* acquire access to the Finnish language and how this process can relate to age, time of migration, occupation, and place of residence. Two of the four informants live in towns that are administrative and educational centres of the region, and the other two informants live in small villages. All of them have a tertiary education and the two younger informants are still studying at universities. Table 6.1 gives an overview of the informants, including their pseudonyms, approximate age, length of stay in Finland, place of residence, and the duration of the recorded interviews.[6]

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[4] All interviews were conducted in German. When citing from the interviews, English translations, made by the author, are provided after the German original.

[6] Because the size of the community in the focus of this study is altogether rather small, persons were informed before participation in the study that full anonymity cannot be guaranteed. To reduce the possibility of recognising the participants, pseudonyms are used. Furthermore, names of the places of residence and other information that makes recognition possible (e.g., exact age, profession) are avoided.

**Table 6.1** Overview of the informants in this study

| Pseudonym | Age | Length of stay in Finland | Place of residence | Length of interview |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Andrea | 20–30 | 2 years | Town | 1:32:34 |
| Katharina | 20–30 | 4 years | Town | 1:25:43 |
| Birgit | 60–70 | 15 years | Village | 0:27:13 |
| Susanne | 50–60 | 27 years | Village | 1:24:23 |

In the semi-structured interviews, a range of topics according to the objectives of the *DNFi* project was covered. The topics included in this chapter are the informants' migration history, their linguistic repertoire and practices, and the process of learning Finnish. In addition to these topics, the interviews also included questions on linguistic identity, language maintenance and intergenerational language socialisation, language shift, and language loss.

The objective of the *DNFi* project is to get insight into the participants' language biographies, into their own experiences of and views on their linguistic practices in different domains of their life. Using interviews is one popular method in language biography research in the tradition of German sociological biography studies, and it has been adopted extensively in studies on language learning, language practices, and identity constructions in multilingual environments (cf. Busch, 2016, p. 4; Franceschini, 2002, p. 19; Haas, 2019, p. 107). According to Busch (2016, p. 2; 2017, p. 22), one central goal of language biography studies is to bring back the subject into linguistics and to emphasise the perspective of the experiencing and speaking individual. The research approach when analysing the interviews is qualitative, drawing on reflexive thematic analysis according to Braun and Clarke (2006, 2012). The thematic analysis seems particularly appropriate for this work as it is flexible, allowing for a comprehensive description of the data and a theory-based interpretation of the explicit and implicit patterns of meaning within the data.

When studying multilingualism or multilingual repertoires of individuals and communities, it is important to reflect on the notion of language. Even though in this study we are looking at a relatively clearly identifiable migrant group and refer, when speaking about their multilingual repertoire, to what, at least at first glance, appears to be clearly distinguishable

languages, it is important to be aware that languages in use are not clearly pre-established, distinct entities (Busch, 2017, p. 9). According to Busch (2017, p. 8), essentialising concepts of language disregard both the multilingualism inherent in each individual language (based on dialects, regiolects, and sociolects) and the multilingual practices and language-mixing phenomena that are part of many communication situations today. Therefore, in poststructuralist, subject-oriented approaches, '[t]he notion of language as a system is challenged in favour of a view of language as doing' (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2), where 'speakers' heteroglossic language practices and repertoires' (Busch, 2016, p. 2) stand in the foreground. This concept of languaging (cf. Swain, 2006) is also linked to the understanding of multilingualism as a repertoire (Gumperz, e.g., 1964, 1982). Gumperz (1982, p. 155) defines the linguistic repertoire as 'totality of distinct language varieties, dialects and styles employed in a community', but the concept is also applied on an individual level and includes a bodily, historic-political, and emotional dimension (Busch, 2016, p. 2; 2017, pp. 22–30).

## 6.4    Migration History and Linguistic Repertoire of the Informants

Firstly, the four informants in this study will be introduced by giving some insights into their migration history and linguistic repertoire. Andrea, one of the two younger informants, came to Finland for the first time as an exchange student two and a half years before the interview. During this stay of six months, she met her Finnish partner and decided to return, first for a three-month internship and then for her master's studies. Altogether she has been living in the same place, a university town in the north of Finland, for about two years. She did not visit Finland prior to her exchange studies, nor did she speak Finnish. However, she says that she has always felt a connection to the North and she describes her decision to choose Finland for her student exchange in the following Example 1:

*Example 1*:

Andrea:    Ich war aber vorher noch nie in Finnland gewesen. Was ich gemacht hab, ich hab mir in meinem Bachelorstudium die Partneruniversitäten von meiner Uni angeschaut und hab

mir die ausgewählt, die am nördlichsten war und das war
mir auch … Das hätte irgendein Land sein können, war mir
komplett egal. Ich wollte nur soweit es geht in den Norden
und das war halt X[7] und genau so bin ich hier gelandet.
(But I had never been to Finland before. What I did, I
looked at the partner universities of my university in my
bachelor's degree and chose the one that was the most
northerly and I didn't … That could have been any country,
I didn't care at all. I just wanted to go as far north as possible
and that was [name of town] and that's how I ended up
here.)

Before Andrea came to Finland, she already had experiences of living
abroad. During high school, she spent an exchange year in North
America, where she also spent a work-and-travel year after school. She
obtained her bachelor's degree in another German-speaking country and
did a second internship in a non-European country in addition to her
internship in Finland. During her first stay in Finland, she did not learn
any Finnish, but started to take Finnish courses at the university when she
began her master's studies. At the time of the interview, she participates in
Finnish courses at the A2.1 (elementary) level according to the *Common
European Framework of References for Languages* (CEFR, 2001), but does
not use the language regularly 'outside the classroom'. Besides her first
language German, she speaks English at a near-native level as well as
Spanish and Russian. The language she uses most often is English, which
she speaks at home with her partner, at university, and in everyday situa-
tions. She uses German with some study colleagues from Germany at the
university and with her family in Germany.

Katharina came to Finland four years before the time of the interview.
She decided to go abroad as an au pair for nine months immediately after
receiving her high school diploma ('Abitur') in Germany at the age of
19. It was her first longer period living abroad. Her first choice for the
au pair stay was Iceland, but she found a family in Finland that seemed
suitable for her, and so she decided to come to Finland. Like Andrea,
she had not been to Finland before, but had a general interest in the
North or Scandinavia, to which she also counts Iceland and Finland, as
she describes in Example 2:

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[7] Name of the town left out by the author.

*Example 2*:

> **Katharina**:    Also einfach der Wunsch so nach Skandinavien … Über Island habe ich viel gewusst. Und dass es dann Finnland geworden ist, das war ein bisschen Zufall. Und dann habe ich mich natürlich schon etwas informiert, bevor ich hierher geflogen bin. Aber ich muss echt sagen, ich habe fast gar nichts gewusst.
> (So, it was simply the desire for Scandinavia ... I knew a lot about Iceland. And the fact that it ended up being Finland was a bit of a coincidence. And then of course I did some research before I flew here. But I really have to say that I knew almost nothing.)

Katharina did not have any Finnish skills when she came to Finland. She started to learn Finnish in a course she attended twice a week during her time as an au pair. With the au pair family, she spoke mainly English and German. She used some Finnish only with the family's youngest child, who did not know any English or German. Like Andrea, Katharina met her partner during her stay and decided to apply to an international study programme in the closest university town. At the same time, she started to take Finnish courses at the university and at the time of the interview she is at the B1 (lower intermediate) level according to the CEFR (2001). In addition to English, Katharina learnt Spanish in school for three years. Katharina understands Finnish quite well and can manage everyday life in Finnish, but still prefers to use English; it is the dominant language in her studies and with her partner and most of her friends. She uses German with her family and friends in Germany and some close German-speaking friends in Finland in addition to also needing it in her studies.

The third informant, Birgit, has spent 15 years in Finland at the time of the interview. She was looking for a new start in her life and chose Finland because of a dream, as she explains. She had spent some summer holidays in Finland before her migration, but had no closer connections to Finland or skills in the Finnish language. She moved together with two school-age children to a small village in the north of Finland, where she later found a job and a partner. She acquired Finnish completely outside of formal language education, studying it by herself and through communicating with the local villagers, as seen in Example 3.

*Example 3*:

**Birgit**: Ich habe nicht Finnisch gelernt. Ich bin mitten in ein finnisches Dorf geraten, wo niemand Englisch spricht, und ich war einfach gezwungen zu verstehen, was die Leute sagen.
(I didn't learn Finnish. I was in the middle of a Finnish village where nobody spoke English and I was forced to understand what people were saying.)

She describes her Finnish skills as good, especially considering that she did not learn it in formal contexts. In addition to German and Finnish, Birgit speaks English, but it plays no role whatsoever in her present life. In her everyday life, she mostly uses Finnish. She uses German only with her children, who do not live at home anymore, and with her family in Germany.

Susanne, who has been in Finland the longest out of the four informants, migrated 27 years before the interview. When studying in Germany in the late 1980s and early 1990s, she had Finnish friends and after graduating from university she wanted to spend some time in Finland and learn the language. Through personal contacts, she found work and stayed in Finland. In the following Example 4, she explains her decision to come to Finland with a fascination for Finland's nature which is very different to the nature in Germany.

*Example 4*:

**Susanne**: Das war hauptsächlich so die Natur, die so total anders war als in Deutschland. Das hat mich dann begeistert. Ich bin dann aus dem Grund nach Finnland gezogen, als ich fertig war mit dem Studium.
(It was mainly the nature, which was so totally different from Germany, that excited me. That's why I moved to Finland when I finished my studies.)

Susanne went through the process of acquiring access to Finland's native languages twice. She spent the first ten years in the south and west of Finland, in predominantly Swedish-speaking regions. In the very beginning of Susanne's stay in Finland, she had close friends with whom she spoke German and English, and in her first job she could use German. After around six months in Finland, she started to take Swedish and Finnish courses. Based on her experience that Swedish was easier to learn for her as a German speaker, she started to use it as her dominant

language. During this time, she learnt and used only a little Finnish. In the following Example 5, she describes this phase of her language biography:

*Example 5*:

**Susanne**:  Die Sprache ging voran. Das war aber dann eben das Schwedische. Der Finnischkurs, der ging auch irgendwie relativ unkompliziert, aber der war nicht so […] anspruchsvoll. […] Und als dann eben das Schwedische so einen deutlichen Fortschritt zeigte, dann wurde mir klar, ok, dann ist es jetzt Schwedisch.
(The language made progress. But this was Swedish. The Finnish course was also relatively uncomplicated, but it wasn't as [...] demanding. [...] And when Swedish showed such a clear progress, I realised, ok then it's Swedish now.)

After ten years, she moved to a small village in the far north of Finland for a short-term job where she met her Finnish partner and decided to stay there. Only then did she start to learn more Finnish by taking some Finnish classes in an adult education centre and using it daily. She speaks it nowadays at a good level. Although Finnish is the dominant language in her life—at home, at work, and in her leisure time—she still would prefer to use Swedish. In addition to German, Finnish, and Swedish, Susanne also speaks English, which she used during the first months of her stay in Finland, but now very seldom. She has some contacts with German speakers living nearby. Otherwise, she speaks German only with her family in Germany.

Despite the differences in the migration histories of the four informants, some parallels can be observed. All of them had no prior experiences with living in Finland and no Finnish (or Swedish) skills when they came for their first longer stay in Finland. The reasons for moving to Finland were described with a partly indefinite fascination for the North and the nature of Finland. All of them met their Finnish partners later on during their stay in the country, which was one important reason to remain in Finland, more specifically in northern Finland. At the time of the interviews, none of the four informants considered moving back to Germany. However, for the students Andrea and Katharina, their future plans depend heavily on finding a job after graduating.

## 6.5    Getting Access to Finnish

Getting access to the Finnish language is one of the most important topics in all the *DNFi* interviews and a very prominent theme in the four interviews that have been chosen for this study. Even though all four informants moved to Finland without any prior skills in one of the official native languages of Finland, Finnish and Swedish, the above short insight into the language biographies already shows some significant differences between them. Birgit and Susanne learnt Finnish mainly outside of formal language education and started to communicate in Finnish or Swedish fairly soon after they moved to Finland. English played a minor or even non-existent role in their lives. Andrea and Katharina did not learn Finnish during their first stays in Finland because they considered English to be enough to get by in and Finnish too difficult to learn for living only a short period in Finland. Only when they decided to stay in Finland did they start to learn Finnish systematically in university language courses, but after two and four years in Finland, respectively, they both use mainly English in almost all domains of their lives. Still, they think it is essential to learn better Finnish if they are going to stay in Finland in the future. This difference in the use of English reflects, on the one hand, general developments that can be observed in Finland with English becoming more and more a lingua franca in certain domains, especially in higher education (cf. Saarinen, 2012; Saarinen & Ennser-Kananen, 2020). On the other hand, it can be explained by the age of the informants, the time of their migration, their occupation, and their place of residence. All four informants refer to these different factors when describing their own way to get access to Finnish, their learning history, and the role of other

languages, especially English, in their everyday life. The thematic analysis of the theme 'Getting access to Finnish' shows two recurring main topics in all four interviews that are strongly interconnected: (1) being forced to speak Finnish versus being able to use English, and (2) the formal and informal learning of Finnish. In the following sections, these two topics will be discussed in more detail.

### 6.5.1   Being Forced to Use Finnish Vs. Being Able to Use English

Birgit's and Susanne's processes of getting access to the Finnish language show many parallels. For both, communicating in English was not an option when they moved 17 or 15 years earlier to the small villages in the north of Finland. In both cases it has been necessary to use Finnish from the beginning in almost all common domains of life, at the workplace as well as in the public and private domain. As Birgit expresses in Example 3: 'Ich bin mitten in ein finnisches Dorf geraten, wo niemand Englisch spricht, und ich war einfach gezwungen zu verstehen, was die Leute sagen. (I was in the middle of a Finnish village where nobody spoke English and I was forced to understand what people were saying)'. The same was true for Susanne. She could speak English and Swedish with some acquaintances and colleagues, but her main means of communication was Finnish. Susanne and Birgit had the advantage, as they both expressed it, that the language level requirements for their jobs were quite open. They were both hired even though they had only a basic command of Finnish and they were given the opportunity to acquire the language alongside their work tasks. In both informants' professions it is necessary to communicate orally with people of different ages and educational backgrounds. English can be an option in communicating with some persons, but in general the means of communication must be Finnish. Written skills in Finnish, on the other hand, play a minor role. In the following Example 6, Susanne has the following to say about her first job in an educational context in the beginning of her working life in northern Finland:

*Example 6*:

**Susanne**:   Und plötzlich hatte ich alle möglichen Schüler und Null Sprachkenntnisse (lacht). Ein totaler Sprung, genau ja, aber das war eigentlich gut, weil das war die einzige Möglichkeit

wirklich ins Finnische irgendwie reinzukommen, über eine
Arbeit. Es war furchtbar anstrengend, es war von Herbst
bis Weihnachten, wo es eben auch dunkel wird […], aber
das war eine riesige Herausforderung und irgendwie durch
diese Freundin, ging das schon irgendwie, die hat mich da
auch unterstützt.
(And suddenly I had all kinds of students and zero language
skills (laughs). A total leap, yes, but that was actually good,
because that was the only way to really get into Finnish
somehow, through a job. It was terribly exhausting, it was
from autumn to Christmas, when it also gets dark [...], but
it was a huge challenge and somehow, through this friend,
it worked out somehow, she also supported me.)

Birgit had similar experiences and describes her beginnings with Finnish
in professional contexts as follows in Example 7:

*Example 7*:

    **Birgit**:   Meine erste Aufgabe war X,[8] wir haben viel Spaß gehabt,
               (lacht) aber nichts Unangenehmes. […] Naja, ich hab mich
               sicher auch mal schlecht gefühlt, aber das Finnisch bessert sich
               auch sicher mit der Zeit.
               (My first task was [profession], we had a lot of fun, (laughs)
               but nothing unpleasant. [...] Well, I certainly felt bad at times,
               but the Finnish also improves with time.)

Even though Birgit and Susanne describe the first months at their
workplaces as challenging, they both emphasise that from their present
perspective, having been forced to use Finnish in their work from the
beginning had a positive effect. Both also underline that the attitudes and
concrete support of superiors, colleagues, as well as clients were impor-
tant for them to overcome the initial difficulties resulting from the lack of
language skills. Both informants state themselves that it did not take long
for them to acquire the necessary language skills to master the work tasks
without any major language-related problems.

    Finnish is the dominant language for Birgit and Susanne, not only in
their professional but also in their private lives. For Birgit, who moved
to Finland with two school-age children, German also plays an important

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[8] Profession left out by the author.

role as a family language because she uses it primarily with her children. However, both informants only use Finnish with their partners, as they know no or very little German or English. Birgit met her husband when she already knew Finnish and found it uncomplicated to use Finnish as the family language. Susanne met her husband at the beginning of her stay in the north of Finland and knew very little Finnish at that time. In Example 8, she describes the first meetings with her future husband in a similar way to her experiences at work:

*Example 8*:

Susanne:    Das war nach drei Wochen, die ich da im Büro erst war und das Finnisch, das war noch ziemlich auf Null-Stadium. (lacht) Na egal, wir sind dann zusammen … wir sind Kaffeetrinken gegangen in eines der Hotels da in X[9] […] Wir waren vielleicht 10 Minuten da und ich konnte nur ja und nein und hm,[10] *kiitos* [Danke] und *näkemiin* [Auf Wiedersehen] (lacht).

(That was after three weeks that I had only been in the office and the Finnish was still pretty much at zero level. (laughs) Anyway, we went for coffee together ... we went to one of the hotels there in [name of village] [...] We were there for maybe 10 minutes, and I could only say yes and no and *hm*,[11] *kiitos* [thank you] and *näkemiin* [goodbye] (laughs).)

Despite this challenging start to the relationship, Susanne, much like Birgit, finds it unproblematic that Finnish is the sole language at home. Both informants have accepted that their husbands have not tried to learn German. Susanne in particular emphasises in the interview that she generally avoids speaking any language other than Finnish with Finns as it would negatively affect her relationship with them.

In contrast to Birgit and Susanne, it is uncomplicated for Andrea and Katharina to get by in English. When Katharina came to Finland as an au pair, she was supposed to communicate in English and German with the family members. The parents in the au pair family supported her Finnish

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[9] Name of the village left out by the author.

[10] 'Hm' is used here as a discourse particle expressing agreement.

[11] See footnote 10.

studies but did so without any pressure. It was only with the youngest child or with the grandparents of the children, who did not know any English or German, that Katharina used some Finnish or communicated with 'Händen und Füßen' (non-verbally) as she puts it. But as she was neither alone with the grandparents nor the main responsible person for the care of the children, she managed with some basic Finnish skills, as she explains in the following Example 9:

*Example 9*:

> **Katharina**:  Mit der Kleinsten war es am schwierigsten zu reden. Aber Kinder sind da sehr neugierig und einfallsreich. Also ich habe schon das Gefühl gehabt, dass man sich versteht. […] Und ich habe ihr auch finnische Bücher vorgelesen, auch wenn ich dann nicht verstanden habe – ok, was erzähl ich gerade (lacht).
> (The smallest one was the most difficult to talk to. But children are very curious and imaginative. So, I had the feeling that we understood each other. […] And I also read Finnish books to her, even if I didn't understand – ok, what am I talking about (laughs).)

At the time of the interview, Andrea and Katharina studied in international study programmes at the university, where English is the predominant language (cf. the use of English at Finnish universities: e.g., Komppa et al., 2017; Saarinen, 2012; Saarinen & Rontu, 2018; Vaarala & Kyckling, 2017). They both use English with their partners and with most friends as they point out in the interviews. In their opinion, it is also easy to get by in English when dealing with public services, bank offices, and alike, as Andrea explains in the following Example 10:

*Example 10*:

> **Andrea:**  Also, ich sag mal so, ganz praktisch gesehen, müsste ich nicht Finnisch lernen. Also ich denke, dass gerade auch die jüngeren Generationen … natürlich die sprechen alle supergut Englisch. Generell sprechen Finnen super Englisch. Praktisch gesehen müsste ich nicht Finnisch lernen. Also ich weiß auch, wenn ich hier die nächsten zehn Jahre leben

würde, würde ich die nächsten zehn Jahre mit Englisch auskommen. Ich könnte auch in allen Behörden alles mit Englisch machen, das wäre, denke ich, kein Problem.
(I'll say, from a practical point of view, I wouldn't have to learn Finnish. I think that especially the younger generations … of course they all speak super good English. In general, Finns speak super English. Practically speaking, I wouldn't have to learn Finnish. So, I also know that if I lived here for the next ten years, I would get by with English for the next ten years. I could also do everything in English in all the public offices, so I don't think that would be a problem.)

Even though the experiences of the four informants show individual differences, they reveal interesting commonalities and bring to light aspects that have also been described in other research on migrants' linguistic practices in Finland (cf. Iikkanen, 2020; Lehto, this volume; Leppänen et al., 2011; Scotson, 2018a, 2020). Although it may seem relatively uncomplicated today to get by in English in most domains, this cannot be generalised to all areas. Like in many other countries, there are socio-demographic differences between young, well-educated Finns who have a high level of proficiency in English and use it frequently, and the older generations, especially when they have attended only basic education (cf. Leppänen et al., 2011). This seems to be true in the rural regions in the north of Finland, where many people have only minimal skills in English. Birgit and Susanne, both aged around 60, and Andrea and Katharina, both in their 20s, each belong to the same generation. Birgit and Susanne came to Finland and the north of Finland about ten to twenty years earlier than Andrea and Katharina. While Andrea and Katharina study in English-language programmes and live in university centres, Birgit and Susanne live in small villages and work in fields where Finnish is the only or at least the main means of communication. On the axis of these differences, the dividing line can also be drawn between the domains and places where it seems unproblematic to use English and where English is not an option. While Finnish is the main means of communication for Birgit and Susanne in most domains, it is English for Andrea and Katharina. Birgit and Susanne know English and have sometimes used it in different situations, but because of the environment they live in, they both talk about how they were 'forced' to use Finnish. In the small villages where they live, there is hardly any job offer which would not require the knowledge of Finnish. On the other hand, the

range of study programmes offered in English at Finnish universities is nowadays very extensive and, in this field, it is often not necessary to know Finnish to obtain an academic degree. While Birgit's and Susanne's husbands belong to a generation where a good knowledge of English is not self-evident, Andrea's and Katharina's partners speak English very well. However, Andrea and Katharina also described experiences with the non-existent English skills of different generations, for example with the parents or older relatives of their partners. There are also clear differences regarding leisure time. In the university towns where Andrea and Katharina live, there is a wide range of leisure activities where English can be used, and it is usually no problem to speak English among friends or even to find German-speaking friends. If Birgit and Susanne want to participate in sports or cultural activities in their villages, Finnish is necessary. This applies to most of their social contacts.

Finnish and English are the main languages used by the informants. As shown in the brief insight into the language biographies, German plays a role mainly in contact with family and friends in Germany and with a few friends in Finland for all four informants. For the two older informants Birgit and Susanne, however, German did play a role in contact with Finns when they came to Finland. Susanne had Finnish friends and acquaintances with whom she spoke German during her first time in southern and western Finland and had some jobs where she could use German. Birgit also says that she was repeatedly addressed in German by Finns from a certain generation who had learnt German at school. On the other hand, she says, younger people 'kommen mit Englisch an'—they speak English. The younger informants Andrea and Katharina hardly ever had any experience of being addressed in German. Even if these individual experiences cannot be generalised, they do point to the change in the status of German and English in Finland, also described by Kolehmainen (2022). Whereas German used to be even more widespread than English in many areas, English now clearly dominates German.

### 6.5.2    *Formal and Informal Learning of Finnish*

The second topic which comes up when talking about the process of getting access to Finnish is the ways the informants have learnt Finnish inside and outside formal language education. Here, too, we can see some similarities, but also differences, between the four informants. As mentioned in the language biography, Birgit acquired Finnish completely outside of formal language education because no Finnish courses were offered in the village. She says that she did not learn the language (see Example 3) but describes the process as 'growing into the language', comparing it to the way children learn their first language: 'Ich bin da eigentlich wie ein Kind da reingewachsen (I actually grew into it like a child)'. In Example 11 she explains the process in more detail:

*Example 11*:

**Birgit**:    Ja, also ich hab mir so kleine Sätze gemacht. Ich hatte ein Lehrbuch *Yksi, kaksi, kolme* und also so Drei-Wort-Sätze, mit denen habe ich mich durchgeschlagen. […] eigentlich mehr mit den Leuten, die sind sehr viel zu mir gekommen, zu uns und ich hab viel gehört. Und ich kann mich noch erinnern, so die erste Zeit habe ich gebraucht, bis ich gemerkt habe, wann ein Satz zu Ende ist. Und dann hat es noch mal ein paar Monate gedauert, dann habe ich gemerkt, aha, das ist ein Wort, dass ich die Worte voneinander trennen konnte. Und dann habe ich so einzelne Worte gehört, die immer wieder auftauchen und so ganz allmählich … Ich habe einfach gehört und nachgesprochen, sonst nichts, keinen Kurs nichts.
(So, I made little sentences. I had a textbook called *Yksi, kaksi, kolme* and I made my way with three-word sentences […] actually more with the people, they came to me a lot, to us, and I heard a lot. And I can still remember that it took me a while to realise when a sentence was finished. And then it took another few months, then I noticed, ah, that's a word, that I could separate the words from each other. And then I heard individual words that came up again and again and so very gradually … I just listened and repeated, nothing else, no course, nothing.)

Susanne also learnt Finnish mainly outside formal contexts. She took a Finnish and a Swedish course in parallel at an adult education centre at the beginning of her stay in Finland, as mentioned above in Example

5. However, as she progressed more quickly with Swedish, she concentrated on acquiring this language and did not attend Finnish courses during that period anymore. It was only after she moved to northern Finland and found it necessary to use Finnish in her work that she started learning Finnish in a course. Finnish courses were organised in her place of residence, but the offerings were limited. In Susanne's opinion, the course was useful but grammar-oriented and she feels that she acquired most of her language skills through work, her husband, and Finnish acquaintances.

Andrea and Katharina did not think it was important to learn Finnish when they first came to Finland. Andrea did not attend a Finnish course at all during her exchange studies because she had heard that Finnish was a very difficult or even the most difficult language to learn ('Hört man ja: oh, Finnisch ist so schwierig und schwierigste Sprache der Welt'/'You hear: oh, Finnish is so difficult and the most difficult language in the world') and it did not pay to learn it for such a short stay—where 'it's more about having fun' ('wo es ja eher darum geht, Spaß zu haben'). Katharina attended a Finnish course during her au pair year in Finland, but as can be seen in the following Example 12, learning Finnish was not a priority for her either:

*Example 12*:

> **Katharina:** Und ich bin auch zweimal die Woche – theoretisch – in den Finnischkurs gegangen. Ich muss aber sagen, dass ich es in diesem Jahr nicht als superwichtig empfunden habe, Finnisch zu lernen, weil es war nicht der Plan da, dazubleiben. Und für mich war dann eher so dieser Austausch mit Freunden und dass man sich trifft. Und ja, dass man Sachen unternimmt und wegfährt, war für mich dann wichtiger, als dann die neue Sprache wirklich zu lernen.
> (And I also went to Finnish classes twice a week – theoretically. But I have to say that I didn't feel it was very important to learn Finnish that year, because I didn't plan to stay there. And for me, it was more about this exchange with friends and getting together. And doing things and going away was more important to me than actually learning the new language.)

When they started their studies at university, Andrea and Katharina began to learn Finnish systematically at their universities' language centres, where a range of language courses are offered at different levels and for different skills. Although they are satisfied with the quality of the courses, they both feel that progress in the courses has little impact on their competence to communicate in Finnish. They both acknowledge that it is their own responsibility to use the language 'outside the class-room'. Yet they rarely do so and mostly prefer to communicate in English, as Andrea describes in Example 13 where she speaks about the languages she uses in different situations:

> *Example 13*:
>
> **Andrea**:  Ja, also genau, zuhause mit meinem Freund: Wir sollten eigentlich Finnisch sprechen, damit ich es lerne, aber natür-lich machen wir das nicht. Ja, also mit meinem Freund spreche ich komplett Englisch. […] Bei Geschäften, Lokalen: Ja, wie gesagt, das kommt dann auf den Themenbereich an. Mittlerweile, wenn ich ins Restaurant gehe, natürlich dann versuche ich es auf Finnisch, weil das ist halt mittlerweile ein Themenbereich, den ich, denke ich halt, dass ich den kann (lacht).
> (Yes, right, at home with my boyfriend. We're supposed to speak Finnish so that I learn it, but of course we don't do that. Yes, so with my boyfriend I speak only English. […] In shops, restaurants. Yes, as I said, it depends on the topic. Nowadays, when I go to a restaurant, of course I try to speak Finnish, because that is now a topic that I think I know (laughs).)

Regarding learning Finnish in formal language courses, two central themes can be identified. On the one hand, the informants who live in small villages are concerned with the possibility of attending courses at all. In rural areas, there are sometimes no or only insufficient Finnish courses on offer. In cases where courses are available, they are often at a low level of competence and offer little help with technical vocabulary for different professions. The situation is different in larger towns and in university towns, where there is a wide range of Finnish courses. On the other hand, the immediate usefulness of Finnish courses for gaining confidence in using the language is questioned by the informants although they are

generally satisfied with the quality of the courses (similar experiences are described in Scotson, 2018b).

According to sociocultural approaches to language learning, developing language skills is primarily a social process in the context of which knowledge is first co-constructed before it is further processed individually (Aguado, 2010, p. 817; Mitchell et al., 2013, p. 220). This is also clearly reflected in the interviews. When talking about learning outside formal Finnish classes, all informants emphasise the role of the community and individual persons. For Birgit and Susanne who learnt Finnish mainly outside formal educational contexts alongside their jobs, it is evident that they could not have mastered this without the goodwill and help of the community. The support from other people is mentioned in the interviews by both informants as a key factor in the process of acquiring the Finnish language (cf. also Strömmer, 2017). In the case of Susanne, it was her superior who supported her during the early times of her job. Birgit emphasises several times in the interview that the people from the village helped her a lot in learning. She sees this form of support as typical for the inhabitants of the periphery in the north of Finland and explains it by saying that compared to cities, the people in the periphery are more dependent on each other due to the low population density, long distances, and sometimes extreme weather conditions. 'Die Leute brauchen sich mehr' ('People need each other more'), as she expresses it.

Forms of support mentioned in the interviews and considered as helpful can be verbal or embodied, such as adapting one's own language to the language level of the interlocutor, for example by speaking more slowly; paraphrasing; using simple language; different forms of translanguaging including English, German, and Swedish; non-verbal communication; and, more so for the younger informants, the use of different digital applications. In addition to these concrete forms of scaffolding, the general willingness to communicate in Finnish with interlocutors with limited language skills as well as attitudes towards possible communication problems come up several times in the interviews. As already seen in Example 7, humour is an important factor in situations where there are problems of communication. Both Katharina (see Example 9) and Birgit find it easier to work and communicate with children, which they attribute to children's spontaneity and natural curiosity. In contact with adults, the informants repeatedly mention that they have the impression that many Finns have little experience in communicating with speakers of foreign

languages. This insecurity often results in either avoiding communication or switching to English, as Andrea describes in the following Example 14:

*Example 14*:

    **Andrea**:  Ich weiß nicht genau, wie ich es beschreiben soll, aber Finnen sind halt nicht daran gewöhnt, Leute zu hören, die ihre Sprache nicht gut sprechen. Also ich sag mal, wenn ich in X[12] unterwegs bin und mich jemand in gebrochenem Deutsch nach dem Weg fragt, dann ist das für mich normal. Also ich weiß, ok nicht jeder, der in X wohnt, kann Deutsch sprechen. Aber hier, ich habe bei den Finnen immer das Gefühl, dass die einfach nicht daran gewöhnt sind, jemanden gebrochen Finnisch sprechen zu hören und dass sie entweder dann verwirrt reagieren und dann gar nicht kommunizieren wollen oder dass sie direkt auf Englisch wechseln.
(I don't know exactly how to describe it, but Finns are just not used to hearing people who don't speak their language well. So, I say, when I'm walking in [name of town in Germany] and someone asks me for directions in broken German, it's normal for me. I know, ok not everyone who lives in [name of town] can speak German. But here, I always have the feeling with Finns that they are just not used to hearing someone speak broken Finnish and that they either react in a confused manner and don't want to communicate at all or they switch directly to English.)

Switching to English is a phenomenon that has been discussed in various contexts in Finland recently (see also Lehto, this volume) and is, according to Susanne, a phenomenon of cities ('Das [Wechsel ins Englische] kann passieren, aber hier auf dem Land nicht.'/'It [switching to English] can happen, but not here in the countryside.') and it is indeed a topic primarily in the interviews with the two younger informants, Andrea and Katharina, who live in university cities. Andrea in particular, who is currently trying to use Finnish more often in certain situations, talks about this issue at length in the interview. She describes her own interpretation of the behaviour as contradictory. On the one hand, she thinks that switching language can be well-intentioned and understood by the interlocutor as a form of support. On the other hand, however,

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[12] Name of the town in Germany is left out by the author.

she understands it is a form of exclusion and a wasted opportunity for her to learn and use the language, as she describes in the following Example 15:

*Example 15*:

> **Andrea**:  Ja, das ist mir schon super oft passiert, dass ich versucht habe, auf Finnisch zu sprechen und die gemerkt haben ok, die kann es nicht richtig gut und dann haben sie einfach auf Englisch gewechselt. Und ich muss sagen, das ist immer sehr, sehr demotivierend, weil man sich dann halt so denkt, ach komm, ich kann es ja nur lernen, wenn ich es übe.
> (Yes, it has happened to me super often that I have tried to speak in Finnish, and they have noticed ok, she can't really do it well and then they have simply switched to English. And I have to say, that's always very, very demotivating, because then you think to yourself, oh come on, I can only learn it if I practise it.)

The behaviour described by Andrea—and similarly by Katharina—is also found in the research by Scotson (2018a), who examines the language choices in different conversational situations of highly educated migrants in Finland. Many of the migrants consciously use Finnish in certain situations that they interpret as manageable (Andrea gives the restaurant or cafeteria as examples here); in others they prefer English. In Andrea's case, this involves situations related to her studies, but also, for example, a visit to the optician. To avoid her interlocutors switching to English, she has started to frame her conversations by explaining at the beginning that she is only learning Finnish and does not speak it very well yet but would like to use it. With this strategy of claiming agency and control over the language choice in a particular situation, she tries to make a language contract (cf. Eskildsen & Theodórsdóttir, 2017; Scotson, 2018a) with her interlocutors and is positioning herself as a language learner, as can be seen in Example 16:

*Example 16*:

> **Andrea**:  Und deshalb leite ich halt immer ein, dass ich von mir aus auf Finnisch sage: Ok, ich lerne Finnisch, ich würde gerne auf Finnisch sprechen, aber ich spreche es halt nicht gut.

(And that's why I always start by saying in Finnish: Ok, I'm learning Finnish, I'd like to speak in Finnish, but I don't speak it well.)

According to Andrea, this strategy has led to her Finnish interlocutors switching less often to English and also adapting more to her language level. These examples and Andrea's reflections can be theorised in what Saarinen and Ennser-Kananen (2020) have stated in relation to the role of English as a global or world language and the implications of this status for localised contexts. Even though the authors have dealt with institutional contexts, the ambivalent role of English is also clearly evident in Andrea's subjective language experience. English is at the same time empowering and hegemonic; it is a resource, but it also consumes resources (Saarinen & Ennser-Kananen, 2020, p. 117).

## 6.6    Summary and Discussion

In this study, the process of getting access to the Finnish language for four German migrants in northern Finland was examined through their own narratives. The immigration of Germans to Finland is particularly remarkable from a historical perspective. Today, German speakers (i.e., people who claim German as their first language) and people with German, Austrian, or Swiss nationality are no longer among the largest minority groups in Finland, but they still play an important role regionally, for example in Lapland. According to Breier (2017), the German-speaking minority can be counted among the 'invisible minorities' that are not particularly noticeable—comparable to Finnish immigrants in Germany. This circumstance is also evident in the interviews. None of the informants recounts bad experiences as migrants in Finland and they all are well integrated into Finnish society in many respects, also through their Finnish partners. However, they become an 'obvious' minority through their use of language, for example, through an accent in Finnish or low proficiency in Finnish in general.

Getting access to the Finnish language played a very important role in the interviews. The different positions as language learners and language users that emerged among the four informants are related to the differences among them. For example, they belong to different generations as Andrea and Katharina are in their 20s and Susanne and Birgit are around 60. Significant differences between the informants are also their

lengths of stay in Finland, between two to four years and over 15 years, and their places of residence. The two younger informants live in university towns, the two older ones in small villages. These differences affect linguistic practices and the processes of acquiring the Finnish language. For example, Birgit and Susanne learnt Finnish primarily in informal contexts and were more or less forced to use Finnish in their jobs, even though they did not speak it well at the beginning. Andrea and Katharina, on the other hand, have access to a wide range of Finnish courses in their places of residence, which they also use. However, they use mostly English in their university studies and everyday and private life. English takes on an important role in this research, like other studies on the language use of primarily highly educated migrants in Finland, and is perceived as ambivalent by the informants themselves. From their perspective, English is both a resource in gaining access to education, social contacts, and, in general, initial life in Finland. However, they are motivated to learn Finnish and they see English in this process as an obstacle that prevents them from gaining faster access to the Finnish language. This ambivalence regarding the use of Finnish or English is connected to strong emotional aspects. For example, Andrea and Katharina perceive situations where they, as language users, are deprived of agency in their choice of language by their Finnish interlocutors switching to English as a form of exclusion and frustrating in terms of their learning process.

The desire or even the necessity to learn Finnish is supported by both pragmatic and affective arguments. For Birgit and Susanne, for example, it was a necessity to use Finnish in their jobs, and Andrea and Katharina also assess their future chances in the labour market as relatively poor without a knowledge of Finnish. It is interesting to see here that it is not necessarily always the case that only good language skills give access to the labour market. Birgit's and Susanne's biographies show that doing a job with low language proficiency is possible and can actually provide access to the language. This process requires support from the social community, superiors, and work colleagues, but is described by Birgit and Susanne as extremely effective. However, affective arguments are at least as important as pragmatic arguments in the interviews when it comes to learning Finnish (or the surrounding language, as it was initially with Swedish for Susanne). Birgit and Susanne repeatedly emphasise in the interviews that knowledge of Finnish is important in order to be accepted as part of the local community in the small villages. But also for Andrea and Katharina, living in more internationally orientated university towns, it seems to be

a key factor in their feeling of belonging—or as Andrea puts it, Finnish is very important '[…] fürs Gefühl und für, ja, für dieses Ankommen und Akzeptiertwerden' ('for the feeling and for this arriving and being accepted').

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# Transnationals' Discourses on the English Language in Finland

*Liisa-Maria Lehto*

## 7.1 Introduction

Alongside other societies in the world, Finland is facing increasing diversity in its population, and the sociolinguistic changes that follow are challenging existing policies and established structures in Finnish society. The current situation calls for the need to find new ways to live multicultural and multilingual lives in the Finnish community (e.g., Ruuska, 2020, p. 251; Saarinen, 2012). Oftentimes, multiculturalism or internationalism seems to equal the use of English as the assumed shared language (e.g., Saarinen, 2012); in other cases, English is simply positioned as a global language and thus seen as an enabler or a threat (e.g., Saarinen & Ennser-Kananen, 2020). Here, I concentrate on how transnationals living in Finland talk about English and its use in a Finnish context, that is, their discourses on English. By the term transnational, I refer to people whose background is in a country other than Finland.

L.-M. Lehto (✉)
Research Unit for Languages and Literature, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland
e-mail: liisa-maria.lehto@oulu.fi

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Some existing studies on Finns' perceptions of English in a Finnish context show that English is present in the everyday life of Finns in Finland (Leppänen et al., 2008; Leppänen et al., 2011; Leppänen & Pahta, 2012; Peterson, 2019). It has been documented in studies that Finns (often) speak English willingly (Leppänen et al., 2011; Scotson, 2018a, p. 45). The use of English by migrants and their perceptions of English in Finland is, however, a less studied phenomenon. This is because, in the Finnish context, the language studies of migrants focus on Finnish language learning (e.g., Iikkanen, 2020; Komppa et al., 2017), as language skills and finding employment are considered to play an important part in migrant integration (e.g., Tarnanen et al., 2015; cf. Bivojet & Östman, this volume).

Linguistic choices between English and Finnish in particular have been studied in different everyday situations. Migrants' perceptions of languages in Finland and the significance of English for migrants are topics which have been touched upon for example in recent studies by Ruuska (2020), Scotson (2020), and Iikkanen (2020). That is, English is present in these studies when talking about, for example, language choice (Scotson, 2020), the increased use of English in everyday interactions in Finland (Ruuska, 2020; Scotson, 2020), and ideological representations connected to English skills (Iikkanen, 2019). However, Finnish occupies the main role: For example, Ruuska (2020) focuses on advanced second-language speakers of Finnish and their experiences of everyday language use in Finland, and Scotson (2018b) concentrates on the agency of migrants and their language choices between Finnish and English. Also, the relationship between language and identity, along with the topics of inclusion and exclusion, has been the centre of interest in several studies connecting migrants and language issues in Finland (e.g., Ekberg & Östman, 2020; Intke-Hernandez, 2020; Ruuska, 2020; Scotson, 2018b).

To conclude, the discourse on the self-evident position of English, in terms of skills and usage, has already been proven in previous studies among both Finns and migrants in Finland, but it has not been studied in detail. In the current changing society, it is important to discuss the recurrent claims about English in Finnish society as well as consider their possible consequences. Perceptions, attitudes, and ideologies on migrants and language in Finland have been perused in earlier studies, whereas discourses—ways of constructing the world via language—have not been in the focus. In this study, I use a discursive approach to identify different ways in which my informants give meanings to languages and language

users (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2019). My research questions are: (1) What discourses on the English language do the informants of the study construct in the pair conversations? (2) What kind of picture do these discourses paint of the linguistic situation in Finnish society, that is, how is the presence of English in Finnish society as well as proficiency in English pictured in the discourses of transnationals in Finland?

Discourses on languages and also ideologies behind discourses are hardly ever about language alone (e.g., Saarinen & Ennser-Kananen, 2020). Hence, it is important to consider the relationships between different languages in society and, more importantly, the relationships between language users as well as the social structures behind language use (Saarinen & Ennser-Kananen, 2020). Discourses have the potential to reshape dominant perceptions and increase awareness about languages. The informants of the study contribute to the picture of language discourses circulating in Finnish society: They may strengthen prevailing discourses, or they may challenge or even resist them. How the informants speak about English can be seen as a reflection of dominant language discourses. It is also a way to make these discourses visible or provide an opportunity to approach language questions from varied viewpoints and reshape conceptions of the present linguistic state of Finnish society.

The article is divided into five sections: In the next Sect. 7.2, I present the theoretical starting points on which I build my analysis, followed by my data and methodology in Sect. 7.3. I report and analyse my results in Sect. 7.4, which includes three sub-sections, each discussing a particular emerging discourse. Finally, the results and implications of the study are discussed in Sect. 7.5.

## 7.2 Theoretical Background

From a broad perspective, two distinct viewpoints can be identified in discourses on English around the world: The language is seen as a global lingua franca and an international language on the one hand and as a threat to other languages on the other. The former in particular has attracted criticism (see, e.g., Jakubiak, 2012), since attention is often drawn to a multilingualism where English is persistently portrayed as a lingua franca despite only being a part of the global picture of language use (Makoni & Pennycook, 2012; on linguistic imperialism see Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 2000, pp. 112–114.). However, a discourse on English as an empowering or oppressing language is also a non-fruitful starting

point for a conversation about language as a social phenomenon—these kinds of dichotomies are to be avoided. Instead, studies should go beyond just considering the usefulness or dangers of English as a global language, as this way of thinking glosses over the social structures and ideologies behind it. The studies should concentrate on the layered and complex social implications of English in localised contexts (Saarinen & Ennser-Kananen, 2020). I will proceed to give a brief overview on the current perceptions of multilingualism in Finland, expanding on the introduction to English in a Finnish context in Chapter 1.[1]

### 7.2.1    *Multilingualism in Finland*

Linguistically and ethnically, Finland is relatively homogeneous (Blommaert et al., 2012, pp. 10, 12; Ruuska, 2020) and the linguistic situation and population structure is not consistent between different geographical regions around the country. The regional composition of the foreign population varies: The number of people with foreign background is highest in Uusimaa (14.9%) and Åland (16.7%) and lowest in South Ostrobothnia (only 2.5%) (Statistics of Finland, 2020). The number of foreign-language mother-tongue speakers in Finland is under 8%, and the largest foreign language groups are Russian and Estonian, with English being fourth on the list (approx. 23,000 speakers, i.e., 0.4% of the population) after Arabic (Statistics of Finland, 2020).

Recent studies (e.g., Ruuska, 2020, p. 251) show how linguistic diversity as well as the awareness of a variety of different speakers of Finnish is increasing nowadays. Ruuska's dissertation about highly proficient second-language speakers of Finnish is one example of the existence of this variation as well as of the gradually changing linguistic situation and perception of languages and language varieties in Finland. According to Statistics of Finland (2017), out of the adult Finnish population (ages 18–65), over 90% claim to speak at least one foreign language, and English is the main foreign language of those surveyed.

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[1] For a more detailed picture of the linguistic situation in Finland see Chapter 1 of this volume.

### 7.2.2 Perceptions of English in Finland

The attitudes of Finns towards English and their perception of it have been examined for example by Leppänen, Nikula, and Kääntä (2008, eds.) as well as Leppänen et al. (2011), and English is presented in their studies as a natural part of everyday life. Previous studies have shown that Finns do indeed have a very positive attitude towards English (Leppänen et al., 2011), and English is sometimes portrayed as an integral part of society, to the point of receiving the label of Finland's 'third national language' (Leppänen et al., 2008). However, Leppänen and Pahta (2012) have found different voices when studying language ideological debates in Finland, noticing that English is sometimes described as the *foreign other* and that these discourses reflect nationalist ideologies which originate from the changing of the world.

Proficiency in English seems to be self-evidently considered a prestigious and valuable resource in the sociolinguistic field of Finland. English has acquired the status of an international language, and it can also be seen as an indicator of the level of an individual's education (Leppänen et al., 2011). The position of English can also be seen in the context of Finnish higher education where, for example, Finns' experiences of English learning and usage are studied (e.g., Räisänen & Karjalainen, 2018). The position of English is also evident in studies on Finns' professional use of the language. For example, Räisänen and Karjalainen (2018) studied multilingualism in the work of technical engineers and the kind of (multilingual) communication skills needed in their work. All their informants experienced English skills to be a natural and self-evident part of working life (see also Räisänen, this volume).

From a migrant's point of view, there are two main angles to the discussion of English in Finland, as demonstrated in recent studies on migrants' language perceptions. First, Ruuska (2020, p. 139) states that English is an important resource and lingua franca for migrants in Finland. Second, there are possible disadvantages of English usage when considering the position of English from a migrant's point of view. Positive effects of English emerge when having English as a resource can act as a gateway to Finnish society, since it is often the first language used to interact with the locals. It works as an inclusive language in different areas of everyday life. For example, Iikkanen (2020) shows in her study how migrants see English as an essential skill especially during the first stages of settlement in Finland. In working contexts of migrants, English is seen

as a language that makes communication easier, for example when Finnish skills are felt to be insufficient (Komppa, 2015, p. 176; see also Iikkanen, 2017). Migrants may experience different levels of agency and possibilities to act and participate in different languages. Scotson (2018b, pp. 218, 221) has observed such differences in her informants: Agency is sometimes possible in English, but not necessarily in Finnish. English allows for equal communication and acting in society, whereas using Finnish leads to confusion. English is perceived as a better choice for communication and participation especially in special situations such as institutional encounters and situations where time is limited (Scotson, 2018a; see also Komppa, 2015). English is seen both as a language of time management, quickness, and efficiency and as a language that is easy to use. Migrants in Finland see it as a tool to avoid misunderstandings and also as a language for meaningful conversations (Komppa, 2015, p. 176; Scotson, 2018a).

The possible disadvantages of English usage emerge in views where English is often mentioned as an obstacle to learning Finnish, hindering the possibilities of learning the language (Scotson, 2018a, 2020). If one wishes to have social contacts outside of the English-speaking community, speaking only English can become an obstacle to integration into Finnish society (Iikkanen, 2017). In the same vein, in a workplace context, English is not only a useful communication tool leading to inclusion but also a language that hinders the usage and learning of Finnish (e.g., Strömmer, 2017). In sum, while being able to use English in Finland may initially open many doors for migrants, relying on its use may decrease their opportunities for incorporating local languages into their everyday language practices.

## 7.3   DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In this section, I present my pair conversation data and the informants in the first subsection. In the following subsection, I discuss my discourse analytical research approach and report my research conduct.

### 7.3.1   *Informants and Pair Conversations*

The data consist of pair conversations between transnationals residing in northern Finland at the time of the conversations. There are 20 informants in total: four men and 16 women. By the term transnational, I refer to persons who have, or whose parents have, moved to (northern) Finland

as adults and who use a language other than or in addition to Finnish at home. The informant group is heterogeneous: The informants represent 13 different countries of origin and 13 different reported mother tongues in total. Among them are seven informants who reported themselves to have more than one mother tongue, and for two of these informants one of their mother tongues was Finnish. Most of the informants have moved to Finland as adults, and their motivations for migrating as well as time spent in Finland vary. One of the informants was born in Finland.

The data consist of 10 video-recorded pair conversations. The conversations last between 45 minutes and two hours each, and there are approximately 15 hours of research data in total. Some of the informants knew each other beforehand, but the pairs were mostly selected at random. One of the pairs was a married couple (pair 4) and another consisted of a mother and her daughter (pair 2). There were no other family relations. Table 7.1 details the data and the informants. In the informant codes, the first number indicates the number of the pair, followed by F for female and M for male. Finally, the last number is the informant's age at the time of the pair conversation.

The pair conversations resembled semi-structured theme interviews (Tiittula & Ruusuvuori, 2005). The informants received a thematically grouped set of questions to discuss together regarding themes of language and inclusion in Finnish society. Some of the conversations between the informants were more flowing and natural, whereas others were more like interviews since the informants directed their answers to me, the

**Table 7.1** The informants and data

| Pairs and informant codes | Time spent in Finland (years) | Length of the recording | Language of the pair conversation |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1_F37/1_F32 | 11/approx. 1 | 1:15 | Finnish |
| 2_F20/2_F48 | Born in Finland/22 | 1:16 | Finnish |
| 3_F49/3_F45 | 14/18 | 2:08 | Finnish |
| 4_F36/4_M38 | 15/12 | 1:54 | English |
| 5_F35/5_F49 | 10/22 | 1:24 | Finnish |
| 6_M38/6_F40 | 10/10 | 1:44 | English |
| 7_M23/7_M20 | 4/4 | 00:46 | Finnish |
| 8_F23/8_F39 | 4/11 | 1:37 | Finnish |
| 9_F32/9_F26 | 2.5/2 | 1:50 | Finnish |
| 10_F37/10_F31 | 11/4 | 1:23 | Finnish (English) |

researcher. However, this did not affect the quality or usability of the material.

The informants were allowed to choose the language of their conversation as well as the questions to answer. It was also possible to use multiple languages during the conversations and to receive the questions in both English and Finnish if needed. Out of the 10 pair conversations, eight were conducted in Finnish and two in English.

### 7.3.2    Discourses in the Study of Languages and Language Users

I use critical discourse analytical methods (Fairclough, 1989) and scrutinise my data by paying attention to recurring themes and linguistic features that the informants use to construct discourses, that is, the linguistic means the informants use to describe the English language as well as its position and use in Finnish society. I consider discourses to be socially shared ways of seeing and structuring the world in interactions between people (Fairclough, 1992, 2003; Wodak & Meyer, 2016, p. 16). Discourses are simultaneously linguistic and social phenomena (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2019); they are a social form of language use as well as socially shared ways of constructing the world. That is, the relationship between language use and the social world is a two-way street: Discourses have the potential to (re)construct identities, ideologies, and social reality (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258; Wodak & Meyer, 2016, p. 6).

There are multiple ways to structure social reality and its phenomena in a language, and language use does not ever exist in a neutral social space. Concretely, this means choosing and using language resources to talk about certain topics or phenomena and, in doing so, structuring reality. Social spaces are connected to the valuations and conventions of languages and language use, which are maintained by individual language users as well as the wider society (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 3–4, 127–130; Wodak & Meyer, 2016; Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2019). One purpose of critical discourse analysis is to recognise naturalised ways of speaking about certain topics and phenomena and make them visible in order to enable change in discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2016, p. 7). This is important because certain discourses—recurring ways of talking about and seeing the world—have a tendency to delimit other angles to the topic (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2019). Discourses can increase our understanding of how societies work; they can produce beneficial or

detrimental effects on members of society as well as shed light on how these detrimental effects can be reduced or eliminated (Fairclough, 2003, pp. 202–203).

Norms and conventions regulate language use, but language also has the potential to resist rules and re-create new ways to structure reality (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, pp. 258–259). I examine my informants' ways of speaking about linguistic encounters with the aim to reveal discourses on the English language regarding the position of English and the relationships between different languages and their speakers. Via discourses, I take a critical look at the linguistic situation in Finnish society. I detect recurring linguistic features in my data, for example, if the informants use certain pronouns to discuss language use or if their descriptions of the situations include modality, which indicates certainty or uncertainty of expressions. These linguistic features are used as a starting point to describe, explain, and interpret social structures and phenomena.

## 7.4   Discourses on the English Language

The informants' conversations about linguistic encounters in Finnish society constantly lead to discussions on English language use even without being asked about the topic. The themes and questions of the pair conversations revolve around languages used in certain interactions, but none of the questions mentioned any other language than Finnish.[2] The recurrence of English in the pair conversations may be explained by the perceptions Finnish members of society hold of English and its use as a natural part of everyday communication (see Sect. 7.2). Nevertheless, I consider the appearance of English to be a meaningful theme. In the first subsection, I present discourse on English as a common language in Finland, spoken by 'everybody'. The picture of the all-embracing existence of English is interestingly refined and adjusted in the following sections, that is, the claims of English presence in Finnish society are followed by explanations and exceptions. The next subsection considers a discourse in which informants describe people and contexts where English is not commonly used after all. Finally, the discourse is further developed

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[2] For more information on the national languages, language rights, and languages used in Finland, see Frick, Räisänen, and Ylikoski, this volume. In this chapter, I examine only the Finnish language in relation to English.

in the third subsection through the presentation of cases in which the informants claim that even though English is widely known and used in Finnish society, it is still somehow insufficient in everyday life.

In the following sections, examples of transcribed data are presented with an accompanying set of transcription notations. A single parenthesis () is used when a word or a set of words is heard unclearly, whereas double parentheses indicate remarks or additions made by the researcher. Brackets [] are used to depict anonymised information; dashes mean one (-) or more (- -) words left out of the example text. I refer to the original Finnish words of the examples (beside the English ones) in the detailed linguistic analysis even though the Finnish examples are translated into English. This is due to the fact that discourse analysis is based on the linguistic choices and resources of the informants.

### 7.4.1    Everyone Speaks English

A discourse that emerges recurringly in the data is the self-evident position of English. It emphasises the role of Finland as a region or country where English is commonly known—at least on some level. The first Examples (1 and 2) illustrate the general claims about English language skills and its usage in Finland.

*Example 1*[3]

> 1_F32: sitten tietysti voi aina, kysyä myös, mikä se on englanniksi koska kaikki, osaa englantia niin hyvin että, jos en ymmärrä jotain tai, on sellainen sana sitten pitää vain, pyytää, kuka voi kääntää.
> 1_F32: and then of course you can also always ask what it is in English because everyone knows English so well that if I don't understand something or if there's ((an unfamiliar)) word then I just have to ask someone to translate.

*Example 2*

> 8_F23: - - sillä ((englannilla)), pärjää aika hyvin ((pause)) siinä mielessä ku, - kaikki, melkei opiskelee englantia, koulussa. ja, -

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[3] English translations are made by the author.

monesti ((pause)) - - jos matkustaa, nii on aina, englanniksi jotain
ohjeita tai, - -
8_F23: - - you can get by quite well with it ((English)) ((pause))
in the sense that - everyone, almost ((everyone)) learns English in
school. and, - often ((pause)) - - if you travel, then there are always
some directions in English or, - -

English is constructed as a common and constantly present language
in Finnish society. Common knowledge is reflected in the ways in which
users of English are named (*kaikki* 'everyone'; *kuka* 'someone' lit. 'who';
*kaikki, melkei* 'almost everyone') whereas the presence of English is seen
in the ways how the position of English is constructed in the descriptions
of the recurrence of its use (*aina* 'always'; *monesti* 'often') and in expres-
sions of modality, in this case certainty (*tietysti* 'of course'; *vain* 'just').
Finally, a cause-and-effect relationship can be seen in the discourse: *Jos*
('if') one is in a situation where there is a potential language problem,
*sitten* ('then') English is available. All these features in the examples above
support the picture of English as a common resource in Finland, and the
tendency in the overall data is to praise how it is possible to get by with
English *Suomessa* ('in Finland') or *täällä* ( 'here'), which also indicates the
informants' present place of residence. Example 2 makes possibly an even
wider generalisation of English knowledge, since it implies other contexts
of use outside of Finland. Hence, a view of English as a worldwide lingua
franca is visible in the data. Even so, speaking about the language skills
of people living in other countries functions mostly as a means to praise
the language skills of Finns and English as a useful resource in Finland, as
seen in Example 3:

*Example 3*

9_F26: kun esimerkiksi Puolassa, - - se ei ole niin hyvä, englannin
taso, Puolassa, kun Suomessa. sitten jos sä et, tiedä mitään, Puolassa,
jos, esimerkiksi, sä tulet, töihin, sä et ymmärrä mitään sä, se on tosi
vaikeaa. Suomessa, ((pause)) on kaikki - tiedot, englanniksi myös.
niin kuin Kelassa tai joku, toimistossa. sä voit myös, he vastaavat,
mutta englanniksi jos sä et osaa suomea. mutta toisessa maassa se ei
vois olla mahdollinen.
9_F32: (joo just.)

> 9_F26: when for example in Poland, - - it isn't so good, the standard
> of English, in Poland as in Finland. then if you don't know anything,
> in Poland, if, for example, you come to work, you don't understand
> anything you, it's really difficult. In Finland, ((pause)) everything -
> the information, is in English too. like at Kela[4] or in some office.
> you can also, they reply, but in English if you don't know Finnish.
> but in another country it wouldn't be possible.
> 9_F32: (yes exactly.)

The discourse on English in Finland is constructed and emphasised
by comparing the linguistic situation to that in other countries—usually
the home countries of the informants—and the language skills of the
inhabitants of these countries. The limited possibilities to use English in
Poland are described by making a point that everyday life is challenging
for those who do not know Polish (*sä et ymmärrä mitään sä, se on tosi
vaikeaa* 'you don't understand anything, it's really difficult'). In contrast,
Finland is portrayed as a country where English is a natural resource with
widespread possibilities of use in society (*on kaikki - englanniksi myös*
'everything - is in English too'). According to the informant, the possi-
bility to use English is essential especially in places and situations (*Kelassa
tai joku, toimistossa* 'Kela or in some office') where it would be difficult
to use a foreign language anyway (on special situations see, e.g., Scotson,
2020). English is seen as an essential resource in the public services, and
countries are ranked according to opportunities for its usage. This is one
way to praise the widespread use of English in Finland as well as the
English skills of Finns, which is also noted in the study of Virkkula and
Nikula (2010, pp. 266–267).

In some cases, the repeatedly discussed point that English is spoken
'by everyone' and 'everywhere' including official situations leads to the
conclusion that Finnish is not necessarily needed in Finland. As, for
example, informant 10_F31 points out*: suomalaiset puhuu myös englantia
siis, ei tarvi suomea* 'Finns also speak English so, there's no need for
Finnish'. The same way of speaking has been detected, for example,
by Niemelä (2019) when she studied students' perceptions of Finnish
spoken by foreigners. Her informants consider that not all migrants need
to learn Finnish since they know English, a valid resource with Finns

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[4] The Social Insurance Institution of Finland.

(see also Iikkanen, 2017). In this study, however, the taken-for-granted status of English goes so far that it reaches the point where an informant questions the possibility to not use English. This is triggered by the imagined situation described in the pair conversation questions as Example 4 demonstrates:

*Example 4*

> 2_F48: ((lukee paperista)) tilantees jossa toiset henkilöt, puhuvat kieltä jota et osaa ollenkaan. ((pause)) ei kyllä siellä on aina englantia joku osaan.
> - -
> 2_F48: ku, ku mää oon, (ma ei ole) semmosessa tilanteessa varmaan hirveesti ollu.
> H: entä sillon ku tulit tänne.
> 2_F48: no englanti. kaikki osaa englantia ja sitten mä opin suomen kielen. mutta toki oli se et ku mä tulin että oli ne, ne jotka. (esimerkiks) anoppi, ei osannu englantia. että osas vain suomea, - -
> - -
> 2_F20: joo, määki oon turvautunu, englantii yleensä että.
> 2_F48: ((reading from the paper)) situation in which other people, speak a language you don't know at all. ((pause)) no there's always someone who knows English.
> - -
> 2_F48: - - I probably haven't been in many such situations.
> Int: and what about when you came here.
> 2_F48: well English. everyone knows English and then I learnt Finnish. but it was indeed the case that when I came that there were those, those who. (for example) my mother-in-law didn't know English. that she only knew Finnish, - -
> - -
> 2_F20: yeah, I've also usually resorted to English, so.

In Example 4, informant 2_F48 gets confused and does not seem to understand the question asked. This conclusion can be drawn by noticing the break between the question she reads from the paper and her answer as well as her verbal reaction. She questions the existence of such situations where it is not possible to use English (*ei kyllä siellä*

*on aina englantia joku osaan* 'no there's always someone who knows English'). The informant justifies her opinion by expressing that English, as a resource, is always available (*kaikki osaa englantia* 'everyone knows English'). Even after pondering the situation, she still cannot name any cases where this is not true. It is not fully directly expressed that she speaks namely of English in Finland, but this can be inferred from the part where she speaks about times when she started learning Finnish. Also, the informant's daughter 2_F20 confirms 2_F48's doubt regarding the impossibility of using English in Finland. However, in the end, the informant manages to come up with a gap in the English proficiency of Finns: She mentions that it is not possible to use English with her *anoppi* ('mother-in-law'). Even though the language skills of Finns have been generalised in the examples above, the informants seem to have a broader understanding of the variation in these skills within the Finnish population. Such exceptions to the aforementioned generalisations are discussed in the following section.

### 7.4.2     But Some Still Don't Speak English

According to the examples presented in the previous section, expectations of Finns' language skills and the possibility of using English in Finnish society are high. Nevertheless, the data reveal a discourse that adds limitations to these claims or even directly contradicts them. Discursively, it is interesting when something seems to diverge from the norm; it must therefore be brought forward or mentioned. This section demonstrates how informants modify the discourse on the presence and position of English in Finland. Firstly, an uncertainty concerning the knowledge and use of English can be seen in certain restrictions mentioned by the informants in Examples 5 and 6:

*Example 5*

> 9_F32: - - mutta he käyttävät englantia työpaikalla niin kuin - - ensimmäisenä kielenä ja sinä kyllä voit pärjätä englannin kielellä töissä, koska suomalaiset osaavat hyvin englantia, - -
> 9_F32: - - but they use English at their workplace like - - as their first main language and you can definitely get by in English at work, because Finns know English well, - -

*Example 6*

> 8_F39: - - koska Suomessa yleensä, minusta yleensä, -, ihmiset osaavat, puhua englanti jonkun verran - - tuo tavallinen ehkä keskustelu (hyvin joo), pääsee hyvin, - -
>
> 8_F39: - - because in Finland in general, in my opinion in general, -, people know, speak English to some extent - - this ordinary conversation maybe - - goes well, - -

According to the informants, there are certain groups in which the use of English is always possible. They mention the workplace (Example 5) or hobbies as such places, thus delimiting the use of English to certain contexts after all. This leaves open the option that there might be places in which and people with whom English is not used. In addition, restrictions can be seen in how a certain number of the informants' statements are accompanied by hedges such as *yleensä* ('in general'), *melkein* ('almost'), *jonkun verran* ('to some extent'), and *ehkä* ('maybe'), as Example 6 illustrates. Thus, a contradicting discourse emerges concerning limitations regarding the extent to which English is a possible tool for communication in Finland. Secondly, limitations to the English skills of Finns are visible in how the generalisations are followed by the word choice *mutta* ('but') or some other element to indicate that the description includes caveats to the statement expressed before. The informants may bring up individual cases, such as random people in certain contexts who do not speak English or have limited skills in English, or, more typically, certain groupings among 'those who don't speak English', as Example 7 demonstrates.

*Example 7*

> 6_F40: well I, still think that, - - if you go with, an old Finnish person, in an island, during midsummer for like two weeks, a person that doesn't speak English at all, I'm sure, we learn. ((laughs)).
>
> 6_M38: yeah. yeah but, when we work where we work, like there is, people,
>
> 6_F40: yeah yeah it's true.
>
> 6_M38: always speak English. so maybe I yes, maybe we should switch it, our, we should switch our, expertise and just do some, cleaning stuff and, some.

6_F40: well, this is.
6_M38: I don't know.
6_F40: I remember once I told the, daycare ladies, that, oh I should work with you to ((laughs)) actually improve my Finnish. to work with kids an-, and them.
6_M38: yeah.

Example 7 demonstrates how the informants illustrate exceptions to the possibilities of using English in everyday life in Finnish society. Usually, these limitations consist of people in certain working contexts or living in certain areas, as well as certain age and migrant groups. These groupings seem to be based on two questions: The first asks *who* does not speak English, and the second reveals *where* in Finland English is not perceived to be spoken. Informant 6_F40 brings about an imaginary situation: with *an old Finnish person*, on an isolated place (*an island*), and during the holiday season (*Midsummer*) when it is typical to retreat to one's summer cabin away from the cities. This scenario is in opposition to the informant's and her conversation pair's normal daily working context of a highly educated person, where English seems to be present to the extent of hindering the possibilities to learn Finnish (*we should switch our expertise*). It is proven that especially persons with a degree in higher education struggle with learning Finnish, since using English resources enable them to manage daily situations without the knowledge of Finnish—hence, their language skills in Finnish are poorer than that of other learners (e.g., Nieminen & Larja, 2015, p. 46; Scotson, 2018b). When discussing the presence of English, the informants create a contrast of contexts between their own working environment and other kinds of jobs. Informant 6_M38 toys with the idea of working a different kind of job from his as an opportunity to learn Finnish and suggests a workplace where English is not used, that is, a *cleaning* job. Informant 6_F40 adds to the context *daycare* and *work with kids*. The aforementioned working contexts would increase the informants' ambitions and motivation to learn Finnish.

Peterson (2019, p. 6) notes that there is a sharp contrast between generations: Compared to their parents and grandparents, young Finns are more willing to use English in varying situations. English is a part of their repertoire—a tool they can use as a main language to express themselves or alongside their native tongue (see also Leppänen et al., 2011; Pitkänen-Huhta & Hujo, 2012). The following Example 8 demonstrates

how English skills vary between the generations according to the informants. The term *old people*, who were mentioned to not use English, is elaborated on in further detail in the following example:

*Example 8*

> 8_F39: - - kun, menen, miehen, mummu luokse, varmasti, hän, hänelle, kanssa puhua, suomea, koska hän ei ymmärrä, englantia ja muita kieliä. - - kyllä sitä ei käytetä muita kieliä paitsi suomi.
>
> 8_F39: - - when I go to my husband's grandmother's place, I definitely speak Finnish with her, because she doesn't understand English and other languages. - - yes, we don't use other languages besides Finnish there.

Elderly family members (*miehen mummu* 'my husband's grandmother'), usually those of one's spouse's, are considered non-users of English. In-laws or other old(er) relatives are probably among the first persons whom transnationals meet when coming to Finland if they come here because of marriage. These in-laws or other old(er) relatives might also be the only elderly people with whom the informants regularly communicate if their work is not, for example, in the service sector or in any other way related to elderly people. The following Example 9 further confirms the case, since the informant speaks namely of work with elderly people.

*Example 9*

> H: riittääkö Suomessa, englannin kieli. teijän mielestä.
>
> 7_M23: ei riitä. tai se vähän riippuu tilanteesta ainakin minun alalla, englanti ei riitä. koska ((pause)) esimerkiksi minä, olen lähihoitajaopiskelija (minusta tulee) lähihoitaja, niin, monet, suomalaiset ((pause)) ikääntyneet ne ei osaa, englantia niin ei pärjää, pelkällä, englan, kielellä.
>
> 7_M20: (no se) (riippuu) (sitten mikä se paikasta) että missä tilanteessa työpaikassa tai koulussa missä, (sä oot että), - -
>
> Int: is knowing English enough in Finland. in your opinion.
>
> 7_M23: it's not enough. or it depends somewhat on the situation. at least in my field, English isn't enough. because ((pause)) for example I am a practical nursing student (I will become) a practical nurse, so,

many Finns ((pause)) who are elderly they don't know English so
you can't get by solely in English.
7_M20: (well it) (depends) (then on what place) what situation
workplace or school (you're in so) - -

According to the informant, working as a practical nurse is a context in
which Finnish is needed because many elderly people do not use English
(see also Pitkänen-Huhta & Hujo, 2012). Both informants also emphasise
the situational nature of the language, which means that the context and
interlocutors determine language choice and use. This further supports
the counter-discourse where the possibilities of using English in Finnish
society are not as widespread and the skills are not as common as some
generalisations may suggest. English is present, but resources are not
equally distributed as shown above: not between different age groups,
but also not geographically. Example 10 considers the first aspect of
geographical limitations to the use of English in Finland: rural regions.

*Example 10*

8_F23: - - mullo aika paljon, semmosia kavereita, ketkä ei ossaa
englantia tai, kyllä ne, niinku ((pause)) ossaa kirjoittaa, ja, ymmärtää
jos lukee, englanniksi joku te- teksti, mutta, ne, ei osaa keskustella,
englanniksi tai, niille ei oo sitä, niinku itsevarmuutta, nii, ne kyllä
haluais että mä puhuisin englantia, niitten kans et ne oppii sitä mutta,
se on tosi vaikea tilanne. ko, ma ((pause)) ossaan niinku suomeksi
selittää paljon paremmin, heille, jotain, mitä mä osaisin englanniksi
((pause)) niinku, sillä lailla että ne ei, ymmärrä, välttämättä jos mä
selitän englanniksi nyt, pitää tosi, yksinkertaisesti, selittää niitä asioita,
nii on, niiku helpompaa puhua suomea - -
H: onko ne suomalaisia ystäviä.
8_F23: joo.
H: aika.
8_F39: okei.
H: jännä koska.
8_F39: jo- joo. (minulla) ei ole samaa mieltä.
- -
8_F39: yleensä suomalaiset puhuu englannia. joo kyllä.
8_F23: mutta tää o, ehkä maaseudulla,
- -

8_F23: niin ne ei siellä, että ei käy siellä niin paljo, turisteja eikä, niinku ulkomaalaisia.
8_F39: okei.
8_F23: niin ehkä, oo oppinut käyttämään sitä kieltä, et se on jäänyt vähän niinku, kouluun. ((naurahtaa)). ei,
- -
8_F23: - - niin mä o asunut [kaupunki]:ssa ennen, au pairina, ja, siellä, on, kyllä semmosta ((naurahtaa)) niinku, maaseutua että.
8_F23: - - I have quite a lot of friends who don't know English or, well they, like ((pause)) can write and understand if they read some text in English, but they can't hold a conversation in English or they don't have the, like, self-confidence, so, they do want me to speak English with them so they can learn it but, it's a very difficult situation. when I'm ((pause)) able to, like, explain something to them in Finnish much better than I could in English ((pause)) like, in the sense that they don't necessarily understand if I explain it in English now, I have to explain the things in really simple terms, so it's, like, easier to speak Finnish - -
Int: are they Finnish friends.
8_F23: yeah.
Int: that's quite.
8_F39: okay.
Int: interesting because.
8_F39: y- yeah. (I) don't agree.
- -
8_F39: usually Finns speak English. yeah, yes.
8_F23: but this is, perhaps in the countryside,
- -
8_F23: so there they don't, well there they don't get so many tourists or, like, foreigners.
8_F39: okay.
8_F23: so maybe, ((they)) haven't learnt to use the language, so it's kind of remained, like, a relic of school days.
- -
8_F23: - - so I've lived in [city] before, as an au pair, and it's, like, ((laughs)) quite the countryside over there.

8_F23 describes her friends as people who do not know English. She does not specify the nature of the group in question until the researcher

begins to hesitate and informant 8_F39 expresses her differing opinion on the matter. Discursively, the most important finding is how the taken-for-granted discourse on the omnipresence of English is countered in Example 10. This can be seen in the reactions of the researcher as well as the other informant. The researcher has not heard such statements regularly in the pair conversations and the other informant 8_F39 is also bewildered by what is said. She does not understand the possibility of not knowing English until it is explained to her. Informant 8_F39 points out her view on the language skills of Finns (*yleensä suomalaiset puhuu englannia* 'usually Finns speak English'), thus making the exception to the discourse 'Finns speak English' even more important. Hence, 8_F23 has to explain herself and provide more detailed information: She is refer-ring to friends *tää o, ehkä maaseudulla* ('living in the countryside'). She also reflects on the reasons for the differing language situation, which she pinpoints as the lack of contexts to use English in or interlocutors to use English with, or situations in which the possibilities for English use are restricted.

Proficiency in and the use of English are more common among those who live in cities rather than the countryside (Leppänen et al., 2011). Generally, however, linguistic diversity in the Finnish countryside is prob-ably less studied, but exceptions, of course, exist (see, e.g., Ekberg & Östman, 2020). It is not clear as to where the perception of differing English skills in the countryside comes from according to informant 8_F23 in Example 10. However, the example supports the fact that Finland is not linguistically uniform. Informant 8_F23 suggests that the way the foreign population is distributed in Finland or the remoteness of some places (*ei käy siellä niin paljo, turisteja eikä, niinku ulkomaalaisia* 'don't get so many tourists or, like, foreigners') might be the reason for the deficiency in language skills. Indeed, people with foreign background are strongly concentrated in the capital area: At the end of 2018, almost half of the foreign-language-speaking population lived in the three biggest cities of Finland, with over a quarter in Helsinki alone (Pitkänen et al., 2019, p. 18). Hence, it seems only natural that linguistic diversity is also a more common phenomenon there than in other places in Finland. The same can be assumed for English, given that it is among the five most common foreign language groups in the capital area (Pitkänen et al., 2019) as well as a commonly used resource among the foreign popu-lation, at least during the early stages of their stay in a new home country (Iikkanen, 2017; Ruuska, 2020, p. 175).

Questioning the discourse on Finns' knowledge of English produces another counter-discourse in addition to the differences between generations and places. The following Example 11 serves as a reminder that it is not only about the language skills of Finns; there are also people with foreign background living in Finland whose repertoire does not necessarily include English. Since people with foreign background are concentrated in the capital area, these aspects answer both questions, *who* and *where*, regarding the limitations of the use and knowledge of English.

*Example 11*

> 7_M23: no joskus kun, tilanne tulee, joku ((pause)) puhuu vaikka minulle jotain, jotain muuta kieltä kun suomi, tai, oma äidinkieli tai, englanti sitten mä en ymmärrä sitä niin, heti mä, sanon sille jollakin tavalla, että, mä en osaa sitä kieltä, - -. vaikka englantiakin, kun mä en osaa niin hyvin, niin, jossain vaiheessa mä puhun (niin) (puhutaan) suomen kielellä tai, omalla kielellä.
>
> 7_M23: well sometimes when a situation arises in which someone ((pause)) speaks some, some other language than Finnish to me, or their own mother tongue or English and I don't understand it, then I immediately tell them in some way that I don't know the language - -. even with English too, as I don't know it so well, so, at some point I speak (so) (we speak) in Finnish or in our own language.

If the default in the discourse on language skills in Finland is English, it erases all 'other languages'. Also, even the idea of Finnish as a lingua franca between migrants seems impossible (on the topic see Ruuska, 2020, p. 139). The linguistic background described in the pair conversation between two asylum seekers in Example 11 illustrates the situation. It creates a contrast between those who have access to English and those who would benefit more from the use of Finnish. The informants are faced with the need to counter the assumption of English use when encountering unfamiliar interlocutors (*niin, heti mä, sanon sille jollakin tavalla, että, mä en osaa sitä kieltä* 'then I immediately tell them in some way that I don't know the language'). In some cases, in the data, not knowing English seems to construct a picture of a problem as English is presented as a minimum requirement for language skills. The lack of English skills is almost equated with the lack of language skills themselves (e.g., Iikkanen, 2020). Namely, a complete lack of English skills seems

to be the problem, not necessarily the lack of other language skills. As a consequence, English appears as the only foreign language with value in the linguistic markets of Finland.

When considering the informants' own language skills in English, not knowing English (at all) is also almost nonexistent in the data of this study. Only the informants in Example 11 admit that they do not know English so well. Some of the other eight informants mention that they should improve their English, but that is a somewhat different matter. It does not mean that they did not know English in the first place but rather that their skills grew rusty when their use of Finnish increased. In addition to the example above, people with foreign background are only rarely mentioned as a group that does not use English. In these cases, informants indicate that these people differ from themselves: The lack of English resources is connected to a migrant background, usually to stay-at-home mothers and people working in a low-income sector (See also Iikkanen, 2020). That is, sometimes not using English is seen as an indicator of migrant status (Iikkanen, 2020). The same discourses are echoed in this study, but on the other hand, the informants in Example 11 are given a voice to speak for themselves. They were able to remind us that English is not the only resource needed. This topic is discussed further in the next section.

### 7.4.3    But English Is Not Enough in Finland

The informants make a contrast between English and managing one's daily life in Finnish society. This section discusses the discourse where the informants question the usefulness of English language skills in Finland. The extent of the presence of English in society is not denied, but the use of English is accompanied by some sort of limitations. The informants used the word *mutta* ('but') when describing the connection between English and managing one's life in Finland to bring out contrasts between using English and Finnish. The informants of the study generally see English as a focal language and useful resource in Finland. Although some of them even claim that it is possible to live in Finland without needing Finnish, many informants still come across limitations to using English in Finnish society. In the following Example 12, informants who do not have access to English emphasise the importance of Finnish even though

they consider English to be a common resource in Finland. The informants answer the following question: 'What kinds of language skills are useful in Finland?'

*Example 12*

> 7_M20: - ainakin ensin suomen kieli, ulkomaalaiselle on tosi tärkeä. että s- tilanteissa, pystyy hoitamaan itse, omasta asiasta, ainakin Suomessa, papereja, pittää (täytenä) tai koulussa pitää ymmärtää (asiasta että), jos haluaa, omasta elämässä Suomessa rakentaa tai päästää eteenpäin, kannattaa, että suosittelen (opiskelee), suomen kieli ensin, ei englanti. se on totta kai jokaiselle ehkä (osaa), (suomenkielisille), englantia. (-) siltikin pittää, osata ((pause)) suomen kieli.
>
> 7_M23: ja, Suomessakin, kuitenkin asuvat, aika paljon, ulkomaalaisia. - - jotka puhuvat arabin kielellä, ja Iranista Afganistanista on tullut, ne puhuvat persian kielellä niin ((pause)) niistäkin, on välillä hyötyä niin, voi puhua, - - arabiaa mä en, osaa mutta, puhutaan kyllä, Helsinki päin on paljon, - - niin kuin 7_M20 sanoo että, ei niille - kielillä, pärjää Suomessa kokonaan. mutta, voin puhua, niin, kuitenkin niin kuin 7_M20 sanoi että on paljon papereita on ja, töissä ja ((pause)) no, määkin suosittelen että, opiskelis, suomen kieltä. se on tärkein asia täällä Suomessa.
>
> 7_M20: at least above all Finnish is really important for foreigners. so in situations, you're able to take care of your own affairs by yourself, at least in Finland, papers have to be (filled out) or in school you have to understand (things so), if you want to build a life of your own in Finland or move forward, it's worthwhile, I recommend (studying) Finnish first, not English. it's, of course maybe everyone (knows), (Finnish speakers) know English. (-) nevertheless you've got to know ((pause)) Finnish.
>
> 7_M23: and, in Finland too, there are still quite a lot of foreigners living here - - who speak Arabic, and those who have come from Iran and Afghanistan, they speak Persian so ((pause)) those languages are also sometimes useful so, you can speak, - - I don't know Arabic, but it's indeed spoken, there are many speakers in Helsinki, - - like 7_M20 said, you can't get by in Finland on those - languages alone. but, I can speak, so, nevertheless like 7_M20 said there are many

papers and, at work and ((pause)) well, I too recommend that you learn Finnish. It's the most important thing here in Finland.

Finnish seems to offer the informants independence in several fields of daily life (*papereja, pittää (täytenä)* 'papers have to be filled out'; *koulussa* 'at school'; *töissä* 'at work') (see also Iikkanen, 2020). Compared to English, it provides a wider range of opportunities for foreigners (*omasta elämässä Suomessa rakentaa tai päästää eteenpäin* 'build a life of your own in Finland or move forward'). English is equated with other languages (*arabin* 'Arabic'; *persian* 'Persian') and mentioned as a tool. In such cases, English is pictured as something one uses *to get by in Finland*, and it does not have a special role distinct from other languages. Finnish, for its part, is assigned a different set of meanings and evaluations (*tosi tärkeä* 'really important'; *tärkein asia* 'the most important thing'). Finnish is portrayed as essential for living in Finnish society (*siltikin pittää, osata suomen kieli* 'nevertheless you've got to know Finnish') (on this subject see also, e.g., Iikkanen, 2017; Strömmer, 2017; Ekberg & Östman, 2020; Intke-Hernandez, 2020; Scotson, 2020), and one example of the importance of Finnish is related to working life as the following Example 13 shows.

*Example 13*

> 10_F37: - - when I came here and I didn't speak Finnish, and - -, it was okay, cause, you know I was part of the university and something. you belong to somewhere, and you can, manage, your life and, not only like in survival, way, but you can, construct relationships and, you can construct family. you can construct your life, - - but then, when you try to, like in working life for example ((pause)) and, then you, start to realise that you can for example study, in English. the whole master's, - - but then, there is no single working place where you can work entirely in English in [a name of a professional field] - -, that was for me like a really big disappointment. - - when I understood that actually, - -, I was (feeded) by the idea that you can, live, in Finland, by, speaking English. - - and construct your life. but, you have (big) limitations on it.

The informant describes her possibilities for inclusion when using English in Example 13. She was able to participate in student life (*I*

*was part of the university*), as well as create and maintain personal relationships (*you can, construct relationships and, you can construct family*). However, her account of English usage continues with several *buts* when the discussion turns to entering working life. According to the informant, English is only partly applicable in her field. Highly educated migrants often find their jobs in multicultural working environments, and in their free time, they also tend to choose English as a shared language with Finns (Scotson, 2018a, p. 45). However, in order to participate in social situations at the workplace, Finnish is often needed alongside or over English for conversations as well as informal situations (Komppa et al., 2017; see also Ruuska, 2020, pp. 165–166). Informant 10_F37 paints a picture of the linguistic reality in which she found herself, that is, a position where she was not included in society in the way she would have preferred. She discovered the real state of affairs—that language made her excluded—without anyone telling her beforehand (*start to realise; I understood that; I was feeded by the idea*).

The disparity between education and working life can lead to situations in which highly educated professionals end up not staying in Finland after receiving their degrees. However, the informants of this study also perceive the necessity of Finnish on a more comprehensive level of belonging than just working life. Such experiences of language use and its significance to an individual's life seem to be quite hard to describe, as shown in Example 14:

*Example 14*

> 10_F37: - - I got, the point - - that you don't belong here. that you just live here - - and that you use this, like a physical environment, but you, and you have your, little bubble, - - it's like - really ((pause)) complicated, emotional feeling - - because you live here and you try to, construct your life (in) here, but you have so much environmental limitations, on, actually developing and, - -, like expanding yourself, - - in emotional level I suppose.
> - -
> 10_F37: and then I (suppose that) when I started to use Finnish language, more and more, started to change a bit.

Many informants still have an experience that something is missing, and without Finnish, they feel excluded from Finnish society in some way.

It seems that one can participate on some level, but on a very technical level, as 10_F31 describes (*you can get by; you can pay your taxes*). One's life as an outsider not knowing the local language is portrayed as fulfilling one's responsibilities in society, but that does not necessarily mean that one is included. The key factor in the meaning assigned to the language in Example 14 does not seem to simply be 'using the language of the country' or adapting one's language to the language of other interactants in certain situations, but something deeper (*I live here, but I'm not part of, whole thing; emotional level*). I consider this perception to be connected to the fact that while language is a mode of communication, it also means something else, as can be seen from the accounts of the informants. Languages create connections between people, and this is not restricted to the mere transmission of a message.

## 7.5    Discussion and Implications

I have discussed discourses that people with transnational background living in Finland constructed in their pair conversations on the English language in the Finnish context. Firstly, English was presented as a general, self-evident lingua franca spoken by 'everyone' in Finland. However, this discourse was modified when the stories and discussions of the informants progressed. The informants refined their statements by producing exceptions to generalisations of the English skills of Finns in the descriptions in which they pointed out that there were differences between speakers of certain age groups and educational backgrounds as well as places of residence. Finally, the informants stated that it is not possible to fully live in Finland using only English, since certain aspects of life are missing without knowing the local language. It is noteworthy that these modifications to the discourse, that is, exceptions and stories about struggles without the Finnish language, were also in many pair conversations linearly in the same order as presented above.[5]

The discourses found in this study reflect how social structures behind language use affect the lives of individuals in at least two ways. There is an effect on working life and a possibility of the exclusion and marginalisation of certain groups. English is a resource that is empowering and hegemonic at the same time (Saarinen & Ennser-Kananen,

[5] However, the order of the questions (Appendix 7.1) has an effect on the (linear) structure of the conversations and hence on the data.

2020, pp. 117–118). As this study has shown, English is a different resource for different transnationals and for different Finns. For highly educated persons, English is a taken-for-granted resource when considering the language of education and work. However, for people from certain countries or with a lower level of education, it is not an available resource. Also, the informants reflect in their stories on how English is not enough, and not knowing Finnish hinders one's opportunities to get a job. The prevailing discourse on the commonness of English use at the workplace can mislead people who pursue further education with the expectation of finding employment in Finland. This discourse can prove even more harmful if the education programmes conducted in English do not provide international students with adequate Finnish language skills to manage their working life (Komppa, 2015, p. 169; Iikkanen, 2017, p. 135). In addition to this rather concrete effect, insufficient Finnish skills seem to also exclude the informants from society on some deeper emotional level.

English can be presented as a solution to problems in multicultural interactions: for example, as a means to enhance migrants' inclusion in society. In this study, however, English is not necessarily portrayed to be as inclusive as it might seem at first glance. Instead, it could turn out to be exclusive in cases where one's expected (English) language skills in a situation are in contradiction to the language user's own wants, needs, abilities, and expectations (Räisänen, 2012, p. 223). Firstly, the way of speaking about English as a language every Finn knows is misleading. Such discourse then creates expectations for migrants as well as the majority population. Expectations lead to misunderstandings and actions where some members of society are not able to fully participate. Secondly, the informants' modifications to the discourse on self-evident English revealed even more profound ways of exclusion. That is, the discourse revealed that English is not a skill that can be attributed to everybody; instead, it is possibly a language of young city-dwellers. The discourse on elderly people living in peripheral regions then possibly reveals a larger phenomenon of segregation processes in Finnish society: well-being that is not necessarily equally distributed to different regions and different groups. Hence, language may be one indication of how certain resources, or a lack thereof, may shut certain groups out of society. All languages—including English—should not be analysed on their own: instead, they should be tied to life contexts and the possibilities of their users (Pennycook, 2007, pp. 100–101; Saarinen & Ennser-Kananen,

2020, pp. 117–118). The informants' discourse on languages is at the same time a portrayal of the social reality in Finnish society. In order to improve the well-being of every member of society, these micro-level messages of people's reality of life should be heard.

## Appendix 7.1. Pair Conversation Questions

Questions for group conversations

Consider the time you have lived in Finland and answer the following questions (you can also compare the time when you came to Finland with the situation now)

1. **Language choices in everyday life**

    a. Which of the languages that you speak do you NOT use
        – with some people or
        – in some situations? Why?
        – What stops you or restricts you in these situations?
    b. Which languages would you like to use more in your everyday life? Why?
    c. In what kinds of situations do you feel like using your native language/Finnish/some other language? Why?

2. **Different languages in speech**

    a. What languages do people use to speak to you? In which kinds of situations?
    b. In which kinds of situations do you mix another language into your speech when speaking, for example, Finnish? How do other people react to it (a significant other, friends, co-workers…)?
    c. Have you been in situations where other people speak a language you speak poorly or not at all? What happened?
    d. Are your/have your language skills been taken into consideration at work and in your hobbies? How?

3. **Languages as hindrances or possibilities in everyday life**

    a. What kind of language skills are useful in Finland?
    b. Have there been any situations where you wished you were better at speaking a language? What happened?

c. How meaningful do you find speaking the language(s) of the country you live in?

d. What does 'surviving in a language' mean (in your life)? What else does a language mean, or what else can you do with a language?

4. **Situations where you are not understood, or you do not understand others**

a. What kind of experience do you have of situations where someone does not understand you, or you do not understand others? What happened? What do you think it was that caused the misunderstanding?

b. What kinds of means do you have at your disposal when you do not understand, or you are not understood?

c. Have you ever used not speaking Finnish (or another language) as a means to an end?

5. **The properties and meanings of languages**

a. How do the languages you speak differ?

b. What do the languages you speak mean to you?

c. What does a native language mean?

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# Silence and Question Marks in Drawings of Interactional Encounters

*Heidi Niemelä*

## 8.1 Introduction

Finland has been regarded as a mainly monolingual and monocultural country, especially after the Second World War (see, e.g., Nuolijärvi, 2005; Tervonen, 2014, pp. 154–155). However, this has not been the case, and especially during the past thirty years Finland has experienced a new kind of growth in inhabitants with a foreign background and a foreign language (Nuolijärvi, 2005; Paunonen, 2020; Statistics Finland, 2020). Due to this, multilingualism has become more acknowledged in Finnish society and education, and for example language awareness has become one of the key elements in the national core curriculum for basic education since 2016 (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014). However, national and monolingual language ideologies have deep roots in education, and they still prevail (e.g., Alisaari et al., 2019; Niemelä, 2020). The school's role as lingual agent and the place where language ideologies are circulated cannot be overestimated (Silverstein,

H. Niemelä (✉)
Faculty of Education and Psychology, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland
e-mail: heidi.niemela@oulu.fi

1998, p. 138): Finnish schools have a history of equalising linguistic variation and emphasising the standard languages as well as prohibiting the use of minority languages (Paunonen, 2001, pp. 235–236, 2020, p. 85). It is important to explore how inclusively or exclusively the Finnish language is represented in primary education nowadays, and in this study, the analysed representations are produced by the pupils.

This chapter is a narrow case study zooming into a piece of larger data. The six drawings under exploration are part of the original data of 102 drawings on the Finnish language. The zooming is of interest because the representations of interactional encounters are surprising and arise from the participants' experiences and the discourses in education, not straight from the data-gathering assignment.[1]

In this chapter, I concentrate on the discourses, language ideologies, and visual representations of the Finnish language visualised by Finnish primary school pupils in northern and southern areas of Finland. The participants have visualised the Finnish language in a drawing assignment, and these visual representations consist of many elements and different texts, in which the flag of Finland, the map of Finland, people, and hearts appear frequently. Most of the people represented in the context of the Finnish language are named as *suomalainen* (a Finn) (Niemelä, 2020). The Finnish language is also considered a language spoken by *Finns* mostly or only in Finland (Niemelä, 2020, submitted). However, Finns are not the only people the participants represent in the data. They also include *ulkomaalainen* (a foreigner) in some of the drawings and bring up the different relations Finns and foreigners have towards Finnish. Alongside these, some interactional encounters between speakers of Finnish and foreigners are also represented, and this chapter focuses on exploring these representations.

The representations of foreigners in the data are interesting in the respect that foreigners or immigrants were not mentioned in the drawing

assignments arranged for the data gathering. The interactional encounters in the drawings consist mostly of multiple question marks and silence on the foreigners' part, meaning that the foreigners are represented as speaking no language at all. On the other hand, there are some drawings where the language of a foreigner is English, which highlights the lingua franca status of English in Finland. This raises a question on the assumed connection between one's nationality and language (see, e.g., Ruuska, 2020): Are foreigners not considered possible speakers of Finnish, or is the language considered too difficult for them?

The focus questions of the chapter are:

1. How are interactional encounters between Finns and foreigners represented in pupils' drawings and how are both parties represented in these encounters?
2. What kinds of lingual differences and positions of power are represented in visualised encounters and speaker descriptions?

Next, I will present the theoretical and methodological framework of this study (Sect. 8.2) and the contexts of the study (Sect. 8.3).

## 8.2   Theoretical and Methodological Framework

The theoretical and methodological framework of this chapter is in the study of *language discourse and ideologies*. In the context of this study, I consider language ideologies to be socially structured, shared views and values on language that hold power (Gal & Woolard, 1995, p. 130; Irvine, 1989, p. 255; Rosa & Burdick, 2017), in this case institutional and societal power. Language ideologies are structures that have developed during time and interaction and are often collectively shared but also unconscious or invisible (Kroskrity, 2000; Mäntynen et al., 2012; Woolard, 1998). Language ideologies are ideas about what language is and how it works, and often these are believed to be something natural (Johnstone, 2018, p. 67). The nature of language ideologies as shared views and ways of thinking highlights the fact that they often represent the interest of certain people and groups (Kroskrity, 2000).

*Representation* and *discourse* are important concepts in understanding and analysing language ideologies. In this study, I take representations to be descriptions, portrayals, and ways of representing which are chosen for

a certain context; in other words, I study the way in which the Finnish language, its speakers, and the people not speaking Finnish as well as contexts of speaking have been portrayed. In this way, representation can be seen as a sum of choices that arise from the social and cultural history of the representer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, pp. 6, 11). In this process of choices, language represents the world, and the representing nature of language concerns the ways the world is presented and portrayed through language (Hall, 2013, pp. 2–15; Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2019, pp. 78–80).

Representation is a way to produce meanings and to share them between members of culture through language. Here, language is understood in a broad sense, covering also different visual images of different means. Visual images express meaning in a corresponding way to sounds and images of spoken and written languages—when they carry meaning, they are considered as signs. In the process of representation, different concepts are being classified and organised, and complex relations become established between them. The system of representation can be seen as twofold: Firstly, we are able to associate the objects of our world with certain mental representations. This could be called the conceptual map of our minds. Secondly, the process of constructing meaning relies completely on language: 'The relation between "things", concepts and signs lies at the heart of the production of meaning in language. The process which links these three elements together is what we call "representation"' (Hall, 2013, pp. 2–15). The meaning between signs and their referents is not arbitrary. The system of representation is cultural, and both learnt and fixed socially. Hall (2013) writes that 'culture' can be considered to be shared conceptual maps and shared language and codes that enable one to interpret the relations between them. He adds that meanings do not appear out of thin air but are instead the product of signifying practice, and if representations are a product of meaning-making, they are material for discourses as they try to produce knowledge of the world.

The relation between ideology and discourse is not unambiguous (see, e.g., Määttä & Pietikäinen, 2014). However, in this study I consider discourse and ideology to be intertwined: Discourses are a way of representing and organising the world, its events, and people, which means that discourses organise ideologies (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2019, pp. 83–86). Language ideologies materialise in (language) discourses,

and the discourses on the other hand shape ideologies (Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998, p. 26; Mäntynen et al., 2012, p. 328).

In this chapter, I concentrate mainly on language discourses but also take into account other possible discourses that manifest in contact with language discourses. I approach discourse as meaningful symbolic behaviour (Blommaert, 2005, p. 2), stemming from the knowledge people have about language based on their memories of things they have said, heard, seen, or written before (Johnstone, 2018, p. 2). Johnstone further describes discourse as 'both the source of this knowledge (peoples' generalisations about language are made on the basis of the discourse they participate in) and the result of it (people apply what they already know in creating and interpreting new discourses)' (2018, p. 2). As expressed above, I consider discourse and ideology to be closely intertwined, since discourses can be seen both as ideas and ways of talking that influence and are influenced by ideas (see also Halonen & Vaattovaara, 2017). The circles between discourse and all the aspects that influence and shape it are multi-layered, and obviously discourse—what is known, what is said, and what is considered meaningful—shapes the world, linguistic structure, participants, and their possible purposes and future discourse in return (Johnstone, 2018, p. 8).

I use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA from here onwards) (see Fairclough, 1992; Jones, 2012; Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2019) to analyse the textual structures as well as the power structures and social practices produced in the drawings. CDA considers discourse to be a means through which ideologies are reproduced, and ideology is regarded as an important topic in the tradition (Blommaert, 2005, p. 26). The nature of my data incorporates visuality in the analysis (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996) and offers a multimodal conception of semiosis that is broader than the traditional text-based CDA (Blommaert, 2005, pp. 28–29). The analysis utilises 'the controlling theoretical idea behind the CDA that texts, embedded in recurring "discursive practices" for their production, circulation and reception which are themselves embedded in "social practice", are among the principal ways in which discourse and ideology are intertwined' (Johnstone, 2018, p. 53). That is, the analysis of the drawings advances in three phases:

1. *Discourse-as-text*, where the visual and textual choices of the drawings are systematically described and analysed. For this I combine the

socio-semiotic model on visual analysis by Kress and van Leeuven (1996) explained below.

2. *Discourse-as-discursive-practice*, where I interpret the categories and structures offered by the participants and analyse the discourses found in the drawings as something that is produced, circulated, distributed, and consumed in society.

3. *Discourse-as-social-practice* is the last phase, where the ideological effects and language ideological process behind the discourses are brought forward and explained (Blommaert, 2005, pp. 29–30). To understand the ideological level of the drawings, processes of *iconisation*, *fractal recursivity*, *erasure*, and *axes of differentiation* are used (Irvine & Gal, 2000; Gal, 2016).

Based on the social semiotics of M.A.K Halliday and the systemic-functional theory, Kress and van Leeuven (1996) have developed a socio-semiotic model to analyse visual grammar. This allows one to examine different actions and interactions between different elements in a picture. In the analysis, different narrative and analytical processes are explored to gain a deeper understanding of the connections and actions of the represented encounters in the drawings.

Narrative processes consist of action, events, processes of change, and transitory spatial arrangements. The drawings under examination in this chapter are personal in the sense that there are represented participants in the pictures, and the drawings are dynamic because something is going on. In these kinds of settings, there are actors and goals: Actors are the ones who do the deed and goals are the ones to whom the deed is done. The semantic relations in the pictures are expressed by vectors, diagonal lines of action, which are somewhat of an equivalent to action verbs. A vector connects two participants to each other and represents them doing something, which creates a narrative process (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996, pp. 44, 46, 56–57).

Three to four different narrative processes can be detected from the drawings: reactional processes, speech processes, and mental processes as well as action processes, though the three first processes are predominant. Different processes can be present simultaneously, and vectors appear in different forms in different processes. In *an action process,* there is at least one participant, who is usually the actor. If there are many represented participants, the other one is usually the actor and the other one is the goal. The vector emanates from the actor towards the goal, or the actor

itself forms the vector in whole or in part. A vector can be an element or a line which shows that the presented participants of the image are doing something to or for each other (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996, pp. 56–63). A vector could be, for example, a finger of an actor pointing to the goal.

In *a reactional process*, the vector is formed by the direction of a glance of one or more participants, and in these processes the participants are not actors and goals but *reactors* and *phenomena*. The reactors of a reactional process must be humans or human-like animals, and the phenomena can be another participant or a whole visual proposition. The glance can be either transactional or non-transactional: The eyeline of the reactor can be directed at something in or outside the picture (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996, pp. 64–67).

In *speech processes* and *mental processes*, the vectors are formed by speech and thought bubbles that connect *the speaker* and *the senser* to either their content of speech or their inner mental processes (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996, p. 67).

On the other hand, some of the drawings are also partly structured by *analytical processes*. Analytical processes are about a part-whole structure, *the carrier* and *the possessive attributes* (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996, p. 89). An analytical image is not about what is going on but about how the participants fit together. The carrier is the 'whole' and attributes the parts that make up the whole (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 48). In the drawings of this chapter, the analytical processes are constructed by the represented participants as carriers, and the different attributes such as nationality, language proficiency, and so forth are connected to them.

## 8.3   Research Contexts and Data

Officially bilingual Finland has two national languages, several minority and indigenous languages, and many foreign languages are also spoken (see Introduction for details). Despite this, Finland is not free of the ideology of one nation and one language typical of nation states. Different views and ideologies live on both the Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking sides: The Finnish nationality can either be tightly entwined with only the Finnish language, or it can be seen as something shareable between two languages. The connection between language and nationality has accumulated new layers with the increase in multiculturalism and multilingualism during the past 30 years, and despite naturalisation or official policies, some people can still be considered more Finnish than

others. In general, the Finnish language and minority policies provide a good example of a case where there is a large gap between the legal and symbolic constructions of the nation (Saukkonen, 2012, pp. 9–11).

The data of this study is gathered from four Finnish medium primary schools from two areas: two from the Oulu region and two from Helsinki. Oulu is a city of approximately 200,000 inhabitants on the coast of Northern Ostrobothnia, and Helsinki, the capital of Finland, is a city of more than 600,000 inhabitants in Southern Finland. In addition to their size, these two cities differ in urbanism and bilingualism and multi-lingualism. Even though there is also a lot of geographical variety in Helsinki, it can be considered a more urban city environment compared to Oulu with its large rural areas. Some of the data has been gathered in a small neighbouring commune which goes by the pseudonym Lampela and can be classified as the countryside. Also, in terms of multilingualism these areas differ: Even though both cities are traditionally Swedish-speaking, Finnish has become the majority language already in the early twentieth century. In Oulu, the Swedish-speaking community is very small, with only some 400 people, whereas in Helsinki there are some 36,000 Swedish speakers. The number of foreign language speakers in Helsinki in 2020 was more than 100,000, and in Oulu in 2016 it was slightly more than 7,600 (City of Helsinki, 2021, p. 11; Statistics Finland, 2018b).

The data was gathered in autumn 2016 and spring 2017, and participants from ages 11 to 13 were asked to 'draw the Finnish language'.[2] The data was gathered during a school day in classrooms, in situations that resembled educational situations. The task was always received with some bewilderment—how can one draw *a language*? To enable the participants to get started, some supporting questions were offered, for example: *Where is Finnish spoken? Who speaks Finnish? What is the language like in your opinion?*, and so forth. All the participant groups had the same equipment: white paper, coloured pencils, and markers. The participant groups are presented in Table 8.1.[3]

The primary school data consists of 102 drawings of the Finnish language.[4] In this data, there are 29 drawings where speakers of the

[2] Teacher trainees from the University of Oulu also participated in the study (see Niemelä, 2020), but at this point, I have left their drawings out of the analysis.

[3] Lampela is a pseudonym for a small neighbouring commune of Oulu.

[4] I thank all the participants for allowing me to use their drawings as part of this study.

**Table 8.1**  The participant groups and background data

| Oulu region | 2 groups from the city (21) | 1 group from Lampela (19) | Mostly Finnish-speaking + 5 other home languages | Language proficiency in 7 other languages than the reported home languages |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Helsinki | 2 groups from North Helsinki (41) | 1 group from East Helsinki (21) | **North**: Mostly Finnish-speaking + 6 other home languages **East**: 14 different home languages | **North**: Language proficiency in 4 other languages than the reported home languages **East**: Language proficiency in 10 other languages than the reported home languages |

Finnish language are commented on in writing and six drawings where an interactional encounter between a Finn and a foreigner or a lack of understanding is visualised. In the analysis that follows, I concentrate solely on the six drawings mentioned above. These drawings come from the groups in the Oulu region and North Helsinki. The names of the pupils presented are pseudonyms.

Previously, the whole data has been analysed from the perspective of different representations of the Finnish language (Niemelä, 2020). The results show that even though the drawing task has been open for different implementations, widely shared representations occur in the data. These are mostly based on symbolic elements such as the flag and map of Finland as well as people named as Finns or Finnish-speaking. The connections between the language, nation, and nationality are strongly present.

The focus data of this chapter—the six drawings where an interactional encounter between a Finn and a foreigner or a lack of understanding is visualised—presents parts of the data that include aspects which were never mentioned in the data gathering, such as immigrants or other languages. For this reason, they form an interesting piece of the data that requires an inquiry of its own.

## 8.4  ANALYSIS

In this section, I analyse six drawings in which an interactional encounter between a Finn and a foreigner or a lack of understanding is visualised in different ways. These visualisations can be divided into two different types

where a) an interactional encounter is presented (three drawings) and b) foreigners speak English or Finnish (three drawings).

The analysis is divided into four parts: In Sect. 8.4.1, I will provide a text-level analysis of the drawings where an interactional encounter is presented, and in Sect. 8.4.2, I will provide a comparable analysis of the drawings where foreigners speak English or Finnish. I will analyse the discourses occurring in the drawings in Sect. 8.4.3 and the language ideological processes behind the discourses in Sect. 8.4.4.

### 8.4.1    Interactional Encounters

In this section, I describe the drawings that represent an encounter between two people and where question marks appear. I will analyse both the textual and visual elements, their relation to each other, and the different narrative processes present in the drawings.

The first drawing, Fig. 8.1, is a drawing by Hely from the Oulu2 group, and there is much going on in it: There is an encounter between two people, of which the person on the left wearing a beanie is marked as *suomalainen* (a Finn), and the one on the right wearing a top hat is marked as *ulkomaalainen* (a foreigner). The drawing contains a lot of writing and other symbols explaining the context. The background or qualities of the people are explained: The Finn *puhuu suomea* (speaks Finnish) and says '*Hei, olen kotoisin Suomesta! Entä sinä?*' (Hello, I'm from Finland! How about you?). The foreigner answers the question with a question mark because, as it is explained, he *ei ymmärrä suomea* (doesn't understand Finnish). The Finnish flag and map in the background together with the phrase *Suomea puhutaan **vain** Suomessa* (Finnish is spoken **only** in Finland) underline the lingual division represented. They also highlight the linguistic and cultural context in which these two people's encounter is represented.

The physical appearance of the two people is in many ways identical: They are both matchstick figures, tall and lean, with different accessories. Nevertheless, if differences are taken into consideration, one can notice that although the figures are the same height, the Finn is positioned slightly higher than the foreigner. In this way, to some degree the foreigner needs to look up to the Finn. Also, the facial expressions of the figures portray different positions and emotions in the situation: The Finn has a tender smile on their face whereas the mouth of the foreigner is only a straight line.
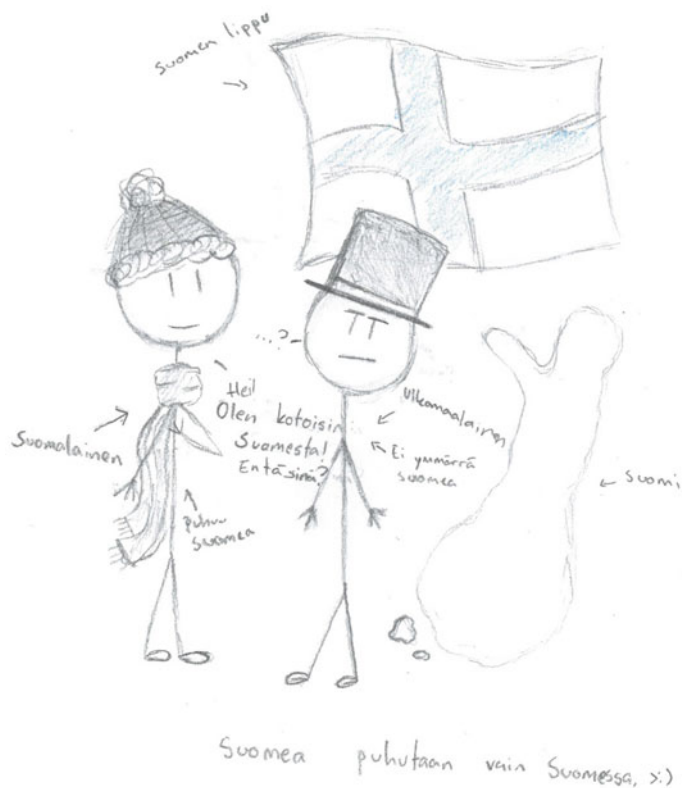
**Fig. 8.1** Hely's drawing, Oulu2 group

There are both narrative and analytical processes going on in Fig. 8.1. With regard to narrative processes, there are reactional processes going on in the characters' glances, and the speech process is present in the speech bubble of the Finn, though instead of a physical bubble there is a line that connects the speaker and their content of speech. On the one hand, the question mark of the foreigner can be interpreted as a speech process since it is structured in a similar way to the Finn's speech process. On the other hand, there is no clear speech content, only an indication of not understanding which could be interpreted as a mental process as well (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996, pp. 56–67). In addition to these, an

action process can be interpreted, as the Finn is leaning or taking a step towards the foreigner. The analytical process in the image is formed by the two carriers, the Finn and the foreigner, and the attributes given to them: nationality and proficiency in Finnish or not. In the same way, the flag and map of Finland are conceptualised in the background.

As in Fig. 8.1, there are many elements in Fig. 8.2, but the one presenting an encounter is found at the top of the paper. This arrangement is a simplified version of Fig. 8.1, and here as well one can see a Finnish-speaking person on the left side and *ulkomaalainen* (a foreigner) on the right side. The Finnish-speaking person says: '*Moi minä puhun suomea*' (Hi I speak Finnish), but apparently the foreigner does not understand, because there are only question marks above him.

In this arrangement the two figures are quite alike: They are both matchstick figures and they are the same size. Unlike in the first drawing, they are placed quite far away from each other. What is quite similar to the first drawing, though, are the facial expressions: The Finnish-speaking figure seems like the active party with a wide mouth, but the foreigner's expression is as confused as in the first drawing, and the mouth is only a straight line.

The Finnish context is well pictured in this drawing through analytical processes: In addition to the encounter, in Fig. 8.2 Juuso has drawn the Finnish map and a sauna by a lake, which can be considered one of the most characteristic examples of the Finnish national landscape. The text completes and explains the visual elements. Besides the map it says '*Täällä sitä puhutaan*' (It's spoken here) and an arrow points to Finland. Inside the map is another text that says '*Tämä ei ole sukka*' (This is not a sock), which explains the form of the artefact and ensures that the viewer does not mistake the map for a sock. The map has also been given a blue cross design, which is the same as in the Finnish flag. The writing by the sauna tells the viewer that '*Täältä löydät suomalaisia*' (Here you can find Finns). In this way, Juuso clearly places the Finnish language and Finns in certain places and cultural contexts. The blue-and-white colour choice further highlights the national perspective Juuso has chosen for the drawing (see Niemelä, 2020).

There are three different narrative processes in Fig. 8.2: Two reactional processes are formed by the eyelines of the Finn and the foreigner as they look at each other. A speech process occurs as the Finn directs their comment (*Moi! Minä puhun suomea! Hi! I speak Finnish!*) to the foreigner. The question marks above the foreigner indicate a mental
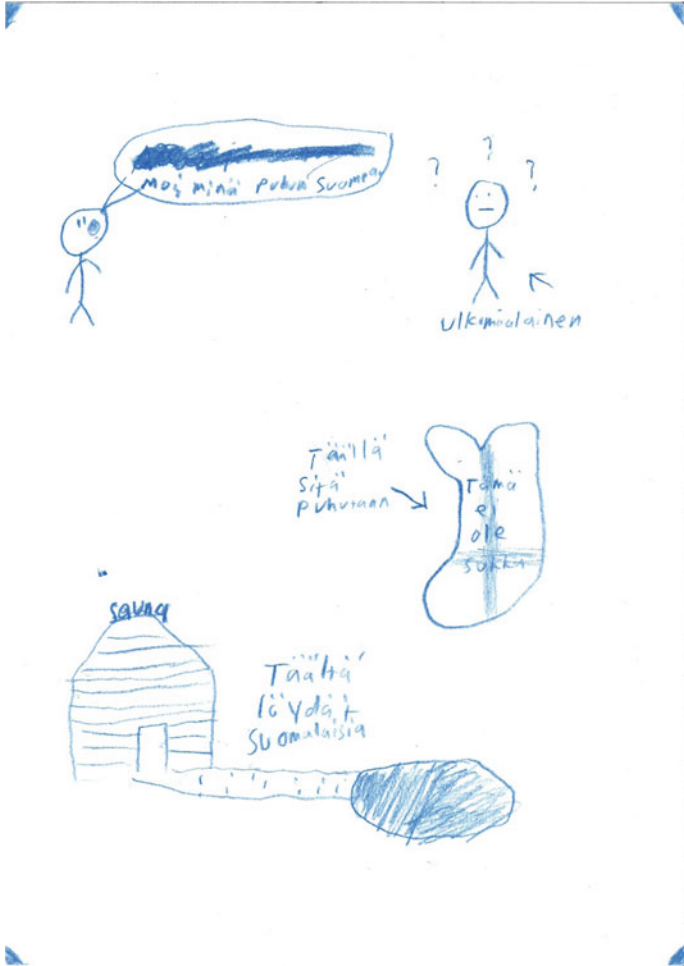
**Fig. 8.2**  Juuso's drawing, North Helsinki group

process, the difficulty of understanding the phrase (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996, pp. 56–67).

The third case is Fig. 8.3, which is the most simplified presentation of these encounters: The person on the right says: '*mitä äijä*', which is the spoken language, an informal and masculine way of asking *how are you*. It

could be compared to English's *What's up dude?* The person on the left does not understand, which is depicted with a question mark.

In this encounter there are no clear clues about the background of the two people, except that one of them is Finnish-speaking. No contextual cues are given either. The figures are quite alike except for the fact that the non-Finnish-speaking figure with a question mark is sporting a beard. This might describe his ethnicity, since at least among Muslim men growing a beard is a habit (Helsingin muslimit, 2021), and a beard can be seen (at least stereotypically) as an external marker that can be interpreted as a lack of integration or an expression of one's own culture (Toukolehti, 2020). On the other hand, beards have also been part of Western fashion for the past decade (YLE, 2019), so there is no way of telling. And as is clear, one's ethnicity does not tell anything about one's language skills. Apart from the beard, these two figures are almost the same. There might be some difference in facial expression, and again the Finnish-speaking figure would seem to have a more positive expression than the other figure, but the difference is so slight that it is very difficult to know for sure.

There are three narrative processes in Fig. 8.3: First, there is a reactional process formed by the glance of the Finnish-speaking character to



**Fig. 8.3**  Manu's drawing, North Helsinki group

the other character. Unlike in the previous two images, in this drawing the characters' glances do not meet; instead, it would seem that the Finnish-speaking figure is looking at the non-Finnish-speaking figure, whereas the non-Finnish-speaking figure's glance is directed outside of the image. In addition, there is a speech process formed by the question of the Finnish-speaking character and a mental process marked by the question mark indicating the trouble of understanding (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996, pp. 64–67).

These three images presented above portray interactional encounters that share many same elements, both analytical and narrative: A person who is identified as a Finn or who speaks Finnish, and another person who does not understand Finnish. The lack of understanding is coded with question marks. In the case of Fig. 8.1 and 8.2, the non-Finnish-speaking person is also identified as a foreigner.

In all three drawings the figures are very similar in appearance, and the main difference between the two in each drawing is the language difference and facial expressions. The encounters are interesting in their one-sidedness: The question or comment placed in Finnish is not replied to in any way, but the foreigner is left in total silence. None of the foreigners reply in some other language, even English, but the silence and question marks are the mediums the participants have chosen to express the lack of proficiency in Finnish. Johnstone (2018, pp. 71–72) writes that struggles over whose words get used and whose do not and also who gets to speak and who does not are often struggles over power and control. In all three drawings, the Finnish-speaking characters have the power and control over the situations. However, it must be taken into consideration that the participants' own language repertoires are also a limiting factor in the representation of these encounters: The participants come from Finnish-speaking homes, and they have studied English for a few years and might have some knowledge in Swedish or some other European language. This means that the possible languages of foreigners in Finland are not part of their linguistic repertoires. The absence of other languages might also be due to the task, since the pupils were asked to draw the Finnish language.

The facial expressions, clearly different in the first and second drawing and possibly different in the third, are a way of portraying the possibly confusing, uncertain, and unjust feelings that come together with the difficulty of understanding a certain language (see, e.g., Scotson, 2020,

p. 71). The young participants have understood and represented the possible awkwardness of such a situation well.

### 8.4.2    Foreigners Speak English or Finnish

In this section, I describe the drawings in which English is spoken or a foreigner speaks Finnish. I will analyse both the textual and visual elements, their relation to each other, and the different narrative processes present in the drawings.

The first drawing, Fig. 8.4, is a drawing by Noora from the Oulu2 group, and it consists of emojis and speech bubbles. In the speech bubbles, information about the Finnish language is distributed: Noora writes that Finnish is spoken in Finland but basically anyone anywhere can learn and speak Finnish. She also writes that Finnish is a very difficult language for those who do not have it as their first language. In this way, she circulates the popular idea of Finnish as an exceptionally difficult language (see, e.g., Miestamo, 2006; Lehto, 2018), but at the same time she continues by adding that despite this, someone might find Finnish easy. She also finds it difficult to determine who speaks Finnish because whoever can speak Finnish anywhere. At the bottom of the drawing, Noora writes that many new things about the Finnish language are taught in school, and if a pupil is not Finnish-speaking, they might study Finnish as a second language.

The texts in the speech bubble show that Fig. 8.4 expresses an exceptional level of language awareness among the drawings. In the context of the data of this chapter as well as the larger data these drawings are part of (Niemelä, 2020, submitted), Noora's views on Finnish show an understanding of language as knowledge that can be learnt and something that is connected to people in general instead of nationality or state boundaries. On the other hand, the national language status and the context of the drawing is portrayed with the Finnish flags in the drawing. The flags are placed next to different elements: a note, the ABC for alphabets, and a building that could be interpreted as a school. These are the analytical processes in the drawing, as Noora connects Finnish with certain qualities and institutions.

In addition to describing Finnish in many words, Fig. 8.4's emojis and speech bubbles are accompanied by a head (possibly another emoji) wearing a bowler hat that says, '*How did you say that*?'. In this way, English is brought into the arrangement. The use of English and
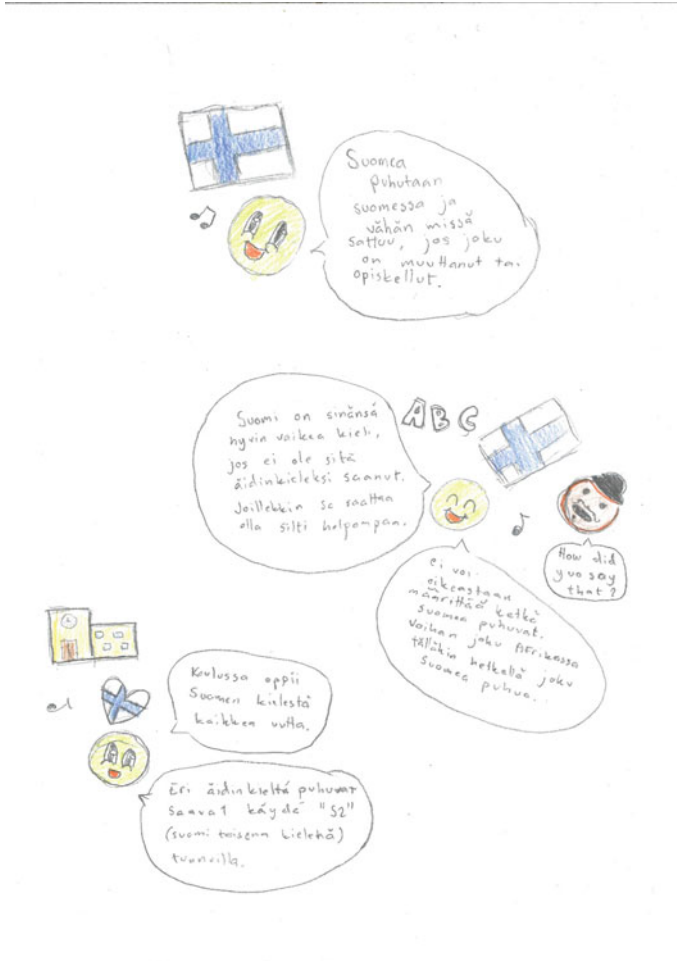
**Fig. 8.4**   Noora's drawing, Oulu2 group

especially the chosen question emphasises the difficulty of the Finnish language to non-Finnish speakers and also brings up the status of English as a lingua franca in Finland. The emojis with their glances and speech bubbles form the narrative processes of the image: reactional processes, as the emojis' glances are directed outside the image and towards the viewer,

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and speech processes are formed by the many speech bubbles (Kress & van Leeuven, 1996, pp. 64–67).

A somewhat similar arrangement is found in Fig. 8.5, which is Martti's drawing from the North Helsinki group: There are six matchstick figures in the drawing, of which one says '*plaa plaa*' (bla bla), three speak Finnish and say '*Mitä äijä!?*' (What's up dude!?), '*Moi!*' (Hi!), and '*Mä puhun suomea*' (I speak Finnish), and two speak English and say '*What*' and '*It's too hard*'. The context of the drawing is given by the Finnish map placed on the left. The glances between the characters in the drawing and towards the viewer outside the image form the reactional processes of the image, and the speech bubbles are the vectors of the many speech processes going on (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 64–66, 67).

The leftmost character speaks an unidentified language, which creates a possibility that Martti has chosen this way of describing a foreigner who is neither a Finnish nor an English speaker. The character in the centre directs their question to the character on the left. It is difficult to say to whom the rest of the Finnish-speaking characters are speaking. Are the greetings and statements directed at the viewer or the characters in the drawing? The English-speaking characters on the right are talking to the Finnish-speaking characters.

Why have Noora and Martti chosen questions and phrases like *How did you say that?*, *What*, and *It's too hard*? They all highlight the speakers' lack of proficiency in Finnish and the perspective where the Finnish language is represented as very difficult to learn by non-Finnish speakers (see, e.g., Miestamo, 2006; Lehto, 2018; Niemelä, 2019). In this way, a



**Fig. 8.5** Martti's drawing, North Helsinki group

boundary is created between the Finnish speakers and the rest: Finnish seems out of their reach. This boundary is comparable to the one created in Sect. 8.4.1, with the difference that in these two drawings the non-Finnish speakers have a voice, albeit a very limited one because it focuses only on commenting on the difficulty of the Finnish language and also at the same time on idealising proficiency in Finnish.

The choice of using English in the drawings brings forward the high status the English language has in Finnish society (see Leppänen & Nikula, 2008, pp. 16–21): In the Finnish context, English is the most studied foreign language and so commonly used that it is often called the third domestic language (Leppänen & Nikula, 2008; Pyykkö, 2017, pp. 24–46; Vaarala et al., 2021, pp. 30–34). The status of and need for English in Finland is widely discussed in the public and media, and there is at least one city in Finland which has made English the official third language of communal services (Institute for the Languages of Finland, 2017; City of Espoo, 2017; YLE, 2021a, 2021b). This is in some contradiction to the linguistic reality of Finland, since Russian, Estonian, and the Arabic languages for example have more native speakers in Finland than English (Statistics Finland, 2020). Studies show that the linguistic status of English-speaking immigrants is different from that of those with other first languages: If English is one's first language, both the demand and need to learn Finnish are lower (Niemelä, 2019; Pitkänen et al., 2019, p. 21), a phenomenon that is familiar from other contexts as well (see, e.g., Yelenevskaya & Fialkova, 2003). Also, compared to other large minority language groups in Finland (speakers of Russian, Estonian, Somali, and Arabic), the English-speaking often speak Finnish on a beginner's level instead of on higher levels (Pitkänen et al., 2019, p. 21).

Figure 8.6 is Jooa's drawing from the Lampela group, and it is slightly different from the previous ones. In this drawing, two people are placed on the Finnish map and they tell the viewer different things. The analytical aspect of the drawing shows the viewer two characters who are coded differently: The one above is *suomalainen, joka puhuu suomea* (a Finn who speaks Finnish) and the one below is *ulkomaalainen, joka puhuu suomea* (a foreigner who speaks Finnish). The narrative part of the image appears through speech processes. The first speech bubble says '*Hei olen suomalainen*' (Hello I'm Finnish), and the second says '*Minä en ole suomalainen mutta puhun suomea*' (I'm not a Finn but I speak Finnish) and '*Mielestäni suomi on mukava kieli*' (I think Finnish is a nice language).
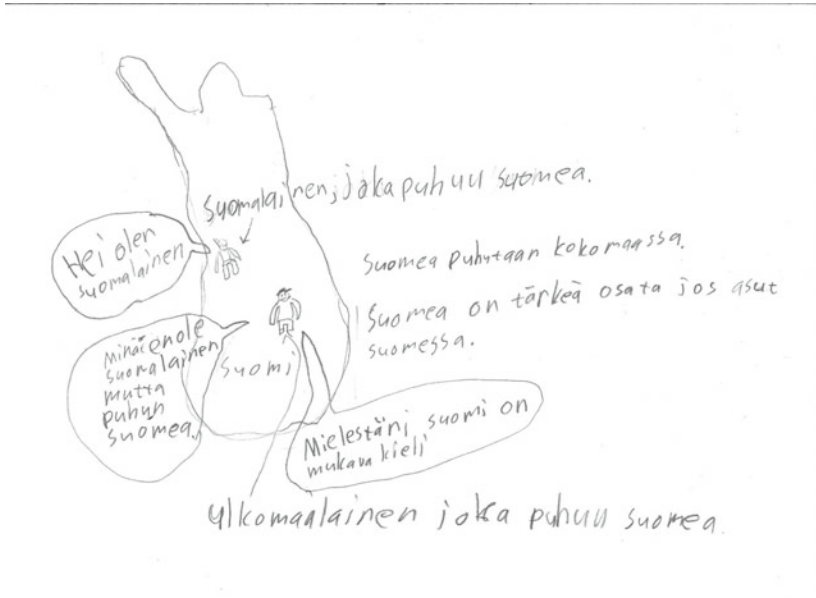
**Fig. 8.6**  Jooa's drawing, Lampela group

Figure 8.6 is interesting for many reasons: It raises a person's background above language proficiency, because foreignness is mentioned even though the person speaks Finnish, but on the other hand it shows the possibility of knowing Finnish even if the speaker is not a Finn. Saukkonen (2012, p. 10) writes about the conflict between the official Finland and the symbolic Finland, where people who immigrated to the country can apply for citizenship and officially become Finns, but 'some people are still generally considered more genuine Finns than others. According to a not insignificant part of the population, these people constitute the true national community'. Ruuska (2020, p. 147) describes how, in her data, Finnishness is ideologically structured from a cluster of features, including accent-free speech, a Finnish name, and even stereotypical looks. In the drawing, the participants are placed in Finland, in a region where one's background seems to make a difference when it comes to defining nationality and language skills, and where therefore Finnishness and foreignness are worth mentioning.

### 8.4.3    The Discourses

The drawings presented above offer a unique peephole to the ways in which primary school pupils describe linguistic differences in the context of the Finnish language. Especially interesting are the different clusters of qualities the participants offer and the different boundaries between them. In what follows, I will examine the different categories and criteria the participants offer in their drawings and interpret the different discourses the participants structure. At this phase of the analysis, I observe the discourses as discursive practice, that is, as discourses that are socially produced, circulated, shared, and produced (Blommaert, 2005, pp. 28–30).

The drawings presented above offer their interpreter four different discourses that structure differences and boundaries between the different people represented. The premise of the drawings has been in representing the Finnish language, which has been closely connected with *nationality, difficulty, and difference*. The discourses observed are:

- Only Finns speak Finnish (foreigners don't).
- Finns and foreigners are different (given different essential qualities).
- Finnish is a difficult language (which is out of reach for non-Finns).
- English is multilingualism.

Next, I will give an overview on the discourses in each drawing. The drawings are structured with a strong division between understanding and not understanding Finnish, which is almost exclusively presented as a quality and skill Finns have and foreigners do not.

The *only Finns speak Finnish* discourse is present in Fig. 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, and 8.5, where the Finnish-speaking Finns are placed in contrast with foreigners speaking no language at all or speaking only English. However, the discourse is partly broken in Fig. 8.4, since Noora brings up the fact that anyone anywhere can learn and speak Finnish. Two opposite discourses are present in her drawing at the same time.

The *Finns and foreigners are different* discourse is also present in these images, since both counterparts gather around them a cluster of different qualities which are tightly entwined and present directly or indirectly the different essential qualities Finns and foreigners supposedly have: *Finn vs. foreigner, fluent in Finnish vs. ignorant of any language, active vs. passive, able to express oneself vs. silent*. In Fig. 8.1 and 8.2, the expressions of

*comfortability vs. discomfort* are also visualised through facial expressions. The first qualities are more positive and always given to Finns, whereas the latter are more negative and always given to foreigners. Finnishness and foreignness are structured by presenting oppositions and creating differentiation, and this creates an immense imbalance of power between the presented groups of people in the drawings. Interestingly, the participants have represented foreigners as a group of narrow agencies by using means that learners of Finnish have themselves used when describing their use of Finnish in communication situations: silence, discomfort, and so forth (see Scotson, 2018). Figure 8.1 and 8.2 also combine foreignness with a lack of language skills overall and in this way ignore any possible language proficiency foreigners might have (Irvine & Gal, 2000). This discourse is also present in Fig. 8.6, where knowing Finnish does not erase the foreigner's background.

The *Finnish is a difficult language* discourse is present in Fig. 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3 as Finnish is represented as something that is non-understandable. The discourse expands in Fig. 8.4 and 8.5, where the difficulty of the Finnish language is clearly highlighted using English in contrast to Finnish, showing how Finnish is out of reach for non-Finns. This discourse is widely shared in Finnish society, where Finnish is considered to be different from many of its Indo-European language neighbours and therefore also difficult and special (see, e.g., Lehto, 2018, pp. 111–115; Miestamo, 2006; Niemelä, 2019, pp. 399–400; Pajunen, 2002, pp. 563–564; Paunonen, 1996, p. 551).

The *English is multilingualism* discourse is present especially in Fig. 8.4 and 8.5, where English and Finnish are presented side by side, but also in all images to a lesser extent since English is the only foreign language named in these drawings. In this way, English is the only indication of any multilingualism in the drawings. As in many other Western European countries, also in Finland the use and status of English has grown fairly high during the twentieth century and increased further in the beginning of the twenty-first century (Leppänen & Nikula, 2008, pp. 16–21). As Pennycook (2021, p. 75) points out, the spread and power of English has a lot to do with *desire*—and in Finland the desire to be able to communicate in English has, for example, led to the situation where English is the most studied foreign language of primary school pupils from the first grade onwards and more widely known and used by the Finnish-speaking population than the country's other official language Swedish (Pyykkö, 2017; Statistics Finland, 2018a).

Unlike in Fig. 8.1–8.3, in Fig. 8.4 and 8.5 the English-speaking partic-
ipants are active, and they have a voice. They are not so much participants
in the conversation as they are commentators: In Fig. 8.4 the recipient of
the information in the drawing lies outside the drawing, and the English-
speaking character's role is to marvel at the difficulty of the Finnish
language. The same kind of arrangement is found in Fig. 8.5, where all
six characters say something. There is a character who speaks an uniden-
tified language, and there are characters who speak Finnish and English.
The English-speaking characters are given the role of marvelling at the
difficulty of Finnish. The English language in the drawings would seem
to highlight the difficulty of Finnish for foreigners (see, e.g., Niemelä,
2019) instead of emphasising the status of English in Finland—although
this happens anyway, since it is the very linguistic resource the participants
have chosen to use in addition to Finnish.

### 8.4.4   The Ideological Processes of Differentiation

Ideologies on language are socially structured and shaped, and they mate-
rialise for example in the ways we represent and organise the world—in
discourses (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2019, pp. 83–86). Ideologies do
not appear out of thin air but are strongly rooted in history (Blommaert,
1999, pp. 6–7), and they can be described as cultural knowledge and
stereotypes which lay the groundwork for different hypotheses on differ-
ence or on the combinations of different qualities. These need to pre-exist
before one can connect certain qualities to certain objects (Agha, 2003;
Gal, 2016). At this last phase of the analysis, I examine the discourses
as social practice and aim to explain the ideological and power-related
backgrounds of the representations (cf. Blommaert, 2005, pp. 29–30).

First, I will focus on exploring how the processes of iconisation, fractal
recursivity, and erasure are present in the drawings (cf. Irvine & Gal,
2000). These are based on the indexical quality of language, where 'the
use of a linguistic form can become a pointer to (index of) the social iden-
tities and the typical activities of speakers' (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 37). As
indices, linguistic features are considered to reflect and express broader
cultural images of people and activities (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 37)—
and this relation is maintained by language ideology, which connects the
linguistic features with the images of social classification (Mäntynen et al.,
2012). Certain features or a whole language can index a social group,

and people act in relation to these ideologically constructed representations of linguistic difference (Irvine & Gal, 2000). This happens through the process of *enregisterment*, in which 'a linguistic repertoire becomes differentiable within a language as a socially recognized register of forms' (Agha, 2003, p. 231).

In the drawings, the signs representing Finnish are multiple. The map of Finland, the flag of Finland, and the hearts signify Finnish on a symbolic level, but the drawn participants and their conversations (or lack thereof) use a different signification process. In cases where a whole language can be seen as a linguistic repertoire that can index a social group, as in the drawings presented here where the drawn Finns and Finnish speakers use the language, the Finnish language indexes Finns as a whole. Finns appear as quite an exclusive group of certain people, one of whose main qualities is the Finnish language. Foreignness appears in contrast to Finnishness and indexes the lack of proficiency in Finnish. In Fig. 8.1 and 8.2 and Fig. 8.4 and 8.5, these indices seem to go one step further and become *icons*: In this process of iconisation (Irvine & Gal, 2000; Gal, 2016; Mäntynen et al., 2012, p. 330; Rosa & Burdik, 2017), knowing Finnish becomes an essential quality for Finns, whereas not knowing Finnish similarly becomes a quality of those who are not Finns or who speak other languages.

In addition to iconisation, the process of fractal recursivity (Irvine & Gal, 2000; Mäntynen et al., 2012, p. 330; Rosa & Burdick, 2017) can be found in the background. 'This process involves the projection of an opposition, salient at some level to the relationship, onto some other level' (Irvine & Gal, 2000). In this process, a certain relation is taken as it is and projected to describe some other relation (Mäntynen et al., 2012, p. 330), and usually these are relations and oppositions 'between activities or roles associated with prototypical social personas' (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 38). In Fig. 8.1–8.3, the opposition of knowing Finnish and not knowing Finnish seems to be refracted to other quality oppositions of Finns and foreigners, where Finns are described as active and able to express themselves and foreigners are described as passive and silent. Because foreigners are perceived as non-speakers of Finnish, they are also perceived as inherently different people.

In both of the language ideological processes presented above, the ideology of essentialism is strong. It leans on the assumption that socially defined groups can be clearly delimited and that their members are more or less alike, based on the cultural (or biological) characteristics believed

to be inherent to the group. These kinds of characteristics are usually believed to be 'authentic' (Bucholtz, 2003, p. 400). In the drawings, Finns are differentiated from foreigners by their authenticity and different qualities, the primary one being the knowledge of the Finnish language.

The qualities or roles of passiveness and astonishment given to the foreigners are also a result of the process of erasure (Irvine & Gal, 2000; Mäntynen et al., 2012; Rosa & Burdick, 2017). Erasure is a process in which ideology renders some persons, qualities, or activities invisible, or matters in juxtaposition with the ideological scheme go unnoticed or get explained away (Irvine & Gal, 2000). In most of the drawings, the participants have completely erased the foreigners' possibility of being multilingual and knowing other languages than Finnish and/or English. In Fig. 8.1–8.3, the foreigners are represented as if they spoke no language at all—which unfortunately is quite often the perspective taken in Finland with foreigners or immigrants who speak anything other than well-known European languages (Pöyhönen et al., 2019, pp. 263–264). Of course, this is also affected by the fact that the participants might not know any of the languages they might think foreigners speak and are thus unable to demonstrate them in writing. However, this leads to ignoring the possible language skills of foreigners. In Fig. 8.4 and 8.5, the English-speaking characters' marvelling at the difficulty of Finnish also erases the possibility of foreigners learning Finnish. In the drawings, the ideology that only Finns speak Finnish is a totalising vision, and possible elements that are not seen to fit in the picture are ignored (see Irvine & Gal, 2000).

However, two of the drawings leave space for different interpretations. Figure 8.6 differs from the rest as it represents a foreigner who speaks Finnish. In this drawing, the knowledge of Finnish is not represented as the inherent character of the group members in the same way as in other drawings, but the opposition is structured between different nationalities: a Finn and a foreigner. Together with Fig. 8.4, these representations shed light on the understanding that anyone can learn and speak Finnish and that language is not bound to nationality. Figure 8.4 does nevertheless bring forward the fact that parallel and contradictory language ideologies can and do prevail in society (Kroskrity, 2000).

The drawings and the language ideological processes prevailing behind them present us with different *axes of differentiation* (Gal, 2016), where different signs and the qualities they index have polarised as opposites. In the process of representing the Finnish language, certain differences have been construed in the context of similarity, because similarity and

difference are mutually defining (Gal, 2016, p. 121; see also Irvine & Gal, 2000). That is, the Finnish language and everything that in the minds of the participants goes together with it have also been represented through difference and contrast, as described above.

These axes of differentiation are construed according to different qualities that are considered to be shared by the expressive features that make up the register (in this case, the Finnish language) and by the persona it indexes (Finnishness and related activities), and these are in contrast with another such pairing (non-Finnish-speaking, foreignness, and related activities) (Gal, 2016, p. 121). The axes of differentiation in the drawings reproduce and circulate the ethnolinguistic assumptions and prejudices very familiar with national states and national languages (Bonfiglio, 2010, p. 1; Blommaert et al., 2012, pp. 2–3).

## 8.5    Conclusions and Discussion

In this chapter, I have presented six different drawings where an interactional encounter between a Finn and a foreigner or a lack of understanding is visualised. The drawings have been analysed from the perspectives of visual analysis as well as of discourses and the language ideologies prevailing behind them.

The visual analysis exposes that the visualised encounters are structured in analytical and narrative means. The analytical processes in the drawings highlight the fundamental qualities of the represented participants such as nationality and language proficiency. The narrative processes on the other hand present different levels and ways of activity. In these drawings, the activity takes place mainly in reactions (gazes), speech, and thoughts. Speech is almost exclusively reserved for the Finnish-speaking, whereas thoughts and question marks are for the immigrants.

I have sought to answer how the interactional encounters of Finns and foreigners are represented in pupils' drawings and how the parties are represented in these encounters. The analysis shows that in the drawings, Finns and foreigners comprise counterparts which are presented as different from each other, almost as opposites. The knowledge of Finnish or Finnishness is represented as something that enables activity and involvement, whereas not knowing Finnish inevitably places one in a passive role.

Another focus question of this chapter was what kinds of lingual differences and positions of power are represented in visualised encounters and

speaker descriptions. The lingual differences are represented as absolute and black-and-white: One either speaks Finnish or does not. This is due to the idea of Finnish being a difficult or almost unattainable language. When it comes to positions of power, in these representations the source of the power is in the language: If one's language is neither Finnish nor English, one is silent. English is not equivalent to Finnish, but it ensures that one has a voice. Nevertheless, knowing the language does not make one pass as a Finn, since one's national background seems to remain relevant.

In the light of these results, to be able to define what the Finnish language or Finnishness is, one also needs to define what these are not. In these drawings, pupils aged 11 to 13 represent the Finnish language through its opposites: Finnish is the language of Finns, and foreigners do not have proficiency in it. Finnishness is constructed from unifying qualities, of which the most powerful is the language. In the context of national states, this is nothing surprising (see, e.g., Anderson, 2007 [1983]; Bonfiglio, 2010).

The different oppositions presented in the drawings as well as the imbalance of power were not something specifically looked for during the data-gathering task, and thus most of the drawings in the entirety of the data concentrate on multiple representations of Finnish. However, something in the frame and context of the data gathering makes the concepts of Finnishness, nativeness, and nation worth mentioning, along with the main qualities with which the Finnish language is represented (see also Niemelä, 2020). Pennycook (2021, p. 86) writes that lines of difference only take on significance insofar as they are combined in particular ways. In the case of this study and data, the frame is produced by the contexts of the data gathering, which are school and a data-gathering task in the middle of the school day. Everything the participants know, have heard, and have talked about the Finnish language, especially in school, forms the cultural value through which the drawings and presentations of the language are produced.

As stated above, language ideologies do not appear out of thin air but are instead products of history, circulated discourses, and reproduced representations. Since the data was gathered in school, it very much describes the prevailing discursive and ideological dimensions on the knowledge and cultural value of Finnish in this very context. The data gathered in 2016 and 2017 represents Finnish through a strong ethnolinguistic assumption. The year of the data gathering was also when the new

national core curriculum for basic education (POPS, 2014) was taken into implementation. This curriculum highlights the value of language awareness in all teaching as well as the multilingualism of all individuals. However, in the light of this study's results, the language ideologies of primary education seem to highlight the 'one language, one nation' ideal—thus setting them quite far apart from the new ideals towards which the national curriculum strives.

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# Relationship Between Translingual Practices and Identity Performance and Positioning on the Swedish-Finnish Border

*Jaana Kolu*

## 9.1 Introduction

This longitudinal study examines four Tornedalian bilingual adolescents' translingual practices, that is, the way they use their linguistic resources and their performance and positioning of linguistic identities during interactions in informal pair conversations and individual semi-structured interviews with the researcher. The aim is to investigate whether there is a relationship between the adolescents' language use and identity performance and positioning. The investigation was conducted over a period of five years (2014–2019). The research site, Haparanda, located on the border of Sweden and Finland in Tornedalen (Torne Valley, see Fig. 9.1), is a small municipality of about 10,000 inhabitants. Roughly 55 per cent of the population are foreign-born, and over 80 per cent of them were

J. Kolu (✉)
Philosophical Faculty, School of Humanities, University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu, Finland
e-mail: jaana.kolu@uef.fi

born in Finland (Statistics Sweden, 2022). Haparanda shares a common city and shopping centre with the neighbouring city of Tornio in Finland. Tornedalen, on the other hand, is a large geographical area in north-eastern Sweden and in north-western Finland, divided by the national border.

Tornedalen is and has been a multilingual region for centuries. Before the border between Sweden and Finland was drawn in 1809, Finnish and Northern Saami were the main languages of the region. Currently, Swedish is the dominant language in Swedish Tornedalen, whereas Finnish is the main language on the Finnish side of the border. In addition to Swedish, people in the Torne River Valley on the Swedish side of the border speak mostly Meänkieli (earlier called Tornedalen Finnish), various Finnish dialects, and Saami languages (Arola et al., 2014; Kolu, 2023).



**Fig. 9.1** Torne (River) Valley. Copyright 2021 by Tapio Palvelut Oy/ Karttakeskus

Since 2000, Finnish, Meänkieli, and Northern Saami have had the status of official minority language in Sweden (The Swedish Code of Statutes, 2009, p. 724, Act on National Minorities). Meänkieli is the official name of the Finnic language spoken in Tornedalen in northern Sweden. Several researchers consider that it is impossible to draw a strict line between Meänkieli and various Finnish varieties in Tornedalen[1] (Arola et al., 2014, p. 2; Kolu, 2023, p. 130; Ruotsala, 2014, p. 268).

Cross-border zones such as Tornedalen connecting people with different linguistic and national backgrounds make it inadequate to use categories such as those of languages, dialects, and ethnicities (see De Fina, 2016, p. 167). Consequently, in this study neither language use nor linguistic identity is understood to be fixed or predetermined; instead, they are understood to be fluid and socially constructed in interaction depending on the communication context (see Creese & Blackledge, 2015; De Fina, 2016; Fisher et al., 2018; García & Li Wei, 2014; Makalela, 2014; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2013; Pennycook, 2016). Pennycook (2016, p. 205) and Jørgensen et al. (2016, p. 144) prefer to talk in terms of linguistic resources, including language styles, genres, features, and registers, which enable the analysis of linguistic variation in time and space. However, linguistic features may be associated with certain languages as social constructs and ideological systems, and it would be difficult to carry on this investigation without naming languages (cf. Fishman & García, 2011; García & Leiva, 2014; Jaspers & Madsen, 2018). Nevertheless, it should be noted that the translanguaging movement in sociolinguistics challenges hierarchic categories and concepts of language, and even traditional notions of bilingualism (see García, 2012b; Pennycook, 2016, p. 201).

In this chapter, *translingual practices* are seen as bilingual interlocutors' concrete language practices, that is, something they do 'in action' with their multiple language resources (Jørgensen & Møller, 2014).

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[1] Several researchers do not draw a precise line between the Finnish dialects spoken in Tornedalen and Meänkieli, instead treating the speakers as one group (see Ruotsala, 2014, p. 268). On the other hand, in Finnish Tornedalen, people may sometimes call their own local dialect Meänkieli. Nonetheless, there are several differences between Finnish and Meänkieli, especially in vocabulary. For example, Meänkieli contains many new loanwords from Swedish used in modern everyday life (Arola et al., 2014; Ridanpää, 2018, p. 187). Tornedalians themselves may call their language Meänkieli and (Tornedalen) Finnish (Arola et al., 2014, p. 2). There are also several varieties of Meänkieli: For example, in the municipality of Kiruna, the variety of Meänkieli is called Lannankieli.

Linguistic resources can range from how flexibly bilinguals use their vocabulary, grammar, and discourse particles to their use of metalanguage and stylisation in their communication (see more detailed analysis of various features in bilingual linguistic and discourse practices in Kolu, 2017; see also Lehtonen, 2015). Thus, translingual practices are considered by bilinguals to be common and natural ways of interacting which enable them to create their own language styles and linguistic identities (Canagarajah, 2013; García, 2012b). The term *translingual identity* is used here for describing the dynamics of identity, performed through translingual practices and transcending national and language boundaries (Canagarajah, 2013; Flores, 2013; Kolu, 2017).

There is a related concept to the term *translingual practices*—the notion of *translanguaging*—that has been criticised for its ambiguity and vagueness. Here, the concept of translanguaging is used as an umbrella term for the theoretical perspective of translanguaging. García and Li Wei (2014, p. 2) define the theory of translanguaging as 'an approach to the use of language, bilingualism and the education of bilinguals that considers the language practices of bilinguals not as two autonomous systems as has been traditionally the case, but as one linguistic repertoire with features that have been socially constructed as belonging to two separate languages'. As Li Wei (2017) states, the concept of translanguaging has been employed in a variety of contexts, including pedagogy, bilinguals' and multilinguals' spontaneous interaction inside and outside of the classroom, and multimodal communication (see also García, 2009; Cenoz & Gorter, 2017). Hence, translanguaging theory has contributed to a new theoretical approach to language and bilingualism which is also applied in this study.

It can be assumed that translingual practices, that is, bilingual or multilingual speakers' use of their multiple linguistic resources, are linked to cross-border and translingual identity positioning (cf. Canagarajah, 2013; García & Leiva, 2014). As De Fina (2016, p. 167) argues, 'it is through the manipulation of linguistic resources that identities are indexed and conveyed'. Examining the language use and identity formation of young people living in the border region can provide new insights to the research of the hybridisation of languages and identities (cf. Edwards, 2009; Ruotsala, 2012). The four bilingual (Finnish/Swedish) adolescents who participated in this research are members of social networks that extend across the national border between Sweden and Finland.

The term bilingual is used in this study, as the participants consider themselves to be bilinguals in Swedish and Finnish. The focus in this study is on Swedish and Finnish resources, but the concept of bilingualism does not exclude any other languages or varieties the participants use in interactions. The adolescents in this investigation could just as well be described as multilinguals, as they also know and speak other languages such as English and Spanish (cf. Garcia, 2009).

In the following sub-section, I present my research objective and rationale. In the subsequent section, I provide an overview of the theoretical perspectives on language and identity. After that, I present the data set, methodology, and analytical approach to the study object. This is followed by an analysis of conversation data from four data gatherings (2014–2019) and interviews (2019). Finally, I summarise and discuss the findings of the study.

### 9.1.1   Research Objective and Rationale

The research questions that guided this study were as follows:
*Pair conversations* (2014–2019):

1. Are there any changes in the four participants' mutual use of their linguistic resources in the recorded informal pair conversations over a period of five years (2014–2019), and if so, what are the changes?
2. Are there any changes in the way the four participants perform and position their identities in the recorded informal pair conversations over a period of five years (2014–2019), and if so, what kinds of changes?

*Interviews* (2019):

3. How do the participants perform linguistically and position their identities in the individual interviews with the researcher after the last recorded pair conversations, in 2019?
4. How do the participants narrate and explain any changes occurring over a period of five years in their use of language resources, identity performance, and positioning in the interviews with the researcher, in 2019?

*Overall* (2014–2019):

> 5. Are there any links to be seen between the adolescents' language use, linguistic identity performance, and positioning during the period of 2014–2019?

In this study, the same bilingual participants were followed over a five-year period, and during this period they moved from comprehensive school to senior secondary school. The longitudinal research highlights the circumstances that may affect adolescents' language use and identity transformations and influence their maintenance of multiple linguistic resources in the long run. Further, the follow-up study offers the possibility to examine whether the possible changes in adolescents' language use and identity performance and positioning seem to be linked with each other.

The adolescent years of bilingual or multilingual individuals may be a phase in their lives which can be decisive for their later use of their heritage language (Pułaczewska, 2021). For example, a change of place of residence, school, and friends may affect a young person's language use as their linguistic environment and social contexts change (Edwards, 2009; Kolu, 2020, 2023; Pujolar & Puigdevall, 2015). However, there is a gap in the research of this specific field, as there are very few follow-up studies in bilingual and multilingual adolescents' language use, and most of the longitudinal studies are conducted from a language learning perspective, not from a perspective of informal interactions outside the classroom (cf. Bateman, 2016; Kapp & Bangeni, 2011).

## 9.2    THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE, IDENTITY, AND TRANSLINGUAL PRACTICES

As Edwards (2009, p. 254) notes, 'language and identity are powerfully and complexly intertwined, and contexts of bilingualism and multilingualism only reinforce this point'. Edwards (2009, p. 255) argues 'that the importance of being bilingual is, above all, social and psychological rather than linguistic'. Furthermore, Edwards (2009, p. 254) explains that for majority language speakers living in an environment where the majority language is spoken, the link between language and identity is not necessarily a matter of concern, while for minority language speakers

the issues between language and identity are not always self-evident or static.

Hence, bilingual identities are shaped and reshaped along with the bilingual language practices and correspondingly, bilingual language practices themselves may be considered as acts of identities (see Canagarajah, 2013; Musk, 2010; Pennycook, 2004). On the other hand, García (2010, p. 519) uses the verbs *languaging* and *ethnifying* instead of the nouns *language* and *ethnicity* to emphasise that it is individuals that use certain linguistic practices to signal who they are and what they want to be: 'It is through languaging and ethnifying that people perform their identifying'.

The four adolescents' use of language resources and identity performance and positioning are examined in this chapter from a translanguaging approach, in which both language and identities are seen as integrated and fluid in different social contexts (see Fishman & García, 2011; García & Leiva, 2014; Jaspers & Madsen, 2018). Here, translingual practices account for the concrete incorporation of multiple linguistic resources into speakers' everyday interaction in places where different languages are simultaneously present (De Fina, 2016, p. 168). Furthermore, translingual practices refer to bilinguals' unplanned and integrative use of multiple language resources both inside and outside of school (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; García, 2009). The language repertoire of bilingual adolescents includes all kinds of meshing and blending of language resources (vocabulary, grammar, phonology, discourse particles), translations, metalanguage, and calques (Kolu, 2017; Moore, 2018).

In this study, both linguistic and ethnic identities are viewed as being *performed* and *positioned* during interactions with other people in certain discursive spaces and situations (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Duff, 2015; Pennycook, 2004). Translingual practices enable social and identity transformations and hybrid identities; correspondingly, identity transformations may generate translingual practices (Flores & García, 2013; García & Leiva, 2014; García & Li Wei, 2014; Li Wei, 2011). Thus, the language or languages the speakers choose for the interactions are seen as a part of the participants' identity performance (cf. Kolu, 2020; Lehtonen 2015; Musk, 2010). Consequently, translingual practices themselves and various linguistic features (grammatical and lexical features and discourse particles) may function as identity markers and social indexicals which establish social relationships between interlocutors (Kolu, 2017, 2020; Henricson, 2015; Lehtonen, 2015). As Lehtonen (2015, p. 215)

suggests, it is not only a question of an individual's own identity performance, but also a question of her relationship to other interlocutors and the actual context (Lehtonen, 2015, p. 297).

One central concept in this study is *positioning*, which according to Davies and Harré (1990, p. 47) 'is the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines'. Davies and Harré (ibid.) divide positioning into 'reflective positioning' in which a person positions herself and 'interactive positioning' in which one person positions another. In this chapter, positioning refers both to how the interlocutors in this study position themselves and each other as language users and to how they locate their identities through the roles and subject positions they take up in pair conversations and individual interviews with the researcher (see Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, pp. 591–593).

## 9.3    Data, Participants, and Analysis Method

The data presented here are drawn from recorded, informal pair conversations and from individual interviews with the participants: Carro and Amanda, and Janet and Emma. The pair conversations were recorded on video in two schools on four occasions in 2014, 2015, 2017, and 2019 respectively (see Table 9.1). A questionnaire about the participants' language background was only used as a supplement to the data for the purpose of gathering information from the four participants in the study. The questionnaire included questions, for example, about their place of residence and language background (e.g., the languages they studied at school).

In the first data gathering phases, in 2014 and 2015, the other pair of the study, Carro and Amanda, were between 14 and 15 and attended an officially Swedish comprehensive school. In the questionnaire, Carro reported that she was born and had lived in Haparanda, while Amanda stated she was born in Finland, but her family had moved to Haparanda when she was two. Both Carro and Amanda stated that Finnish was their mother tongue but that they were studying only Swedish and Spanish at school. Carro noted she mostly spoke Finnish at home, whereas Amanda reported that she spoke *only* Finnish at home. They described that they used mainly Finnish in their spare time with their Finnish-speaking friends, but they used both Finnish and Swedish at school. Both girls

**Table 9.1** Data gatherings

| Type of data and date of collection | Pair conversations 1 (Questionnaire) October 2014 | Pair conversations 2 (Questionnaire) December 2015 | Pair conversations 3 (Questionnaire) May 2017 | Pair conversations 4 (Questionnaire) February 2019 | Individual interviews February 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School grade | Grade 8 of comprehensive school | Grade 9 of comprehensive school | Year 1 of senior secondary school | Year 3 of senior secondary school | Year 3 of senior secondary school |
| Participants and length of the data | Carro & Amanda (85 min) Janet & Emma (40 min) | Carro & Amanda (70 min) Janet & Emma (50 min) | Carro & Amanda (50 min) Janet & Emma (60 min) | Carro & Amanda (80 min) Janet & Emma (80 min) | Carro, Amanda Janet, Emma (20 min each) |

noted that they crossed the border almost daily, and nearly all their relatives lived in Finland, and that they frequently met their relatives and friends on the Finnish side of the border.

The other pair of the study, Janet and Emma, were between 14 and 15 in 2014 and 2015, and attended a comprehensive school where, for approximately 80 per cent of the pupils, Finnish was their first language. Janet was born in Haparanda, but she was currently living in Tornio in Finland, while Emma was born in Haparanda and still lived there. Both girls stated that Finnish was their mother tongue, and they also studied Finnish at school. Emma was the only one of the participants who studied Swedish as a second language. In the questionnaire, Janet reported speaking mostly Finnish at home, while Emma said she spoke *only* Finnish at home. They said that they crossed the border daily to meet with relatives and friends or to attend other activities. Furthermore, Janet crossed the border daily to attend school in Haparanda.

The conversation recordings in 2014, 2015, 2017, and 2019 were conducted during school hours in a separate room outside the classrooms. As the pairs were close friends, I assumed that they had established certain conversational patterns. I, as a researcher, was not present in the recordings of the pair conversations, and I instructed them to speak as they generally would speak to each other. I let them freely choose the discussion topics and the language(s) used in their conversations. In 2019, directly after the final recordings (Recording 4) of the pair conversations, the participants, whom I interviewed individually, had the opportunity to listen to and comment on a short excerpt from the beginning of the first recording before the interview. Each of the individual interviews took approximately 20 minutes.[2]

The data collection, storing, and processing followed the ethical principles outlined in the Guidelines for Ethical Review in Human Sciences drawn up by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK, 2019). All participants' names were replaced by pseudonyms, and written

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[2] Carro, Amanda, Janet, and Emma were chosen for the interviews in 2019 since they were the only ones who participated in data gatherings every year: 2014, 2015, 2017, and 2019. The Haparanda corpus consists of data from 31 bilingual participants in total. The whole database consists of 26 recording sessions with a total of over 19 hours of video- and audio-recorded informal group and pair conversations. The data for the corpus were collected among 14–19-year-old bilingual adolescents at three junior high schools and at the only senior secondary school in Haparanda. Each of the conversations lasted for between 15 minutes and one and a half hours.

consent to participate was documented. The participants could also end the recordings whenever they wished. Thus, the total duration of the pairs' conversational data varied from 4 hours and 45 minutes (Carro and Amanda) to 3 hours and 50 minutes (Janet and Emma) (see Table 9.1).

The conversations and interviews were transcribed, but the qualitative analysis was based on listening to the interactions. In the analysis of the participants' language use and linguistic and ethnic identity positioning, Pennycook's (2003, 2004) concept of performativity and Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) principle of positionality were applied. This means that the language(s) chosen for the conversations and interviews were considered to be part of the participants' identity performance (see Kolu, 2020; Musk, 2010). Nonetheless, the focus of the analysis was on the speakers' translingual practices, that is, their use of multiple language resources, that were viewed as acts of translingual identity (cf. Canagarajah, 2013). In addition, the positionality principle was applied to explore how the interlocutors position themselves, position others, and are positioned as language users in interactions in informal pair conversations and individual interviews with the researcher (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, pp. 591–593). Hence, both the way participants utilise their linguistic resources and how they refer to those resources may be interpreted as expressions of linguistic identity. Overall, in the analysis, identities encompass identity performance, positioning, and participant roles in interactions (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Pennycook, 2003).

The qualitative semi-structured interviews offered data on the participants' narratives that revealed the meanings they gave to different circumstances and stages in their lives that they thought had had an impact on their language use (cf. Galletta, 2012). Furthermore, the interviews provided a hermeneutic understanding of the complexity and dynamics of four bilingual adolescents' social life, cross-border mobility, language use, and identity. Finally, I analyse whether the speakers' use of linguistic resources coincide with their performance and positioning of their linguistic identity over a period of five years.

## 9.4    Dynamics of the Language Use and the Identity Performance and Positioning in the Recorded Informal Pair Conversations

In the following sections, I present the results from the recorded pair conversations in chronological order as I attempt to answer my first research questions: (1) Are there any changes in the four participants' mutual use of their linguistic resources in the recorded informal pair conversations over a period of five years (2014–2019), and if so, what are the changes? (2) Are there any changes in the way the participants perform and position their identities in the recorded informal pair conversations over a period of five years (2014–2019), and if so, what kinds of changes?

Furthermore, the pair conversations are analysed regarding the fifth research question, and the participants' language use with each other is examined on four different data gathering occasions to see if there are any connections between how they use their language resources with each other, how they perform their linguistic identity through using their language resources, and how they position themselves as language users through the stances, roles, and orientations they adopt in the conversations. In the analysis, I provide representative excerpts from the recordings and examples of the participants' translingual practices and identity positionings.

### 9.4.1    Carro's and Amanda's Increasing Translingual Practices and Translingual Identity in 2014 and 2015

In 2014 and 2015, Carro and Amanda were between 14 and 15 and attended an officially Swedish compulsory school. During the first pair conversation in 2014, Carro spoke mainly Finnish, but she also employed translingual practices through using Swedish school vocabulary and quotations. For the transcribed sequences in Finnish, the usual style is used, whereas Swedish words are transcribed in bold. The English translations are in square brackets and the translations from Swedish in bold. For instance, Carro reported: 'sitten mää muistin että meillä on **idrott**ia' [then I remembered that we have **gymnastics**], and 'Anna on sanonut **det kommer inte till betyget**' [Anna has said **it doesn't affect our grades**].

Also, Amanda used mainly Finnish, and translingual practices emerged in some single school-related Swedish words which were inflected according to the rules of Finnish grammar, for example, 'ei ne **glosor**it oo niin tärkeitä' [those **vocabulary tests** are not so important] (see more detailed analysis of the adolescents' language use in Haparanda in Kolu, 2017).

During the first conversation, Carro asked Amanda whether she sometimes mixed her languages. Amanda stated she sometimes knew a word in English but did not know the corresponding word in Finnish or Swedish. Amanda continued that she did not know why she found Swedish more difficult than Finnish and English, and she noted that she mostly used Finnish and English when communicating with her classmates. Nevertheless, she did not use English in the first recording except for a vocabulary test that she did for Carro.

Carro described how she could keep to Finnish with Amanda, but during lessons her languages alternated more between Swedish and Finnish. Carro added in Finnish that she hardly noticed when this was happening since they lived in the cross-border region: 'se on ko assuu täällä' [It is' cos you live here]. Carro's observation indicates three things: First, her statement that translingual practices happen unnoticed shows that she does not draw a strict line between languages. Second, Carro seems to be aware of the impact of the border region on their language use. Third, Carro also suggests that people living in the cross-border region perform some kind of local translingual identity through translingual practices. Her comment reinforces the findings of how translingual practices are related to translingual identity performance and positioning (see Kolu, 2020; Canagarajah, 2013; García & Leiva, 2014).

To sum up, in 2014, both Carro and Amanda positioned themselves as bilinguals (or multilinguals in Amanda's case) by stating that they used Finnish, Swedish, and even English for Amanda (see Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, pp. 591–593) and performed their translingual identity through translingual practices, that is, through using Swedish school vocabulary. At the same time, Carro and Amanda positioned their mothers' and their own ethnic identities as Finnish. Amanda stated: 'äiti on syntynyt Kalixissa mutta eihän se tee susta ruotsalaista' [my mother was born in Kalix,[3] but it doesn't make you Swedish]. Carro agreed and concluded: 'mää oon

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[3] Kalix is a municipality in northern Sweden.

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suomalainen' [I am Finnish], and Amanda noted the same about herself. In the first recording, Finnish dominated Carro's and Amanda's conversations, and there seemed to be a link between their use of language resources and linguistic and ethnic identity positioning (except Amanda's statement about English use). This is also in line with Liebkind's (1999, p. 143) claim that there is a connection between linguistic and ethnic identity.

During the second pair conversation in 2015, both Carro and Amanda were performing an increasingly translingual identity through translingual practices. Now, they were using longer sequences in Swedish, but also occasional separate school words:

For instance, Carro reported that she felt a little nervous before the national exams: 'sitä on vähän niinkö **laddad inför själva provet**' [you are like a little **nervous before the exam**], while Amanda stated: 'ei siihen voi **plugga**ta niin ei se haittaa' [you can't **study** for that so it doesn't matter]. Neither participant explicitly commented on their language use nor positioned their identity. During the conversation, they planned on taking a vacation in Finland, thus continuing their transnational mobility.

### 9.4.2   Janet's and Emma's Intense Translingual Practices and Translingual Identity in 2014 and 2015

In 2014 and 2015, the other pair of girls, Janet and Emma, were between 14 and 15 and attended a comprehensive school. In the first pair conversation in 2014, Janet and Emma performed translingual identities through intense translingual practices: 'meillähän loppuu **tjugofem över** ku meillä on **matte**a tiistaisin' [we will finish (at) **twenty-five past**' cos we have **maths** on Tuesdays] and 'me saadaan nyt lähtä **praoa**maan' [we may now go to **on-the-job training**]. At some point in the conversation, they positioned themselves as poor speakers of Finnish because the corresponding Finnish word for the Swedish word **repetition** 'rehearsal' was unknown to them. This is, however, understandable, because they studied in a Swedish school where the Swedish curriculum was taught. Thus, the interlocutors used Swedish words for school subjects, even when they were speaking Finnish (Kolu, 2017, 2020).

In the second pair conversation in 2015, Janet and Emma continued performing their translingual identity through translingual practices, especially through using Swedish school words. For example, Janet asked Emma: 'Mikä **lektion** meillä on tämän jälkeen?' [what **lesson** do we

have next?], and Emma answered: '**svenska**a, sitten on **syslöjd**' [**Swedish**, then **handicrafts**]. When Emma, in turn, asked Janet what she had been doing the night before, Janet answered: '**plugga**sin siihen **prov**iin' [**I studi**ed for the **exam**]. Then, Emma began to reflect on the verb form **plugga**sin '**studi**ed' and asked Janet whether she had ever thought that the verb was Swedish but the past tense ending -*sin* was Finnish. Emma responded in Finnish: 'kyl mää tiiän mut eihän sitä ajattele sillä lailla' [yes, I know, but you don't think like that], to which Janet agreed. Janet's reaction to Emma's question and both of their conclusions about their language resources is consistent with García's (2012b) and Poza's (2019) previous studies that noted that bilinguals themselves do not perceive their languages as isolated systems, nor is their linguistic repertoire made up of two discrete languages that are separately used.

### 9.4.3 Carro's and Amanda's Dramatic Language Shift and Changes in Identity Positioning in 2017 and 2019

We now return to the first pair, Amanda and Carro, and their third recorded pair conversation in 2017. The most dramatic changes in Carro's and Amanda's mutual language performance seemed to occur after their attendance at Swedish senior secondary school, when they started to speak to each other almost entirely in Swedish. Carro still employed translingual practices briefly, for example, in references to Finnish dishes they ate when visiting grandparents such as *makkarakeitto* 'sausage soup' and *poronkäristys* 'reindeer stew' and when quoting her mother, father, grandmother, and grandfather: '**han ba** kuinka monta kuppia mää keitän kahvia' [**he was like** how many cups of coffee will I make?]. Quoting other speakers' words in the original language is a common translingual practice (Kolu, 2017). Amanda did not use Finnish at all, and judging by performativity theory (Pennycook, 2003), she no longer performed a translingual identity through her language use in this conversation (cf. Musk, 2010).

During the pair conversation, Carro asked Amanda if she had realised they were not using Finnish so much nowadays. Amanda explained that in the past, she had spent more time with her family and relatives in Finland, but now, she mainly spent her time with her new Swedish-speaking friends in senior secondary school in Haparanda. Carro agreed and added that she had also started to speak Swedish at home. Amanda was having similar experiences. Carro's and Amanda's narratives about causes of changes in

their language use are in line with what Azurmendi and Martinez de Luna (2011, p. 333) state about the important role of school, social networks, and the identification with the speakers of the language and contacts with them in adolescents' language maintenance.

At the end of the third recording in 2017, Carro conclusively positioned herself and Amanda as Swedish speakers: She concluded that they had not used much Finnish, but this was inevitable because '**det är så här vi pratar**' [**this is how we talk**]. In the fourth and last pair conversation in 2019, Carro and Amanda used exclusively Swedish and did not make any explicit comment on their language use or identity.

### 9.4.4    *Janet's and Emma's Increased Translingual Practices and Translingual Identity in 2017 and 2019.*

In the third pair conversation in 2017, Janet and Emma did not raise any questions about their language use or identity, but they continued engaging in translingual practices in the same manner, albeit with longer stretches of talk and a larger variety of subjects than before, encompassing more than just school matters. For instance, Janet stated: 'meillä tulee **långhelg då blir det säkert superspännade**' [we are going to have **a long holiday it is going to be super exciting**] and Emma responded by saying: 'viimenen **valborg** ko mää oon **nykter**' [the last **May Day** that I will be **sober**]. In conformity with Pennycook's (2004) performativity principle, Janet's and Emma's translingual practices may be considered a part of their performative translingual identity. Both also used the Swedish discourse marker **typ** '**like**' which is very typical for Swedish youth language (Kolu, 2017). According to Henricson (2015, p. 129) the bilingual use of discourse markers may be a way to perform a bilingual identity.

Regarding cross-border mobility, Janet and Emma had applied for summer jobs on both sides of the border. During the third recording, Emma's mother called her, and Emma employed translingual practices also with her: 'sehän on **kristihimmelsfärdsdag**ina' [it is on **Ascension Day**], 'ollaan tehty **nationella prov** ja kaikkea **typ**' [we have already done the **national exams** and all **like**].

During the fourth and last pair conversation in 2019, Janet and Emma continued performing translingual identities through intense translingual practices, but they did not comment on their language use or identity. It seems that employing translingual practices was a natural way for

Emma and Janet to communicate with each other (cf. García, 2009), and therefore, they did not need to comment on their language use.

To summarise the pair conversations over a period of five years, the most striking difference in Carro's and Amanda's use of their language resources compared to Emma's and Janet's was that Carro's and Amanda's mutual communication had changed from predominantly using Finnish to only using Swedish in the last conversation. The changes in Carro's and Amanda's language use seemed to be in line with the changes in how they were positioning themselves as language users during these five years. Emma and Janet, in contrast, increased their translingual practices in senior secondary school. It was only in the second recordings (2015) that all four participants engaged in similar kinds of translingual practices.

These differences between the language use of Carro and Amanda and that of Emma and Janet may be related to the differences in their language background. Both Emma and Janet had attended a comprehensive school where Finnish was the first language of the majority of the pupils, and they had studied Finnish throughout their school years—eleven years in total—whereas Carro and Amanda had only studied Finnish in Years 1 and 2 in senior secondary school. Furthermore, Emma was the only one who had studied Swedish as a second language, and Janet was the only one who lived on the Finnish side of the border. Also, both Emma and Janet were still mainly using Finnish at home, while Carro and Amanda had started using mainly Swedish, both at home and at school.

In 2019, all four interlocutors reported they had social networks extending across national borders and they worked at IKEA,[4] where they served both Swedish and Finnish customers.

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[4] A Swedish-founded, multinational group of companies that designs and sells ready-to-assemble furniture, kitchen appliances, home accessories, and so forth.

## 9.5    Adolescents' Different Performances and Positionings of Identities in the Individual Interviews

In this section, I present the results of the interviews carried out after the last recorded pair conversations in 2019, and I intend to answer the third, fourth, and fifth research questions: (3) How do the participants perform linguistically and position their identities in the interviews with the researcher after the last recorded pair conversations in 2019? (4) How do the participants narrate and explain any changes occurring over a period of five years in their use of language resources, identity performance, and positioning in the interviews with the researcher in 2019? In addition, the individual interviews are analysed regarding the fifth research question about the relationship between the participants' language use, linguistic identity performance, and positioning.

The interviews were conducted individually. Initially, each respondent chose the language for the interview. I posed the questions in Finnish and Swedish and said they could also use both languages. First, each participant was asked to listen to a short extract from the beginning of the first recording and then to share her reactions to it. In addition, the interview questions concerned the participant's language use and identity, possible changes in them, and explanations of reasons behind possible changes in language use and in linguistic and ethnic identity.

### 9.5.1    Carro and Amanda—On the Way to Language and Identity Shift?

Carro preferred to use Swedish throughout the entire interview. Nevertheless, she explicitly positioned herself as bilingual, because '**för att det känns att det har blivit så naturligt med båda språken**' [**it feels it has become so natural with both languages**]. She noted that her language use with Amanda had changed over the years due to their new circle of friends in senior secondary school, and she described that the language used in her family had also changed. Previously, they had almost entirely used Finnish, but now the whole family had started to use Swedish. Carro explained that even if her parents tried to speak Finnish with her and her siblings, they almost always answered in Swedish. Thus, it seems that the change in Carro's and her siblings language use has affected the language use of the whole family.

Carro thought her language skills in Finnish had deteriorated over the years, noting that it had become more difficult to communicate with her Finnish-speaking relatives since she had less contact with them, and that she was a bit sad about this.

In the beginning of the interview, the participants had access to the first recording from 2014, and they were asked questions about their reactions to the video. Carro stated that she could hardly recognise herself in the first recording when she and Amanda were only using Finnish: '**asså det känns så konstit för att vi verkligen bara pratade finska och det låter inte som mig själv jag blev så här chockad - är det där vi? - asså det är jättekonstit**' [**Well, it feels strange that we really only spoke Finnish, and it doesn't sound like me at all. I am totally shocked - Is that really us? - I mean it is really strange**]. In this example, Carro's observation indicates that she now sees herself and her identity differently and unrelated to her previous self as a result of the change in her language use. This comment reinforces the findings of how people relate their language use to their identity (cf. Bäckman, 2017, p. 167).

Carro explained that her friends and school were the main reasons for this change: '**jag tror att det är så här just för att jag fått så många andra kompisar som bara pratar svenska och sen i skolan är det bara svenska och sen typ så här när jag var yngre då var jag mycket mer med typ familj och släkt också man kanske bara är mindre med dom där människorna**' [**I think it is just because I now have so many other friends who speak only Swedish and then at school—it is only Swedish, and then like when I was younger, I spent so much more time with my family and relatives. Maybe you spend less time with them**]. Carro's preceding observation indicated that she thought that the changes in her language use were connected to her being distanced from her relatives in Finland. At the end of the interview, she repositioned her identity as more Swedish and Swedish-speaking than bilingual, since she considered she was no longer so good at Finnish. This comment indicates that Carro relates her ethnic and linguistic identities to her language proficiency (cf. Liebkind, 1999, p. 143). García (2010, p. 519) argues that people's language use and competence do not necessarily remain the same, nor does ethnicity have to be a permanent characteristic of a person. Mills (2001, pp. 387–388) suggests that losing bilingualism means that 'somewhere along the line, someone will lose their linguistic identity', whereas Liebkind (1999, p. 149) argues that even if bilinguals' proficiency in their first language declines as a result of a shift to a dominant

language, this does not necessarily mean a loss of linguistic identity. As Bäckman (2017, p. 167) points out, 'identities can never be "lost"—they are emergent through actions such as speech in interaction, they depend on their local contexts, and they are in constant motion'. Thus, it is noteworthy that Carro took a slightly different positioning of her linguistic identity in the beginning and at the last stage of the interview when she noted that she identified more and more with the speakers of Swedish and Sweden. This example shows how fluid identity positionings may be in different contexts. The interview situation and my role as interviewer and researcher may also have influenced the result.

Amanda also preferred to answer the questions in Swedish. Her language performance, that is, her language choice in the interview, was concordant with her positioning of herself as more of a Swedish speaker. She considered, however, Finnish to be her mother tongue. She thought the change in her language use was due to both her school and her job at IKEA. She said that comprehensive school had afforded more opportunities to use both Finnish and Swedish as there were more Finnish-speaking pupils: 'vi småpratade alltid på finska' [We were always chatting in Finnish]. She reported that nowadays, everybody at school spoke only Swedish. Like Carro, Amanda had started to spend more time with her Swedish-speaking rather than her Finnish-speaking friends and relatives, and her language use at home had also changed drastically. As she spoke mostly Swedish at home, she explicitly positioned her identity increasingly as Swedish and Swedish-speaking and felt more competent in Swedish than in Finnish. Amanda's reaction after hearing the first recorded pair conversation was similar to Carro's: 'asså det känns som att alltså jag var jättebra på finska kändes det som vi pratade ju finska hela tiden men nu pratar vi inte numera' [I mean it feels as if I was very good at Finnish because we spoke Finnish all the time. But we do not speak it these days].

### 9.5.2    *Janet and Emma—Translingual Identity Performance and Positionings*

Janet was indifferent to what language she would use in the interview, so I posed the questions in both languages. She responded mostly in Finnish, but also employed translingual practices with me. Janet's language performance accorded with her ethnic and linguistic identity positioning, as she positioned herself as Finnish, Finnish-speaking, and bilingual due

to her Finnish-speaking parents, place of residence, and Finnish citizenship. Janet still lived on the Finnish side of the border in Tornio and continued her daily border crossings to go to school. She reported that she still mainly spoke Finnish at home. She felt better orally in Finnish but stronger in written Swedish, since it was her language of instruction.

After hearing the first recording of her and Emma's pair conversation from 2014, Janet did not at first react to her own or Emma's language use in the conversation. When asked about changes in her language use, she answered in Finnish: 'puhuttiin me enemmän suomea nyt mää uskon mää ainakin puhun enemmän ruottia no se on varmaan ko ollaan alettu lukion uusia kavereita uusia luokkakavereita ja suurin osa nykyisistä niinkö joiden kanssa mää käyn luokkaa on ruotsalaisia' [We used more Finnish back then, but now I think at least I use more Swedish that is probably because we started in senior secondary school with new friends, and most of our fellow students are Swedish]. She then continued in Swedish: **'skolan påverkar mest'** [**the school is the major factor**].

Emma, for her part, preferred to respond to the questions in Finnish. However, she positioned herself as bilingual and had difficulties in deciding which language was her mother tongue: 'mun mielestä mää oon kaksikielinen että se on mää en voi oikein sanoa onko mun äidinkieli suomi tai ruotsi mutta sitten ko mun äidin kieli on suomi ja niin enemmän niinkö suomi tullee' [I think I am bilingual and I cannot really say whether my mother tongue is Finnish or Swedish, but since my mother's first language is Finnish, mine seems to be Finnish too]. As Bäckman (2017, p. 174) points out, '"mother tongue" may be related to identity and a sense of continuum in the family line'. Bäckman (ibid.) also notes that when a language is connected to heritage, 'it may also be used as a symbol of "ethnic" or national identity'.

Emma found it equally difficult to say whether she identified more as Swedish or Finnish: 'jotain siltä väliltä mää oon just vaihtanu kansalaisuuden ruotsin kansalaiseksi nyt on silleen mää en tiedä oonko mää joku svennebanaani vai oonko mää joku semmonen sekotus' [Something in between. I have just changed my citizenship to Swedish, and now I don't know whether I am a 'Svennebanan'[5] or some sort of mixture]. Citizenship seemed to have special indexical value for Emma's identity as well as for that of Janet. Emma's 'blurring' between identities accorded with

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[5] Svennebanan is a slang word for a Swede (Slangopedia http://www.slangopedia.se/ ordlista/?ord=svennebanan).

Fisher et al.'s (2018) and Li Wei's (2011) arguments that bilingual identity may not be seen as the simple sum of two identities. According to García and Leiva (2014), translingual practices enable bilinguals to position themselves in a translingual and transnational identity, that is, an 'in-between identity'.

Emma described that she still spoke mostly Finnish at home and thought she was orally better in Finnish, but she considered herself to be better in written Swedish. Emma's reaction to the first recorded pair conversation was similar to Janet's, and she noted that their language use with each other had not changed so much: 'aika saman tyyppistä mun mielestä että silleen ehkä enemmän ruottia kuitenkin mutta silleen sama linja me ollaan aina puhuttu suomea keskenään niin sehän tullee aina takaisin se suomi' [I think it is quite the same, maybe more Swedish, anyway, but quite the same way, but we have always spoken Finnish with each other so it comes back to us, Finnish]. According to Baker (2011), bilinguals often use certain languages with certain people, and two or more bilinguals can establish a bilingual way of communication with each other. Like Janet, Emma considered her language use to be changed mainly due to school.

To summarise the interviews, in 2019, the first pair, Carro and Amanda, performed a more Swedish-speaking identity through only using Swedish with me in the interview (cf. Pennycook, 2004, p. 16; Musk, 2010, p. 71), and they explicitly positioned themselves more and more as Swedish speakers, while Janet performed a translingual identity through engaging in translingual practices with me and positioned herself as bilingual. On the other hand, Emma used only Finnish with me in the interview, but positioned herself as bilingual. Judging from her answers, she seemed to possess a hybrid, 'in-between' linguistic and ethnic identity.

## 9.6   Connection Between Language Use and Identity Performance and Positioning

In this section, I present the major findings of the study (see Table 9.2) and summarise the results for the fifth research question: Are there any links between the adolescents' language use, linguistic identity performance, and positioning during the period of 2014–2019?

Overall, the study provides examples of drastic changes in the case of Amanda's and Carro's mutual language use from using predominantly Finnish resources in 2014 to engaging in translingual practices in 2015,

**Table 9.2** The four participants' use of language resources and identity positioning and performance in the pair conversations in 2014–2019 and in the interviews with the researcher in 2019

| Linguistic identity positioning (2014) | Language resources used in the pair conversations 2014 | Language resources in the pair conversations 2015 | Language resources in the pair conversations 2017 | Language resources in the pair conversations 2019 | Language resources in the individual interviews with the researcher 2019 | Linguistic identity positioning (2019) in the interview with the researcher |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Carro** Finnish as a mother tongue, bilingual | Predominantly Finnish, some school words in Swedish, (translingual practices) | Finnish, longer sequences in Swedish, increasing translingual practices | Almost exclusively Swedish, (translingual practices, e.g. when quoting in Finnish) | Swedish | Swedish | Bilingual, but identifies herself more and more as Swedish-speaking |
| **Amanda** Finnish as a mother tongue, bilingual | Almost exclusively Finnish, some school words in Swedish (translingual practices) | Finnish, longer sequences in Swedish, increasing translingual practices | Swedish | Swedish | Swedish | identifies herself more and more as Swedish-speaking |

(continued)

**Table 9.2**  (continued)

| Linguistic identity positioning (2014) | Language resources used in the pair conversations 2014 | Language resources in the pair conversations 2015 | Language resources in the pair conversations 2017 | Language resources in the pair conversations 2019 | Language resources in the individual interviews with the researcher 2019 | Linguistic identity positioning (2019) in the interview with the researcher |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Janet** Finnish as a mother tongue, bilingual | Predominantly Finnish, Swedish, translingual practices | Predominantly Finnish, Swedish, translingual practices | Predominantly Finnish, Swedish, increasing translingual practices | Predominantly Finnish, Swedish, increasing translingual practices | Predominantly Finnish, Swedish, translingual practices | Finnish as a mother tongue, bilingual, performs a translingual identity through translingual practices |
| **Emma** Finnish as a mother tongue, bilingual | Predominantly Finnish, Swedish, translingual practices | Predominantly Finnish, Swedish, translingual practices | Predominantly Finnish, Swedish, increasing translingual practices | Predominantly Finnish, Swedish, increasing translingual practices | Finnish | Bilingual, translingual, hybrid identity |

and finally, in 2019, to using exclusively Swedish. The other pair's—Janet's and Emma's—language use only changed a little, as they used longer passages of Swedish in the last recordings in 2017 and 2019. All four interlocutors saw senior secondary school and new Swedish friends as the primary reasons for why they now used more Swedish. This result is in line with Norton's (1997) and Pujolar and Puigdevall's (2015) investigations of changes in language use and identity that revealed typical life stages when changes to speakers' language use occur. In Carro's and Amanda's case, these changes also seemed to be linked to the change of language use in their families. Probably, the impact of various circumstances underlies the changes and differences between the four participants' language use and their identity positioning.

In conclusion, these young people's linguistic performance—that is, the use of their language resources—seemed to be connected with their identity positioning in the conversations and interviews over the period of five years. As Amanda's and Carro's mutual language shifted from Finnish to Swedish, so did their identity positioning from positioning themselves as Finnish and Finnish-speaking and bilinguals to positioning themselves more and more as Swedish and Swedish-speaking. Janet and Emma continued to perform a translingual identity through translingual practices and to position themselves as bilinguals during the period of 2014–2019. Janet considered herself to be Finnish, whereas Emma reported possessing a hybrid, 'in-between' identity in the final recording in 2019.

## 9.7    Discussion

In this chapter, the focus of the study has been to explore the relationship between the four adolescents' language use and translingual practices in particular and their performance and the positionings of their linguistic (and in part ethnic) identities over a period of five years (2014–2019). My analysis of the data revealed that the four young people, living their transnational lives next to the Swedish–Finnish border and with networks in both countries, brought different performances of language use and identity positionings to the interactions. The study identifies and provides examples of changes in the participants' translingual practices and their identities, especially in the case of one pair of participants, and the data illustrate how the identities may shift between monolingual, bilingual, and translingual. The impact of changes in school and one's circle of friends

and the changes in the language used in two of the participants' families may explain the changes in their language use and identity positioning. As Bäckman (2017, p. 167) concludes, 'linguistic identities are negotiated in an environment characterized both by the creative possibilities and normative expectations that surround them'.

The presented examples provide evidence of the fluid and complex linguistic and ethnic identities the adolescents had performed over the five-year period. However, the results indicate that the translingual practices can be linked to the participants' performance and positioning of their translingual and transnational identity (see Li Wei, 2011, p. 1230). This is in line with García and Leiva's (2014) studies which demonstrated that translingual practices allow speakers to transcend linguistic and ethnic boundaries and position themselves in 'a bilingual in-between position' where their experiences of different identities and languages are integrated.

Ultimately, it is also a question of which language or languages and nationality or nationalities the speakers want to identify with. Carro and Amanda performed and positioned themselves more and more as Swedes and Swedish-speaking, whereas Janet positioned herself as Finnish and bilingual, and Emma positioned herself as possessing a hybrid linguistic and ethnic 'in-between' identity. Liebkind (1999, p. 148) argues that an integrative attitude towards the majority language is connected to identification with the speakers of that language, while Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985, p. 181) suggest that '[t]he individual creates for himself the patterns of his linguistic behavior so as to resemble those of the group or the groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified, or so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be distinguished'.

As Pennycook (2004, p. 16) states, performativity and performance approaches provide insights into how languages, identities, and the speakers' linguistic biographies are shaped and reshaped. Nonetheless, it is important to stress that the participants' language use could have been different with other interlocutors, and they could have positioned themselves differently in other contexts. Furthermore, the adolescents in this study were aware that I was interested in their language use, which probably had at least some impact on their language use and on their becoming more aware of their language use.

Border regions such as Haparanda provide new perspectives of and preconditions for bilinguals' language maintenance and identity construction. People in those settings may be involved daily in activities in both countries and in both languages, and they have opportunities to maintain close ties with friends and relatives on both sides of the border. There is a reason to assume that those bilingual and multilingual individuals who continue using their multiple language resources through translingual practices and maintain their bilingual or translingual identity and networks in both countries will more likely actively maintain their language resources in their heritage language in the future (cf. Fisher et al., 2018).

The crucial point I wish to make is that there may be common critical factors and stages concerning the changes of young speakers' language use and identity performance and positioning. In the current study, these stages involved a change of school and interlocutors with whom the speakers regularly engaged. The participants' transition from a more diverse comprehensive school to a monolingual senior secondary school may partly explain the changes in their language use and linguistic identity. Furthermore, the changes of language use in two participants' families are probably also behind the changes in their language practices, or vice versa, the changes of the adolescents' language practices have an influence on the language use of their families.

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# Language Mixing in the Contact of Finnish with Swedish, Estonian, and English: The Case of Mixed Compound Nouns

*Riitta Kosunen, Maria Frick, and Jaana Kolu*

## 10.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter sheds light on the language use of Sweden Finns, Finland Swedes, Finns in Estonia, and Finnish L2 speakers of English. More specifically, we examine how representatives of these groups conceptualise and talk about the world around them using what we call *mixed compound nouns*—complex nouns consisting of two or more words taken from different languages. One example of a mixed compound in our data is the word *bilkatsastus* ('car inspection'), where the head noun *katsastus* ('inspection') is in Finnish and the modifier *bil* ('car')

R. Kosunen (✉) · M. Frick
Research Unit for Languages and Literature, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland
e-mail: riitta.kosunen@oulu.fi

J. Kolu
School of Humanities, Foreign Languages and Translation Studies, University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu, Finland

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is in Swedish. Mixed compounds are also known as *hybrids* or *hybrid compounds* (Chrystal, 1988; Graedler, 1998; Mickwitz, 2010).

Compounds are notoriously difficult to define linguistically (Lieber & Štekauer, 2009), but one crucial property is the combination of lexemes into larger words (Booij, 2005, p. 75). In this chapter, we concentrate on *endocentric mixed compound nouns*. Like in the example above, endocentric compounds consist of two nouns: a modifying noun and a head noun (in this order in the languages concerned in this chapter). More specifically, endocentric compound nouns are word constructions 'in which the compound as a whole is a hyponym of its head element' (Lieber, 2009, p. 89). To illustrate this with the example of *bilkatsastus* ('car inspection') above, there can be many kinds of inspections, but by adding a modifier and using the compound noun **car inspection**, the meaning of the hyperonymous or superordinate word *inspection* is narrowed down and specified as a certain kind of inspection, the hyponymous or subordinate word *car inspection*. Creating a (mixed) compound can be a random, ad hoc phenomenon, but overall, compounding is useful, as it is one of the most prolific ways of creating fresh expressions and neologisms.

Compounding is thus one of the main strategies for creating words for new concepts in a language (cf. Graedler, 1998, p. 201). Compounding is a productive way to form new words also in Swedish and Finnish. To take an example, there are 36 words in a list of Swedish neologisms, *Nyordslistan 2021*, compiled by The Language Council of Sweden and *Språktidningen*, a popular Swedish-language magazine (see Institute for Language & Folklore, 2021). 34 words out of the 36 on the list are nouns. Furthermore, 26 words on the list are compounds. Similarly, out of the 75 neologisms listed by the Finnish language section of the Institute for the Languages of Finland (2021), 71 were nouns and 63 compound nouns. Mixed compound nouns, where one constituent is taken from another language, further enhance the possibilities of fine-tuning the expression. In the Institute for the Languages of Finland's (2021) list of Finnish neologisms, there are mixed English-Finnish compounds such as *cut out -mekko* ('cut-out dress'), *pile-takki* ('pile coat'), and *Y2K-muoti* ('Y2K fashion').

All languages constantly need new words for naming new objects and phenomena. Nouns label and categorise all kinds of phenomena in the world: people, things, places, ideas, and emotions. In that sense, they are a powerful tool of human understanding and perception. The words we choose tell something about how we see and evaluate the reality around

us. To take a well-known example, it makes a big difference whether a violence maker is called a *terrorist* or a *freedom fighter*. Through our word choices, we also invite our interlocutors to interpret the world in a certain way. To a large extent, then, meaning is negotiated in interaction. As Johnstone (2002, p. 45) puts it, 'every linguistic choice – every choice about how to produce discourse, but also every choice about how to interpret it – is a choice about how the world is to be divided up and explained'. Linguistic choices can thus be seen as potentially strategic, and choices about how to name entities in the world are part of the strategy (Johnstone, 2002, pp. 45, 48–49).

Using words and other linguistic features from different named languages or varieties evoke different associations of values in communication such as solidarity and prestige. As Jørgensen et al. (2011, p. 29) state, '[s]uch an association may be an important quality of any given [linguistic] feature, and one which speakers may know and use as they speak'. Mixing languages can be used as a communicative or social strategy for reasons like showing speaker involvement, marking group identity, displaying status or expertise, or even excluding someone from communication (Grosjean, 2010, pp. 53–54).

Our word choices also carry echoes of our life history in terms of age, national belonging, ethnicity, education, and so on. The words we choose in communication reflect our background and previous encounters with language. According to Blommaert and Backus (2013, pp. 13–16), linguistic repertoires and means of communicating are individually and biographically organised complexes of linguistic resources that follow the rhythm of language users' actual lives: With age, education, and other stages of life, we learn new patterns of using language, while some older ones may wane. According to them, the meaning-making practices of people are also increasingly characterised by (super)diversity. Different forms of mixing and blending are very common, and people can no longer automatically be put into specific national, ethnic, or sociocultural groups and identities based on their language use. Linguistic diversity and hybrid language identities are increasingly seen as a given assumption rather than a deviation from the ideal of monolingualism (cf. Hall & Nilep, 2015, p. 611).

It is from this communicative perspective that we examine our data. We seek to answer the following questions:

1. What kind of referents and textual contexts attract the use of mixed compound nouns in the data?
2. How do the mixed compounds in the data reflect the language of the surrounding culture, community, or speaker?

The overall aim of this study is to increase the understanding of how bilingual individuals make use of their linguistic resources to make meaning in their bilingual lives. Mixing languages is a typical feature of bilinguals' interaction and a central competence in their language proficiency and intercultural competence (Council of Europe, 2020).

In this chapter, we examine data from closely related languages (Finnish–Estonian) and languages that are typologically far apart from each other (Finnish–Swedish and Finnish–English). Language mixing in the language pairs and in the data has been studied previously, but only scarcely from the point of view of mixed compounds (see Frick, 2009, 2013; Kolu, 2017). We bring together data from different language pairs in an examination of mixed compounding. We study if there are similarities in how bilinguals in our study organise and make use of their lexical repertoire irrespective of language boundaries when creating compound nouns.

## 10.2   DATA

In order to demonstrate a wide distribution of mixed compounds, we have chosen a data collection that is very diverse, not only representing different language pairs but also different modes of communication (spoken, written, computer-mediated) in different genres (audio-recorded conversations, private diary, email messages, online video game, humorous podcast) and informants of different ages. The data used in this study includes datasets from five different sources: (1) bilingual (Finnish/Swedish) adolescents living near the Finland–Sweden border, (2) Finland Swedes, represented here by data from an elderly woman's diary, (3) Finnish university students in Estonia, (4) native Finnish speakers in Finland, and (5) a humorous Finnish podcast. Table 10.1 shows an overview of the data. The details of the data are explained in the following chapters.

**Table 10.1**  Overview of the data

| Data | Type and size of data, participants, place | Number of mixed compounds |
|---|---|---|
| Haparanda data 2014–2019 | Video- and audio-recorded informal conversations (19 h) among bilingual adolescents in Haparanda, Sweden | 21 |
| Diary data 1995–2004 | Private diary (40,855 words) by a bilingual in Oulu, Finland | 15 |
| Email data early 2000s | Email conversations (2,000 messages) among Finnish medical students in Tartu, Estonia | 75 |
| Video game data | Recorded online video game playing sessions (5 h) by young adult Finnish-speaking males in Finland | 5 |
| Podcast data | Podcasts by two native Finnish speakers (60 episodes) | 8 |
| | | **Total 124** |

### 10.2.1   Recorded Conversations Between Bilingual Adolescents in Haparanda, Sweden

The Haparanda data consists of over 19 hours of video- and audio-recorded informal group and pair conversations. Haparanda, located on the Swedish–Finnish border in Tornedalen (Torne River Valley) in the northern part of Sweden, is a small municipality of about 10,000 inhabitants. According to Statistics Sweden (2022), over 40 per cent of the inhabitants of Haparanda were born abroad and 82 per cent of them were born in Finland. But an even higher percentage of inhabitants has a Finnish background, that is, they were either born in Finland or have at least one parent or grandparent from Finland. Migration from Finland has strengthened the position of Finnish in Haparanda. Consequently, most schoolchildren currently have Finnish as their first language (see also Ruotsala, 2014). Many inhabitants in Haparanda speak Finnish or Meänkieli as their first language. Meänkieli is the official name of the language spoken in Tornedalen. While it is close to the dialects of Northern Finnish, Meänkieli has been subject to significant influence from Swedish and therefore has a number of Swedish features, such as modern loan words.

Currently, the towns of Tornio in Finland and Haparanda in Sweden share one commercial centre, and the border is extremely busy, with over 14 million annual crossings (Business Tornio, 2023). It is common for

inhabitants in the border region to study, work, take part in different activities, and meet relatives and friends on both sides of the border.

The data was collected in 2014–2019 among 14–19-year-old bilingual adolescents at three junior high schools and one senior secondary school. One of the junior high schools was officially a Swedish compulsory school, whereas two of them were bilingual schools in which pupils could choose bilingual tuition. Most of the pupils in the bilingual junior high schools had a Finnish background, that is, at least one of their parents or grandparents were born in Finland. The aim of the curriculum in these two bilingual schools was to develop functional bilingualism. The only senior secondary school in Haparanda is Swedish-speaking.

31 adolescents in total participated in the recordings in Haparanda. All participants in the recordings were from Finnish-speaking or multilingual families, and they were by their own definition bilingual. In most families, both parents were Finnish- or Meänkieli-speaking, and both Finnish and Swedish were used at their homes. The conversations were recorded outside of the classroom at schools in Haparanda. The interlocutors were not told what language to use or what subjects to talk about, just to talk as 'normally' they could. The conversations turned out to cover such subjects as school, future plans, hobbies, travelling, and music. Finnish was the base language in 13 of the 18 conversations, but the bilingual adolescents frequently switched from Finnish to Swedish, but not so much from Swedish to Finnish.

Previous studies (Kolu, 2017, 2018, 2020) of the bilingual adolescents' conversations in Haparanda revealed patterns and functions in the interlocutors' use of linguistic resources and translanguaging practices in interactions outside the classroom. The participants fluidly and flexibly made use of their language resources, including words, grammar, and discourse markers as well as discourse practices. For example, the interlocutors used Swedish words when they referred to school subjects, although they were speaking in Finnish. This is understandable considering that instruction is given mainly in Swedish, and the Swedish national curriculum is followed at schools in Haparanda.

We found a total of 21 mixed compounds in the informal conversations.

### 10.2.2    *The Private Diary of an Elderly Finland Swede in Northern Finland*

The diary data consists of 795 diary entries from the years 1995−2004, written in Swedish by an academically educated, bilingual person in northern Finland. She lived in the city of Oulu, which is predominantly Finnish-speaking and has only a handful of Swedish speakers. Only 0.2 per cent of the city population have registered themselves as Swedish speakers (Statistics Finland, n.d.). As a result, she was influenced daily by the Finnish language in her life. In addition, her family language in adult life was Finnish: She spoke Finnish with her husband and children. One of the writers of this article knew the diary writer personally, and we have the permission of her close relatives to use her diary for research purposes.

The total number of graphic words in the diary is 40,855, excluding the dates. The average length per entry is 50 words. The shortest entries consist of only a couple of words, whereas the longest comprise several hundred words.

The most important named languages used in the diary are Swedish (in its Finland-Swedish variety) and Finnish, but sometimes even English and other languages are used in the text. According to af Hällström-Reijonen (2012, p. 15), the Finland-Swedish variety of the Swedish language is an over-regional variety of Swedish, and it is characteristic of Swedish-speaking Finns in speech and writing. Standardised Finland-Swedish is almost identical to standardised Swedish in Sweden, except for pronunciation and some official words and expressions that denote Finnish phenomena lacking a counterpart in Sweden. Finland-Swedish language usage, on the other hand, is a broader concept, including dialectal words and expressions, slang, loan words (notably from Finnish), and other less acceptable language features from a normative point of view (af Hällström-Reijonen, 2012, pp. 15, 79). The diary seems to have been written in what could be called a *bilingual language mode* (Grosjean, 2007) or *translanguaging mode* (Otheguy et al., 2015). The base language is Swedish, but the text is speckled with linguistic features that dissolve conventional language boundaries, for example language mixing (Kosunen, 2016, 2017, 2019). The number of Finnish–Swedish mixed compounds in the diary is 15.

### 10.2.3    Computer-Mediated Conversations Among Finnish Students in Estonia

In Estonia, approximately 1000 email messages were collected from a Finnish student association's mailing lists and another 1000 from a mailing list of a small group of medical students from Finland. The data was collected in the town of Tartu, which is a popular place to study among Finns and other nationalities. Estonian is the sole official language in Estonia and the most common first language of the inhabitants of Tartu.

The linguistic backgrounds of many of the participants were rather plurilingual. For instance, out of the 11 students of medicine who gave permission to use their emails, seven were from monolingual Finnish families, and of these three had attended a school where a foreign language was the medium of instruction at some point in their late childhood or adolescence. Four participants were by their own definition bilingual from early childhood, either with a bilingual family background or because they had lived in a bilingual community. The bilingual participants all had Finnish as one of their native languages, although three of them were not from a Finnish-speaking family, and two had never had Finnish as the language of instruction in school.

At the time of data collection (early 2000s), most subjects at the University of Tartu were taught only in Estonian, but international medical students studied in English for two years, after which they switched to studying in Estonian. For this reason, the medical students' mailing list (see Frick, 2008) contained a lot of language mixing to both Estonian and English. The Finnish student association's mailing lists gave approximately 150 and the medical students' list approximately 400 cases of Finnish–Estonian language mixing. In addition, approximately 50 cases of Finnish–Estonian language mixing were collected from private electronic messages between Finns (mainly students) residing in Tartu (Frick, 2008, 2009, 2013).

We collected 41 Estonian–Finnish and 34 Finnish–English mixed compounds from this medical students' mailing list.

### 10.2.4    Native Finnish Speakers in Finland

Data was also collected from native Finnish speakers who have acquired English as a foreign language in school. English is by far the most

common second language in Finland. In 2011, approximately 66 per cent of students in grades 1–6 and 99 per cent of students in grades 7–9 studied English in school (Official Statistics of Finland, 2012). This has resulted in widespread Finnish–English language mixing and the acquisition of new loan words from English.

One subset of the native Finnish speakers' data was from a group of male friends in their 20s who played an online video game (PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds; see Heinilä, 2019, 2022). The Finnish–English collection was further expanded with a well-known Finnish podcast *Kaverin puolesta kyselen* 'Asking for a friend', whose hosts are two female native Finnish speakers (see Koivisto, 2021).

Prior studies show that native Finnish speakers use English words and expressions even in conversations among themselves. Since English is considered a language that 'everyone knows', even people who do not identify as Finnish–English bilinguals use it (see, e.g., Leppänen et al., 2008; Räisänen & Karjalainen, 2018).

We collected five English–Finnish mixed compounds from the video game data and eight from the podcasts.

## 10.3   Background

According to Busch (2012, p. 520), 'the meanings that speakers attribute to languages and linguistic practices are linked with personal experience and life trajectories, especially with the way in which linguistic resources are experienced in the context of discursive constructions of national, ethnic, and social affiliation/non-affiliation'. With multilinguals, their diverse language background often shows in a language practice where they alternate between and mix different languages. The practice has been given various terms such as *code-switching* (e.g., Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Gardner-Chloros, 2009; Gumperz, 1977; Poplack, 1980), *code-mixing* (Muysken, 2000), *polylingual practice* (Jørgensen, 2008), *translingual practice* (Canagarajah, 2013), and *translanguaging* (e.g., García & Li Wei, 2014; Otheguy et al., 2015; Pennycook, 2016). In addition, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020) has introduced the concepts of *cross-linguistic* and *cross-cultural mediation*, the ability to enable communication between people who do not share a language and who come from different cultures. In this chapter, we use the term *language mixing* in a neutral way without any predetermined theoretical assumptions.

By language mixing we refer to all forms of language use where two or more named languages or language varieties are simultaneously used and intertwined in a communicative situation: between sentences, within sentences, and **within words**. In many language mixing situations, single lexical items appear in a text that is otherwise seemingly monolingual. We will use the term *base language* to refer to the main language of the text and *inserted language* to refer to the language used in language mixing (for a discussion on base language, see Muysken, 2000, pp. 64 − 69).

As Gardner-Chloros (2009, pp. 42–43) notes, there are several social factors that contribute to the use of language mixing in language contact situations. She names three main groups of social factors that have an impact on if and how language mixing occurs:

1. Factors that affect all the speakers in a particular community, for example in terms of prestige and power relations of the different language resources;
2. Factors that are connected to the speakers, for example in terms of attitudes, self-perception, and affiliation to different groups; and
3. Factors 'within the conversations', that is, language mixing as a pragmatic discourse practice available to bilinguals.

The language choices in language mixing can act as social indexes that hint to the interlocutors that the topic in question is linked to the language the speaker changes into on any of the above-mentioned levels (community, speaker, or conversation). For instance, in a Finnish email message, the use of the English word *exam* might indicate that English is a high-prestige language in the community, that the speaker perceives themselves as an English speaker or that the exam in question will be held in English. The finding that linguistic variables act as social indexes in interactional situations has already been described by Gumperz (1982, p. 202). Myers-Scotton's (e.g., 1983, 2000) 'markedness' theory on the social indexicality of language mixing has been criticised for presenting social indexes as predetermined and omnipresent instead of interactionally emergent and negotiable (see, e.g., Frick, 2013, p. 70; Li Wei, 1998). Social indexicality is often linked to what we call cultural specificity: Certain phenomena only exist or are known to the speaker in one or the other culture and therefore attract the use of the corresponding language when talked about (see, e.g., Kolu, 2017). For instance,  in a

Swedish school where the Swedish curriculum is taught, bilingual pupils use Swedish words for school subjects, like *SO* (*Samhällsorienterande ämnen*) 'social studies' and *NO* (*Naturorienterande ämnen*) 'natural sciences', even when they are speaking Finnish (Kolu, 2017). As García (2009, p. 48) notes, bilinguals usually have differentiated use and proficiency in their language resources which they use to communicate, as they have been exposed to various language experiences and practices. Consequently, the language settings have an impact on adolescents' language use.

There are also cases of unmarked language mixing with no apparent motivation (Myers-Scotton, 1983). There are discourse and linguistic practices among groups of bilinguals and multilinguals where the interlocutors make use of their common linguistic resources in their interactions with each other (Kolu, 2020; McCormick, 2002). The language resources are often intrinsic and associated with the speakers' identity (Kolu, 2020). They are also used as in-group markers by adolescents (Henricson, 2015; Lehtonen, 2015; Kolu, 2017). The notions of linguistic superdiversity, translanguaging, mobile resources, and heteroglossia are often used as umbrella terms for the use of multiple language resources that seem random on the textual level (Blackledge & Creese, 2020; Blommaert, 2010; Pennycook, 2016). The superdiversity perspective stresses the dynamic use of language resources and the 'normality' of language mixing. Many recent inquiries take the stance that bilingual language use should not be viewed as 'plural monolingualism' (Makoni & Pennycook, 2012, pp. 444−446) or 'dual linguistic competence' (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 298) but as evidence of dynamic linguistic practices that deconstruct our understanding of what 'languages' are. The idea is that language mixing can be unmotivated by the expressive needs of the speaker and just unfold as neutrally as any monolingual text would (see, e.g., Blommaert, 2015; Blommaert & Rampton, 2011).

As bipartite units, mixed compounds offer a fertile ground for the study of language mixing. As Alexiadou (2020) states, the research of (mixed) compounds in language contact situations gives us information about the units of language mixing as well as the organisation of the mental lexicon of bilingual speakers. Mixed compounding has been seen as evidence that the bilingual lexicon is integrated, as bilinguals can use language materials from both languages when constructing compound structures (e.g., Alexiadou, 2020; Brysbaert, 1998; Graedler, 1998; Putnam et al., 2018; van Heuven et al., 1998). As Otheguy et al.

(2018, p. 3) argue, '[t]he myriad linguistic features mastered by bilinguals (phonemes, words, constructions, rules, etc.) occupy a single, undifferentiated cognitive terrain that is not fenced off into anything like the two areas suggested by the two socially named languages'. On the other hand, we suggest that bilingual individuals attach some meanings of the words to the particular social groups and cultures in which they participate or have participated as a consequence of their own life histories, language backgrounds, and personal experiences.

## 10.4     ANALYSIS

In this section, we discuss what kind of referents and textual contexts attract the use of mixed compound nouns in our data. In addition, we discuss how mixed compounds in the data reflect the surrounding culture or its norms, the community of speakers, and the speaker's affiliations or communicative motivations. The discussion is organised into subsections according to the referents and textual functions of the mixed compounds. In the data, we found words denoting places, food, family, and other community- and context-specific terminology. Some of these words fill a lexical gap (see Baker, 2011) in one language or are culturally specific. Others are used in contexts where the participant talks about events where the inserted language is, was, or will be used.

### 10.4.1     Places

Prior studies of language mixing have shown that toponyms are typically uttered in their original form, that is, in the language of the surrounding community (see, e.g., Frick, 2003, p. 14; 2013, p. 16). Our data shows, however, that mixed compounds can also be used to refer to places. The places named in our data include both semi-translated forms of a commonly known place name and more sporadic references to places.

In Excerpt (1), the mixed compound *hampurilais+**restaurang**-iin* 'to [a] hamburger restaurant' is used in a conversation where two participants are discussing where they are going to do their on-the-job training for school.

(1) Haparanda

*mää en ainakaan mee minnekään hampurilais**restaurang**iin*

'At least, I am not going to any hamburger **restaurant**'

The compound is formed of the modifier in Finnish: *hampurilais* 'hamburger' and the head *restaurang* 'restaurant' in Swedish. The word is inflected according to the base language Finnish and its grammar. The Finnish illative ending -*(i)in* indicates movement into something.

The language choices in the word *hampurilaisrestaurang* reflect the everyday language use and environment the participants live in. The towns of Haparanda and Tornio on the Finland–Sweden border share a town centre, and therefore the border crossing-point is almost *imperceptible*. Linguistic diversity is commonplace in the twin city, and both Swedish and Finnish can be used, for instance, in restaurants such as the one talked about in Excerpt (1).

Other examples of place names in the data include *Meditsiini+talo* 'Medicine Building', which is a mixed compound found in the dataset of Finnish students in Estonia. *Meditsiinitalo* refers to the main building of the Faculty of Medicine in Tartu, which is commonly known as *Meditsiinihoone* in Estonian. The compound is formed by translating the head of an originally Estonian compound noun into Finnish: The modifier *meditsiini* is in Estonian and the head *talo* 'building' in Finnish. The head is a translation of the original *hoone*.

In the diary data, the word *ammatti+koulu+butiken* 'the vocational school shop' is used to refer to a bakery shop at the vocational school in Oulu. *Ammattikoulubutiken* is a three-part compound with the Finnish modifier *ammattikoulu* 'vocational school' and Swedish head *butiken* 'the shop'. The use of Finnish in the modifier of the word is motivated by the school being a Finnish one.

### 10.4.2   *Community-Specific Terminology*

Baker (2011, p. 108) explains that people may have lexical gaps if they use different languages in different domains: 'A young person may, for instance, switch from the home language to the language used in school to talk about a subject such as mathematics or computers'. In those cases, the gap is in the individual's linguistic repertoire. We find, however, that trying to explain all domain-motivated language mixing with the lexical gap theory shows the analyst's 'monolingual bias' (see Auer, 2007). A bilingual individual may choose to mix languages even when they would know how to communicate monolingually.

There are, nevertheless, lexical gaps that encompass the whole linguistic system—that is, words that do not exist or are not commonly used in all languages. Such words often refer to community-specific phenomena. In this case, it is typical that the modifier of the compound fills a lexical gap in the other language. For instance, the term *kommunaalimaksut* 'utility costs' is used by Finns in Estonia to refer to building maintenance costs that differ essentially from the respective system in Finland. The head of the compound is a bilingual homophone (Fin. *maksut* ~ Est. *maksud*), and the modifier *kommunaali* is in Estonian.

*Kommunaalimaksut* reflects a conventionalised multilingual discourse practice in the Estonian Finnish community. Similarly, the bilingual adolescents in Haparanda use the word *SO-luokka* 'a classroom for social studies'. The modifier of the compound *SO* is Swedish and stands for the school subject *samhällsorienterande ämnen* 'social studies'. There is not one equivalent school subject for 'SO' in Finnish; instead, the topics are covered in several subjects (history, religion, and geography) in the Finnish school system. The head of the compound *luokka* is the Finnish word for 'class'. *SO-luokka* is thus an example of both a specific place name and of terminology that is community-specific.

The words *kommunaalimaksut* and *SO-luokka* also reflect the power relations of the languages used in the two respective communities. Estonian and Swedish as the official languages of Estonia and Sweden respectively are used when referring to community-related topics, indicating that the societal structures function in these two languages. The local minority language, in this case Finnish, is not used by the authorities, and the minority language speakers adapt to this instead of, for instance, translating the terms into their own language.

We also find, in the Finnish podcast data, an example of a lexical gap in that is not the result of Finnish being used as a minority language but, instead, in a context where reference is made to a foreign institution. The mixed compound in question is *high school -elokuva* 'high school movie', in which *high school* refers to the United States' school system. The school system in Finland differs from the US one, which is why there is a lexical gap in the Finnish language regarding the term, and replacing *high school* with a Finnish word would not work. *High school* films may also be regarded as their own film genre. The term is used in Finland to describe films where the main teen characters attend an American high school. Furthermore, the mixed compound *high school -elokuva* has a special connotation which is associated with teenagers in the USA.

### 10.4.3    Food

Food-related words are another group that seems to trigger language mixing often due to the cultural specificity of food items (Frick, 2013, p. 16). In our data, there are mixed compounds that refer to both culture-specific and non-specific food-related items and topics. Excerpt (2) shows a culturally non-specific food-related mixed compound in the diary data. The example is shown in its sentential context, which is in Swedish.

(2) Diary

*Först var det sill och **kirjolohi**piroger.*

'First there was herring and **rainbow trout** pastries.'

In Excerpt (2) the writer of the diary tells about a party and the food service there. *Kirjo+lohi+piroger* is a three-part compound noun consisting of the Swedish word *pirog* ('pastry') as the head and the Finnish compound word *kirjo+lohi* ('rainbow trout') as the modifier. The motivation for using a mixed compound in the context can be interpreted from the community perspective. The party the diary author refers to was with Finnish-speaking friends, and so the language of the situation is echoed in the diary text. Moreover, expressing the meaning in Swedish would have resulted in a slightly more complex compound consisting of four parts: *regn+bågs+lax+pirog*. Thus, the economy of expression might also have played a role in choosing Finnish as the language of the modifier.

Other food-related mixed compounds in the data include *fika+juttu* 'coffee break thing' from the Swedish *fika* 'coffee break' and Finnish *juttu* 'thing' and *juustu+bileiden* 'cheese party, pl gen' from the Estonian *juustu* 'cheese, gen' and Finnish *bileiden* 'party, pl gen'.

### 10.4.4    Studies

Students often refer to study-related topics with mixed compounds, in which the modifier is in the language of the studies while the head is in the language of the surrounding text. This is common for both the bilingual pupils speaking Finnish as a base language in Haparanda (five study-related examples) and the Finnish university students in Tartu (53 study-related examples). In the other datasets, studies are not among the topics of conversation.

*Rebase+meininki* 'freshman activities' in Excerpt (3) refers to student activities for freshmen. The example is taken from an email by an older Finnish student to first-year Finnish medical students in Estonia.

(3) Email

*Tahtoisin vain kertoa teille, että minusta jokaisen kannattaa ottaa huomenna osaa **rebase**meininkiin.*

'I just wanted to tell you that I think everyone should participate in the **freshman** activities tomorrow.'

The email, which Excerpt (3) is taken from, is in Finnish, as is the head of the compound *meininki,* which is inflected with the Finnish illative suffix *-in*. The head *rebase* 'freshman, gen.' is in Estonian (see Frick, 2009, for a more extensive analysis of the example). Although the Finnish medical students started their studies in English, extra-curricular activities such as the ones talked about in this email were organised for the whole student faculty and were mainly held in Estonian.

In Excerpt (4) another medical student writes about a reexamination.

(4) Email

*sori mut on pakko pitää **cranial nerve** uusinta torstaina klo 9 koska pe on kemian suullinen ja sit pitäisi lukea tätä histologiaakin.*

'Sorry but I have to take the **cranial nerve** reexamination on Thursday at 9 AM, because I have the chemistry oral [exam] on Friday and I need to study histology as well.'

The mixed compound *cranial nerve uusinta* consists of an English modifier and Finnish head (*uusinta* 'reexamination'). The normative spelling of the word would be *cranial nerve -uusinta*.

These excerpts show how the language of the modifiers in the compounds reflects the language of the events talked about; freshman activities are held in Estonian and the cranial nerve exam in English. The language choice acts as an intertextual cue and social index (see, e.g., Frick, 2013, p. 70) that bridges the real-life events to the text here-and-now and adds authenticity to the referential potential of the word. In Excerpt (4) the writer refers to three different study topics: cranial nerves,

chemistry, and histology, but only one of them is in English. There is no definite reason why one word gets written in a different language than the surrounding text and others do not, but researchers in language mixing have found certain tendencies in language mixing patterns. For instance, in Excerpt (4), the anatomical term *cranial nerve* is a more specific term than chemistry and histology, which refer to areas of science. Semantic specificity such as this may motivate language mixing (see Backus, 2001).

Other study-related mixed compounds from the Finnish medical students' email messages include *exam+päivät* (Eng. *exam*+Fin. *päivät*) 'exam days', *keskkonna+kysymykset* (Est. *keskkonna*+Fin. *kysymykset*) 'environment questions', and *nursing opettaja* (Eng. *nursing*+Fin. *opettaja*) 'nursing teacher'. There are also study-related mixed compounds, such as *reklam+juttu* (Swe. 'advertisement'+Fin. 'thing'), in the data we collected from the Finnish students in Haparanda.

### 10.4.5   Other Context-Specific Activities

Context-specific language selection is not limited to the field of studies. Excerpt (5) is taken from Heinilä (2022). It reflects the context-specific use of the compound *quarryporukka* 'quarry team'.

(5)

*Mihihä se* **quarry***porukka sitte kerkes juosta voi että.*

'I wonder where the **quarry** team ran, oh my'

The word *quarryporukka* consists of the English modifier *quarry* and Finnish head *porukka*. It is used by a native Finnish speaker when playing a video game with other native Finnish speakers. When playing the game, the participants in this dataset tend to refer to quarries with the English term instead of the Finnish equivalent *louhos*, which they would use in other contexts. For them, the English word seems to be a conventionalised way to refer, specifically, to quarries within the game.

### 10.4.6   Family Vocabulary

In the diary data, we find examples of what could be called a familylect (see Søndergaard, 1991). One example of family vocabulary is the word

*Koppi-bil* in the diary data, as seen in Excerpt (6). A literal English translation of the word is 'booth car'. The word refers to a small van car owned by one of the family members.

(6) Diary

*Just som jag ätit kom **Koppi**-bilen*

'As soon as I had eaten, the **booth** car came'

The head noun *bilen* ('car') in the example is in Swedish and the modifier *koppi* ('booth') in Finnish. The Standard Swedish word for the referent is *skåp+bil* (literally 'cupboard car'), whereas Finland-Swedes often use the word *paket+bil* (literally 'packet car'), echoing the Standard Finnish word *paketti+auto* (literally 'packet car'). In the family, however, the car was always called *koppiauto*. As the word has the quality of a proper noun, and as the diary writer was used to language mixing in her text, it is somewhat surprising that she does not use the all-Finnish compound *koppi+auto* but creates a mixed compound instead.

### 10.4.7   Other

The compounds discussed in this section include both words whose monolingual counterparts have a conventionalised meaning and are frequently used, as well as ones that are novel compounds that serve the interactional situation here-and-now but are not conventionalised in either bilingual or monolingual language use.

One example of a mixed compound noun whose monolingual counterparts have a conventionalised meaning is found in the diary data: *bil+katsastus*, meaning 'car inspection'. The head noun *katsastus* ('inspection') is in Finnish, and the modifier *bil* ('car') is in Swedish. From the analyst's point of view, it is hard to interpret why a mixed compound was used, especially as the writer also uses the respective conventionalised Swedish noun *bil+besiktning* once elsewhere in the text.

In the diary data we also found the word *bastu+patio* 'sauna porch', which is used to refer to the porch of the sauna building at the family's summer place. The word consists of the Swedish modifier *bastu* 'sauna' and the Finnish head *patio* 'porch'. (The word *patio* is a Spanish loan word in Finnish and can mean either 'inner yard' or 'porch'.)

Compared to the two previous examples of place names, *bastupatio* shows a reversed pattern of combining the compound lexemes: In *meditsiinitalo* and *ammattikoulubutiken* (discussed in Sect. 10.4.1), the generic head noun is expressed in the language of the surrounding text, and the specifying modifier in the language that echoes the local circumstances. In *bastupatio*, the head noun is expressed in the local language and the modifier in the base language of the text.

*Bilkatsastus* 'car inspection', *pesumasiina* 'washing machine', and *bastupatio* 'sauna porch' are all general words that are not associated strongly with one or another culture, nor are they related to a domain that would be more associated with one of the languages. Other such mixed compounds that have conventionalised monolingual counterparts include *läpi+paistavat* ('trans+parent' cf. Fin. *läpi+näkyvät*, pl.; Est. *läbi+paistvad*) and *sminkka+pussit* ('make-up bags', Swe. *smink* 'makeup'+Fin. *pussit* 'bags').

Overall, compounding is a productive way to facilitate the integration of foreign elements into the base language (Graedler, 1998, p. 202; Söderberg, 1983, p. 14). One pattern in compound formation found in the Haparanda data is to combine Swedish elements with semantically relatively empty Finnish nouns (cf. Kolu, 2017, p. 61; see also Söderberg, 1983, p. 14). The compounds *reklamhomma* ('advertising thing'), *fikajutut* ('coffee things'), and *plastjutut* ('plastic things') are formed with the modifiers *reklam* ('advertising'), *fika* ('coffee'), and *plast* ('plastic') in the inserted language, Swedish, and the heads *homma* ('*thing*') and *jutut* ('things') in Finnish. Compound forms make it easier to insert Swedish nouns into the Finnish syntactic environment. Similar examples were also found in the Stockholm data collected for another study (Kolu, 2017). Correspondingly, in the Helsinki data (Kolu, 2017, p. 61), where the base language is Swedish, the young Swedish-speaking Finns inflect the Finnish noun *juttu* in the Swedish plural by adding the Swedish plural endings *-n* or *-r* in order to integrate the compound word into the Swedish syntactic environment: *skolhälsojuttun* 'school health thing' and kärleks**juttur** 'love things'.

(7) Haparanda

*sit me saadaan ne **fika**jutut*

Then we receive those **coffee** things

(8) (cf. Stockholm, Kolu, 2017)

*sit mun pitää tehdä se **svenska**juttu*

Then I have to do that **Swedish** thing

In Excerpt (7) and (8), the mixed compounds had no conventionalised equivalent in any language. The exact meaning of these words must be interpreted from the context. Many of the words in this group end in the Finnish head noun *juttu* ('thing'). Without knowing the context, it is often impossible to determine what 'thing' the speaker is referring to. In Excerpt (7), the speaker refers to the gift cards they had received. In Excerpt (8), the student refers to a school assignment in Swedish that she must do. Similarly, one of the Haparanda schoolchildren uses the mixed compound *band+juttu* ('ribbon/tape/band thing') to refer to a plastic strip used in skiing centres to mark the sides of the skiing slope. The language selection of the modifier, the Swedish *band,* is peculiar, because the main language of the conversation is Finnish and the skiing centre in question was also located in a Finnish language-dominant area of Finland. This example, among others, shows that mixed compounds are not always motivated by an association with one or the other language.

## 10.5    SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, we analysed and discussed examples of compound formation in different contact situations, that is, in the language use of Sweden Finns, Finland Swedes, Finns in Estonia, and Finnish L2 speakers of English. The study of compounds in language contact provides insights into the mental lexicon and multilingual discourse practices of bilingual speakers.

The data set represents not only different language pairs but also different forms of communication (spoken, written, computer-mediated) in different genres (audio-recorded conversations, private diary, emails, online video game, humorous podcast) and different ages of informants. The data comprises naturally occurring written and spoken texts and pair interviews with people whose one language is Finnish and other language is either Swedish, Estonian, or English. All texts except the one collected from native Finnish speakers in Finland had a base language that was different from the dominant language of the surrounding society: The

bilingual adolescents in Haparanda, Sweden, who used both Finnish and Swedish but mainly Finnish in the recorded conversations, lived in a Swedish-dominant town and went to a bilingual or Swedish-speaking school. The diary of our Finland-Swedish participant was written in Swedish, but the main language used in the town was Finnish. The Finnish students in Estonia wrote their email messages mainly in Finnish but lived in a town where Estonian was the dominant language, and they studied in English and Estonian.

Specifically, we found evidence for the view that bilingual speakers make use of their multiple language resources when forming compound words (see also Kolu, 2020; McCormick, 2002). In addition, our examples show that the bilingual lexicon seems to be integrated and dynamic, as bilinguals can choose material from both languages when compounding words (see also Alexiadou, 2020). This provides further evidence for the view that bilinguals do not consider their languages as separate and isolated systems. As Jørgensen et al. (2011, p. 29) state: 'Speakers use features and not languages. Features may be associated with specific languages (or specific categories which are called languages). Such an association may be an important quality of any given feature, and one which speakers may know and use as they speak.'

The examples discussed in this section show that word-internal language mixing in the form of mixed compounds happens in many different multilingual communities in which Finnish is one of the languages spoken. Speakers typically use a pattern in which the head of the compound reflects the language of the surrounding text while the modifier is used in another language. This is true for 113 out of the 125 mixed compounds in our dataset. In some cases, the language pairs studied here share underlying concepts but lexicalise them differently (*skåp+bil*, literally 'cupboard car' in Swedish and *paket+bil,* literally 'packet car' in Finland Swedish), while in other cases, the mixed compounds in the data fill lexical gaps in the language of the surrounding text. For instance, Finnish does not have words to denote all the referents related to building maintenance in Estonia or the Swedish or US school systems. In the case of Finnish in Estonia and Sweden, this reflects the weaker status of Finnish and the fact that the societal structures function predominantly in the majority language. Such examples were not found in the Finland Swedish diary data, which may reflect the stronger position of Swedish in Finland compared to that of Finnish in Estonia and Sweden. More data and

research on the topic are needed, however, before any definite conclusions can be drawn on the matter.

Very often, these mixed compound nouns reflect the multilingual everyday life and discourse practices of the speakers, especially objects, events, and topics that, in the speaker's everyday life, are more linked to the inserted language. Thus, the inserted-language modifiers act as social or cultural indices, 'belonging' more to the life lived in that language. This is not only true for texts written in a minority language but also for many of the English insertions in the native Finnish speakers' Finnish texts. English insertions reflect both the widespread knowledge of English in Finland and the use of English in different life areas such as video games.

Earlier studies show that compounds may have an expressive and pejorative function, for instance in slang vocabulary (cf. *lovebrud* 'girlfriend' English–Swedish, *dumass* 'stupid' Swedish–English; Kotsinas, 2002). We did not detect such usage in our data. Instead, the referents of the mixed compounds in our data were rather mundane and affectively neutral. The mixed compounds in our data were used to refer to places, food, school-related topics, and other everyday matters.

All in all, it is impossible to unequivocally say why people mix languages and create mixed compound nouns. Language use can fulfil several functions simultaneously, and mixing languages gives the message an enriching ambiguity that allows for many different interpretations.

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# Structural Approach to Language Revitalisation: Revival of Aanaar Saami

*Jukka Mettovaara and Jussi Ylikoski*

## 11.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the recent development of Aanaar Saami by combining a structural perspective to language change and an analysis of language ideologies that can be perceived in the writings of the major figures behind probably one of the most successful language revitalisation projects in Europe.

Aanaar (Inari) Saami (< Saami < Uralic) is an indigenous minority language spoken by an estimated 400 people mainly around Lake Aanaar in Northern Finland. The region of Aanaar/Inari has long been on the border of several language areas. As Aanaar Saami is the only Saami language spoken solely in Finland, the Aanaar Saami community has been bilingual in Aanaar Saami and Finnish for generations. As a result, Aanaar

J. Ylikoski (✉)
Department of Finnish and Finno-Ugric Languages, School of Languages and Translation Studies, University of Turku, Turku, Finland
e-mail: jussi.ylikoski@utu.fi

J. Mettovaara
Giellagas Institute, Faculty of Humanities, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland

Saami sentence structures have been gradually restructured to become more and more like those of Finnish.

While the grammatical structure of Aanaar Saami has been little described, the language has recently become one of the best-known modern examples of language revitalisation: Within the past three decades, the once critically endangered language with next to no young speakers has acquired dozens of new speakers via language nests for children as well as effective language learning programmes for adults (Olthuis et al., 2013; Pasanen, 2010, 2015), and these new speakers now rear new generations in the revived language. However, it has been suggested that one of the major factors of the unusually successful revival has been the extraordinarily tolerant attitudes of the speech community: New speakers—Saami and non-Saami alike—have been welcomed with the proclamation that it is better to speak 'bad' Saami than no Saami at all (M. Morottaja, 2007a, p. 10; Pasanen, 2018). This contrasts somewhat with the attitudes of L1 Finnish speakers towards even advanced L2 speakers: In the majority society of Finland, language may be used as a means of social, ideological, and political differentiation, that is, to demarcate 'us' from 'them' (Lehtonen, 2015; Ruuska, 2020). As a consequence, modern Aanaar Saami is now lexically and grammatically more Finnicised than ever, but the use of the language flourishes after decades of decline.

In this chapter, the documentation and description of the Aanaar Saami revival are extended to the structural properties of the language. As Aanaar Saami and Finnish are related to each other both genetically and typologically, the ongoing restructuring of the Aanaar Saami syntax (i.e., the clause and sentence structures) can be considered a textbook example of the phenomenon labelled as metatypy by Ross (1996): Aanaar Saami is becoming increasingly isomorphic (i.e., similar in structure) with Finnish. We will synthesise an analysis of two different aspects of the Aanaar Saami revival as manifested in the existing literature directed to different kinds of audiences: After a brief introduction to the sociological aspects of the revitalisation and revival of Aanaar Saami in Sect. 11.2, we present our data and methods in Sect. 11.3. The main focus of this chapter—in Sect. 11.4—is on contact-induced variation as manifested in texts written in Aanaar Saami. More precisely, as regards the purposes and the subject matter of the present study, our focus is especially on the observations and attitudes concerning the Finnish influence on Aanaar Saami as experienced and expressed by the scholars and revitalisers of the language. (While many of these people are native speakers of Aanaar

Saami, a number of scholars and language planners have acquired the language at a later age.)

After a number of examples of some of the most remarkable features of contact-induced variation in Aanaar Saami in Sect. 11.4, Sect. 11.5 examines the themes surrounding this contact-induced influence in Aanaar Saami in texts written by native speakers. They recognise the emerging variation as an unwanted influence of Finnish and evaluate it to be detrimental to the 'original' Aanaar Saami system, but at the same time tolerance towards all kinds of language is advocated.

Finally, Sect. 11.6 provides a general discussion and further remarks on the topic. Even though Aanaar Saami is becoming increasingly isomorphic with Finnish, this has in no way resulted in a loss of linguistic identity and ideology among the Aanaar Saami people. Instead, the contemporary language appears to be a fruit of extraordinary collective optimism and tolerance towards the future of the Aanaar Saami language and culture, which also clearly differentiates the Aanaar Saami community from other, even significantly larger, Saami-speaking communities.

## 11.2   Background

### 11.2.1   The Aanaar Saami Language

Aanaar Saami is one of about ten living Saami languages, the westernmost branch of the Uralic language family. It is spoken in a relatively compact area around Lake Aanaar, the largest lake in Lapland or Sápmi, the traditional Saami homeland covering about 400,000 km$^2$ of northernmost Fennoscandia. While Aanaar Saami has traditionally been regarded as belonging to the eastern group of Saami languages, the taxonomic position of the language is somewhat unclear. Aanaar Saami has many phonological, morphological, and syntactic features typical of the easternmost Saami languages, but the language is lexically closer to North Saami in the west than to Skolt Saami in the east (Rydving, 2013; Valtonen et al., 2022); Rydving (op. cit., p. 184) even suggests that Aanaar Saami could be considered a third, independent unit between the western and eastern dialect continua.

In any case, in today's world Aanaar Saami has the unquestionable status of being one of the three officially acknowledged Saami languages in Finland. Moreover, it is commonly characterised as the only Saami language traditionally spoken solely in Finland, whereas most speakers of

North Saami (undeniably western Saami) reside in Norway and Sweden, and Skolt Saami (eastern Saami) is also spoken in the Kola Peninsula of the Russian Federation. Consequently, the Aanaar Saami speech community has been heavily influenced by Finnish ever since the increasing Finnicisation of Aanaar since the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Virtually all speakers of Aanaar Saami have been bilingual in Finnish for generations, while the North Saami community has been competitively influenced by as many as three nation-state languages—Finnish, Norwegian, and Swedish—and Skolt Saami by Finnish and Russian. The number of speakers of Aanaar Saami has always been in the hundreds, and by the 1990s the language was commonly considered a moribund language, at one period being passed on to new generations in only two families (Olthuis et al., 2013, p. 30). To be sure, all Saami languages still have a low status outside the Saami homeland and must indeed be considered more or less endangered.

However, the past three decades have witnessed a successful revitalisation of Aanaar Saami, and the language has become one of the best-known modern examples of language revitalisation. The language has acquired dozens of new speakers and it is used in various domains of education and media, for example. The driving force has been the Aanaar Saami Association, *Anarâškielâ servi*, founded in 1986; the activities organised and initiated by the association include three language nests (*kielâpiervâleh*, early childhood immersion programmes since 1997), two Aanaar Saami magazines, an online newspaper, specific language education programmes for adults, and the development of advanced language technology tools. Luckily enough, not only has the language been revitalised and revived in both quantitative (number of speakers) and qualitative (new domains) terms, many of the most important revitalisers of the language are also leading academic specialists of the language, and a significant part of the new speakers have studied the language also at the university level. In the early 2020s, it can be claimed that the Aanaar Saami are one of the most language-conscious and highly educated minority groups within the Uralic family and in the whole of Europe (Valtonen et al., 2022, p. 179).

### 11.2.2    Revitalisation and Its Effects

The sociological aspects of the Aanaar Saami revitalisation process have also been amply documented and distributed to the scientific community.

For the purposes of the present chapter, we refer to the above-mentioned literature for more details, but some general comments are in order. The entire process of the beginnings of Aanaar Saami revitalisation in the period 1997–2014 has been carefully described and analysed by Pasanen (2015, 2018). Olthuis et al. (2013) provide a concise account of the early phases including the establishment of language nests and development of Aanaar Saami elementary education, but focus especially on the creation, implementation, and results of the Complementary Aanaar Saami Language Education (CASLE) project carried out in 2009–2010.

In a nutshell, the Aanaar Saami community has revitalised their language by all possible methods, starting with preschool children and following and supporting their life through primary and secondary education all the way up to the university level. The CASLE project and many other enterprises have focused on the so-called lost generation—adults who had not got a chance to acquire the language in their childhood. As a result, there are currently more than one hundred speakers of Aanaar Saami who have not learnt the language in the most prototypical way at home in early childhood. As always, it is impossible to present exact numbers, but the proportion of new speakers of Aanaar Saami is remarkable in the community of around 400 active speakers.

Contrary to the sociological side of the successful Aanaar Saami revitalisation, its structural effects on the language have not been discussed in much detail. A doctoral thesis and its accompanying articles (e.g., Mettovaara, forthcoming) is in the works, and a master's thesis on the Finnish syntactic interference in Saami-speaking pupils' texts (Seipiharju, 2022) has recently been published. However, the effects of similar processes are well known for other languages such as Hawaiian (NeSmith, 2003; Wong, 1999), Breton (Kennard, 2019), and Manx (Lewin, 2021). In the most extreme cases, scholars sometimes distinguish between varieties labelled as Hawaiian and Neo Hawaiian or Breton and Neo Breton. The best known and most successful case is the emergence of Modern Hebrew (Israeli Hebrew, Israeli, Ivrit), a language unanimously regarded as fully independent from Ancient Hebrew, whose last native speakers died almost two millennia before the first native speakers of Modern Hebrew in the late nineteenth century. The emergence and development of Modern Hebrew has been documented and analysed by generations of scholars; for the most recent studies, see Doron (2015) and Doron et al. (2019).

## 11.3    DATA AND METHODS

We have collected most of our data from two authors' texts: Matti Morottaja (also known by his Saami name Kuobžâ-Saammâl Matti, b. 1942), one of the leading figures of Aanaar Saami revitalisation who has also worked as a teacher and a journalist, and Marja-Liisa Olthuis (Kaabi Eljis Márjá-Liisá, b. 1967), Ph.D., who currently works as the university lecturer of Aanaar Saami at the University of Oulu and who has led several revitalisation projects and been involved in revitalisation activities for well over twenty years. In addition, we have included some material from Petter Morottaja (Kuobžâ-Saammâl Maati Petter), an Aanaar Saami university teacher and author, and Sáárá Seipiharju (Vesko-Ráávná Aaimo Sáárá), an Aanaar Saami journalist who has written her master's thesis (2022) on the Finnish interference in Aanaar Saami.

All in all, we have sought texts written by Aanaar Saami native speakers that deal with Finnish structural influence to any extent. The texts can be divided into four categories: (1) scholarly papers and monographs, (2) master's theses, (3) conference presentations, and (4) popular texts meant for a more general audience. A detailed list can be found at the end of this chapter. However, few of the texts in our data focus exclusively on the issue of Finnish influence; in fact, most observations concerning the recent contact-induced development of Aanaar Saami are scattered in publications directed to the general public and language activists rather than linguists. This does not diminish their significance, however, as the publications in question provide valuable perspectives to the underlying beliefs and aims of those who spend their lives revitalising and using the language in all possible ways.

We examine the same texts from two different perspectives. The first one, structural, is the focus in Sect. 11.4, where we present examples of the grammatical and lexical effects of Finnish on Aanaar Saami that the native Saami authors have highlighted. In Sect. 11.5, we employ *inductive content analysis* and *thematic analysis* on the same texts. These methods are suitable for the type of unstructured text-heavy data we have collected (Kyngäs, 2020). We study the authors' propositions and choices of words concerning the Finnish influence and what they tell us about the attitudes towards the phenomenon. We pay attention mainly to the lexical and semantic level of the texts, and as a result, we identify four main themes emerging from them.

## 11.4 Structural Effects of Aanaar Saami Revival

This section provides an overview of some of the non-sociological linguistic issues that have gained attention in Aanaar Saami revitalisation. By this we mean various grammatical and lexical features of the language whose speakers and domains have experienced extraordinary changes with respect to the traditional use of the language. We will mainly focus on the views presented by native-speaking grass-root language planners and other language activists who often also have various roles also in academia, as it appears that most non-native scholars of the language are—understandably enough—more reticent about their evaluative views on the language in change. However, the focus of this section is on the language system per se, while the evaluative thematic analysis is discussed in more detail in Sect. 11.5.

There are few systematic descriptions of the Finnish interference in or other effects of language revitalisation on Aanaar Saami. Some of them are written by non-native speakers of Aanaar Saami, so we have not included them in our data, but they should be mentioned as background information. An article by Mettovaara (forthcoming) examines the emerging variation in the grammatical subject and object both in spoken and written Aanaar Saami. He argues that the variation can be traced back to Finnish syntactic models. Other notable works are master's theses: Pasanen (2003) surveys the Aanaar Saami language nest and offers brief observations on and examples of the children's spoken language. She summarises that Finnish and Aanaar Saami intersect on all levels of the children's language, so much so that it could be called a mixed lect. Seipiharju (2022), a native speaker, investigates the Finnish interference in written Aanaar Saami syntactic structures of primary school pupils. Her results show that Finnish is clearly influencing the syntax of Aanaar Saami but that there is also wide individual variation between pupils in the intensity of interference.

There are not many general descriptions of the language structure of Aanaar Saami either. The publication by P. Morottaja and Olthuis (2022) is the most extensive to date, albeit geared more towards pedagogical purposes and focusing on morphology, whereas the ones preceding are mainly preliminary sketches (Olthuis, 2000; Valtonen et al., 2022).

The lexicon has been more thoroughly documented by generations of linguists (see Itkonen et al., 1986–1991 for a scholarly account of the traditional spoken language and Olthuis & Valtonen, 2016 regarding the contemporary use of the language).

As a language system can be conventionally divided into grammar and lexicon, we begin with the former first and will take a look at the lexical aspects further below. As for the grammar, we are mainly interested in the rapid restructuring of the Aanaar Saami syntax. Although the phonology and the highly complex morphophonology of the language also seem to be under change, language activists and scholars have paid relatively little attention to this aspect of the language change (Valtonen et al., 2022, pp. 180, 182; Mettovaara, forthcoming). In the same vein, while it is well known that the age-old contacts with neighbouring Finnic languages have affected Saami morphology to the extent that even inflectional and derivational bound morphemes have been borrowed, there seems to be little recent influence from Finnish on Aanaar Saami in particular. One of the most recent yet already fully integrated Finnish features is the converb marker -*máin*, originally a comitative case form (-*in*) of the action nominal (-*m(V)*-), which has been a part of the Aanaar Saami grammar already in the nineteenth century (Valtonen et al., 2022, p. 194; Ylikoski, 2009, pp. 84–85). This represents an instance of *pattern borrowing* (Matras & Sakel, 2007), where the Finnish structure has provided a model, according to which native Aanaar Saami morphemes and syntax are then structured. Even in our days, this verb form (1a) is especially common in direct translations from Finnish with the etymologically analogous converb in -*malla* (1b) (cf. the comitative and adessive cases in the expressions *5,94573:in* and *5,94573:lla*):

(1)  a.  *Määrkih*       *nubásmittojeh*      *euron*
         markka.PL       convert.PASS.3PL     euro.ESS
         ***jyehimáin***  *taid*              *5,94,573:in.*
         divide.CVB      it.PL.ACC           5.94573.COM

     b.  *Markat*         *muunnetaan*         *euroiksi*
         markka.PL       convert.PASS         euro.PL.TRA
         *jakamalla*      *ne*                *5,94,573:lla*
         divide.CVB      it.PL               5.94573.ADE
         'Finnish markkas are converted to euros by dividing them by 5.94573.'
         (http://www.vm.fi 18.1.2002)

The most remarkable effects of the Finnish language on Aanaar Saami grammar are visible in morphosyntax. All speakers of Aanaar Saami are virtually bilingual in both languages, and due to the significant proportion of L1 Finnish speakers in the Aanaar Saami community, it seems impossible to avoid interference from Finnish in Aanaar Saami. The widespread multilingualism—including not only Finnish but also North Saami—among the Aanaar Saami has its roots in at least the 1800s, and on the eastern side of Aanaar there have been close contacts even with the Skolt Saami (Lehtola, 2012, p. 41ff.).

However, most observations on the Finnish influence on Aanaar Saami grammar have centred on syntax. Some phenomena have very central positions within the everyday use of Aanaar Saami sentences: Often-mentioned examples of the emergence of Finnish-like syntax include variation in argument marking and subject–predicate agreement. Interestingly, it is here that the traditional Aanaar Saami represents a typologically unmarked nominative–accusative system where the nominative case is used for grammatical subjects and the accusative is used to mark the grammatical object of the sentence. Distinguishing between the nominative subject that triggers agreement in the verb and the accusative object that does not is a rather straightforward process. On the other hand, the Finnish syntax is notoriously exceptional in this respect, largely due to the existence of the partitive case with a typologically unique set of functions in the language.[1] Compare the following example pairs: The traditional Aanaar Saami nominative subject (*liteh*) in (2a) is matched by the partitive subject (*astioita*) in Finnish (2b), whereas the Aanaar Saami accusative object (*kuobbárijd*) in (3a) corresponds to the Finnish nominative object (*sienet*) in (3b):

| (2) | a. | *Kuáđist* | ***kávnojii*** | *meid* | *puáris* | ***liteh***. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | tent.LOC | be_found.PST.3PL | also | old.ATTR | dish.NOM.PL. |
| | b. | *Kodasta* | *löytyi* | *myös* | *vanhoja* | *astioita*. |
| | | tent.ELA | be_found.PST.3SG | also | old.PTV.PL | dish.PTV.PL. |

'There were also old dishes in the tent.' (Olthuis, 2018)

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[1] Aanaar Saami, too, does have a highly specialised case labelled as partitive as well, but its use is mostly restricted to numeral phrases with numerals higher than 'six', and it thus has little to do with argument marking (Valtonen et al., 2022, pp. 192–193).

(3)  a.  *Nubeh*           *tobdeh*         **kuobbârijd**          *ivneest.*
         other.NOM.PL      know.3PL         mushroom.ACC.PL        color.LOC.
     b.  *Toiset*          *tuntevat*       *sienet*               *väristä.*
         other.NOM.PL      know.3PL         mushroom.NOM.PL        color.ELA.
         'Others recognise mushrooms by colour.' (Olthuis, 2018)

While Finnish subject and object marking has been described and discussed in hundreds of studies (e.g., Huumo, 2003; Kiparsky, 2001; Vainikka & Brattico, 2011), it has been possible to describe traditional Aanaar Saami very concisely in this respect (e.g., Olthuis, 2000, pp. 218, 222; P. Morottaja & Olthuis, 2022, p. 238; Valtonen et al., 2022, p. 193). However, in reality, modern, revitalised Aanaar Saami exhibits novel clause types that have not gone unnoticed by language planners. As Olthuis (2018) points out, in (2c) the nominative subject of the existential clause has been replaced by the object-like accusative NP *puáris liitijd*, and there is no longer number agreement between the NP and the predicate verb (singular *kavnui* pro plural *kávnojii* in 2a). On the other hand, accusative objects such as *kuobbârijd* in (3a) may be replaced by the nominative in (3c):

(2)  c.  *Kuáđist*         **kavnui**        *meid*            *puáris*        **liitijd**.
         tent.LOC          be_              also             old.ATTR        dish.ACC.PL
                           found.PST.3SG
         'There were also old dishes in the tent.' (Olthuis, 2018)
(3)  c.  *Nubeh*           *tobdeh*          **kuobbâreh**     *ivneest.*
         other.NOM.PL      know.3PL          mushroom.NOM.PL   color.LOC
         'Others recognise mushrooms by colour.' (Olthuis, 2018)

As mentioned by Olthuis (2018) and discussed at length by Seipiharju (2022), contemporary Aanaar Saami abounds with such novel uses of the traditionally unambiguous cases for subjects and objects. While diverse hybrid clause types can also be attested, the main pattern that emerges from various sources of authentic Aanaar Saami is that deviations from the traditional nominative–accusative system can always be explained as Finnish interference (see the similarity between 2b and 2c as well as between 3b and 3c, respectively). For example, Seipiharju (2022, p. 57) emphasises that new speakers of Aanaar Saami never err in subject-marking in contexts where Finnish grammar would require the nominative.

Another kind of example is provided by Seipiharju (2022, p. 44), with yet another typological peculiarity of Finnish syntax stirring the originally simple clause structure in Aanaar Saami. In traditional Aanaar Saami, the modal verb *kolgâđ* 'shall; must' is inflected in all persons and agrees with the nominative subject just like other verbs (4a), whereas in Finnish, the verbs *pitää* and *täytyy* (id.) occur in the third-person singular only and are preceded by the subject argument in the genitive case (4b). As a consequence, the latter pattern has also been copied in Aanaar Saami, resulting in a new type of clause exemplified by (4c):

(4) a. ***Mun***      ***kolgim***         *eelliđ*       *Avelist.*
       ɪSG           must.PST.ɪSG      visit.INF      Avveel.LOC
   b. *Minun*      *piti*           *käydä*       *Ivalossa.*
       ɪSG.GEN       must.PST.3SG     visit.INF     Ivaloo.INE
   c. ***Muu***      ***koolgâi***       *eelliđ*       *Avelist.*
       ɪSG.GEN       must.PST.3SG     visit.INF      Avveel.LOC
       'I had to visit Avveel/Ivalo'
       (Seipiharju, 2022, p. 44)

It must be noted here, however, that the possibility of a subject NP in the genitive case with some modal verbs and constructions is already attested in the traditional language (5–6). This clearly seems to be contact induced since such use of the genitive is not commonly found in North or Lule Saami (but see Valtonen, 2017, pp. 215–216). Nevertheless, it is difficult to ascertain the extent of this type of argument marking, as genitive subjects are not mentioned in any general grammatical descriptions of Aanaar Saami since Bartens' (1972) study on the functions of cases in Saami:

(5) *Ijhan*      ***tuu***         *taarbaš*        *tom*        *kirje*        *oastiđ*
    NEG.CL        2SG.GEN          need.CONNEG      it.ACC       book.ACC       buy.INF
    *jieijad*       *ruuđááin.*
    own.2SG        money.COM.
    'You do not have to buy the book with your own money'
(6) ***Muu***      *lii*            *máhđuttem*      *puoh*       *tiettiđ.*
    ɪSG.GEN       be.3SG           impossible       all          know.INF
    'It is impossible for me to know everything' (Bartens, 1972, p. 55)

There is also contact-induced variation in certain other types of argument marking that has become, if not dominant, at least very common in today's language. One example is the use of the verb *lijkkuđ* 'like', which traditionally governs the (directional 'to') illative case for the 'likee' argument (7a), whereas its Finnish counterparts *pitää* and *tykätä* (id.) take the (separative 'from') elative case (7b). As it turns out, bilingual speakers of Aanaar Saami and Finnish tend to equate the Finnish elative in -*sta* with its cognate, the Aanaar Saami locative in -*st*, which in turn has resulted in the use of the locative (7c) also with *lijkkuđ* 'like':

(7)  a.  *Mun*      *lijkkuum*   ***tunjin***.
         1SG        like.1SG     2SG.ILL
     b.  *Minä*     *pidän*      *sinusta*.
         1SG        like.1SG     2SG.ELA
     c.  *Mun*      *lijkkuum*   ***tust***.
         1SG        like.1SG     2SG.LOC
         'I like you.'

Interestingly, opinions have differed as regards the grammaticality of sentences like (7c). While Matti Morottaja (2007a, p. 33) describes *lijkkuđ* 'like' as taking the illative only, Olthuis (2009, pp. 86–87) presents both (7a) and (7c) as acceptable, adding that it is often a matter of time before an originally foreign agreement type becomes so common that it must be considered a variant that should be accepted in the official standard. This is reflected in the most recent grammatical description by P. Morottaja and Olthuis (2022, p. 241), where both the illative and locative are given as equal alternatives. On the other hand, M. Morottaja (2007a, p. 33), Olthuis (2009, p. 87), as well as P. Morottaja and Olthuis (2022, p. 241) describe the verb *poollâđ* 'fear' as governing the locative only, despite the fact that the non-standard use of the accusative (obviously provoked by its Finnish cognate, the partitive case) is also widely attested. Other examples of contact-induced variation in argument marking and subject–predicate agreement have also been mentioned (Seipiharju, 2022). Finnish interference has certainly also been detected in other parts of the grammar, such as in novel ways of finite clause combining instead of traditional non-finite clauses (see below).

As regards lexicon, Finnish as the majority language known by virtually all speakers of Aanaar Saami is the undisputed source or model of most of the rapidly growing vocabulary. For example, although Aanaar Saami, with only some hundreds of speakers, is an extraordinarily privileged language in having many modern schoolbooks in the endangered language, most of them are translations from Finnish, and a significant part of new vocabulary is introduced in such material (Olthuis 2003, p. 574). As a consequence, the Aanaar Saami community is accustomed to adopting new words with more or less visible traces of Finnish. Many of these neologisms are morphological calques modelled after their Finnish counterparts, such as *enâm-ân+värrej-eijee* < Fi *maa-han+muutta-ja* [country-ILL+move-AGN] 'immigrant', *jieš+merid-em+vuoigâd-vuotâ* < Fi *itse+määrää-mis+oikeus* [self+govern-AN+right-NZ] 'self-determination', and *näimi+iâhtu* ~ Fi *avio+ehto* [marital+condition] 'premarital agreement'. However, the Finnish way of using words is also evident in the realm of traditional lexicon, and this has not gone unnoticed by language planners and activists. As one of dozens of examples, M. Morottaja (2007a, p. 53) mentions the use of Aanaar Saami *puolvâ* 'generation' for 'knee' (Aanaar Saami *iidâ*) due to the polysemy of Finnish *polvi* 'knee; generation', the obvious cognate of *puolvâ*.

To be sure, it is impossible to draw a clear-cut line between grammar and lexicon. One of the borderline cases is seen in the following examples: According to M. Morottaja (2007a, p. 35), the most authentic Aanaar Saami way to express negative purpose is the use of *amas* 'lest' followed by the infinitive, as seen in (8a), but a finite clause with the subordinator *vâi* 'in order that' followed by a negative predicate is also possible (8c). However, the general complementiser *et* is also often used for the same purpose, not unlike its Finnish cognate *että* (cf. 8b):

(8) a.

| *Sun* | *piejâi* | *suhháid* | *juálgán,* | ***amas*** | *jyelgih* | ***kolmuâ.*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3SG | put.PST.3SG | sock.ACC.PL | foot.ILL | lest | foot.PL | get_cold.INF |

b.

| *Hän* | *pani* | *sukat* | *jalkaan,* | *että* | *jalat* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3SG | put.PST.3SG | sock.NOM.PL | foot.ILL | COMP | foot.NOM.PL | |
| *eivät* | *kylmety.* | | | | | |
| NEG.3PL | get_cold.CONNEG | | | | | |

c.

| *Sun* | *piejâi* | *suhháid* | *juálgán,* | ***vâi*** | (~ ***et***) | *jyelgih* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3SG | put.PST.3SG | sock.ACC.PL | foot.ILL | so_that | (~ COMP) | foot.PL |
| *iä* | ***kolmuu.*** | | | | | |
| NEG.3PL | get_cold.CONNEG | | | | | |

'S/he put the socks on so that the feet do not get cold
(= lest the feet get cold).'

According to M. Morottaja (2007a, p. 35), the use of *vâi* (8c) is actually unnecessary because of the alternative (8a), which clearly differs from the Finnish expression (8b), but on the other hand he also admits that even the Finnish-like use of *et* has become so common that one probably should accept that as well—but it is still best to use the un-Finnish *amas* clause (8a).

## 11.5   THEMATIC ANALYSIS

In this section, we examine the statements that the native-speaking language planners and activists have expressed regarding the contact-induced effects of Finnish that they have encountered in revitalised Aanaar Saami. As with concrete descriptions of Finnish influence on the language structure, these kinds of remarks are also found here and there in literature. However, despite the apparent fragmentary nature of the sources, the views expressed appear to form a single narrative in Aanaar Saami revitalisation, albeit with different authors focusing on different aspects therein.

In the following, after a concise but non-exhaustive summary of previous research, we present themes emerging from the texts and formulate a synthesis based on them. The texts are originally written in either Finnish or Aanaar Saami, but we will also provide English translations. We have identified four themes: (1) good and poor language, (2) language competence, (3) institutional domain, and (4) tolerance. Each theme will be examined in a separate subsection.

There are sporadic studies that survey the language ideologies and attitudes among Aanaar Saami speakers. Pietikäinen (2012) applies nexus analysis to study the language ideologies and linguistic biography of one Aanaar Saami speaker. She identifies the Aanaar Saami language community as a multilingual minority community and states that in these types of communities, there are two dominant, sometimes opposite language ideologies at play: One emphasises the internal coherence of a language and its distinctness from other languages, and the other recognises the lability of interlingual borders and the situational variation. Both notions of language are useful in multilingual minority communities, but at the same time, idealised models of a clear and distinct language can contradict the everyday experience of many speakers. (See Pietikäinen, 2012, p. 433.)

Pasanen (2015) discusses, among other things, the opinions and attitudes of the elder language masters[2] towards the Aanaar Saami skills of the students in the CASLE programme (see Sect. 11.2.2) and the situation of the language in general. She identifies many of the same ideologies as Pietikäinen (2012): On the one hand, many language masters seem to have an idea of what the authentic Aanaar Saami language is like, but on the other hand, they are very tolerant towards the learners' Saami and its variation. Although most of the interviewed language masters corrected the students' language to varying degrees, a few chose a more moderate approach and opined that assessing language skills and what constitutes flawless language is not straightforward. (See Pasanen, 2015, 283ff., p. 303.)

### 11.5.1   Good and Poor Language

The evaluations of what constitutes good Aanaar Saami and what does not is mostly evident in the authors' choices of words. We have emboldened the pertinent ones in the example:

*Ympäröivien kielten (varsinkin suomi, mutta myös muut saamen kielet)* **paine** *pyrkii* **rappeuttamaan** *inarinsaamea tuomalla kielelle* **vieraita** *rakenteita,* **yksinkertaistamalla** *semantiikkaa sekä* **köyhdyttämällä** *ilmaisuvarastoa. Tilanteen* **korjaamiseksi** *tarvitaan* **tehokasta** *kielenhuoltoa.* (M. Morottaja, 2007b)

'The **pressure** of surrounding languages (especially Finnish but also other Saami languages) tries to **corrupt** Aanaar Saami by bringing in **foreign** structures, by **simplifying** the semantics and **impoverishing** the expressive inventory. In order to **fix** the situation, **effective** language planning is needed.'

*Suomâkielâ ceelhâráhtus teikâ eres ettâmvyevi ij pyevti aainâs njuolgist luoihâttiđ anaráškielân. Motomijd suomâ maalijd puáhtá kal tuhhiittiđ, veikâ sämikielâst ličij-uv toos* **pyereeb** *teikâ* **puárásub** *malli, om. älgiđ povvâstiđ (alkaa nauraa) já povvâstškyettiđ teikâ ruáhásiđ.* (M. Morottaja, 2007a, p. 24)

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[2] For a description of the Master–Apprentice method of language learning, see Hinton (2002).

'A Finnish sentence structure or other expression cannot be borrowed, at least directly, into Aanaar Saami. Sure, some Finnish patterns can be accepted even though there was a **better** or **older** pattern in Saami, e.g. *älgiđ povvâstiđ* (to start laughing) and *povvâstškyettiđ* or *ruáhásiđ*.'

That is, the contact-induced changes are described with negatively charged words, whereas the authentic form of language is described as better and older. Even though other Saami languages are also mentioned, it is specifically Finnish whose influence is seen as the main catalyst for unwanted changes in Aanaar Saami. Linguistic structures borrowed from Finnish are described as having *suomâkielâsmakkâ*, 'a taste of Finnish' (M. Morottaja, 2008, p. 2), and Saami structures ought to be preferred. To be fair, the notion of wanting to retain the purity of one's language by rejecting contact-induced changes is nothing new and can be seen in countless other language communities.

The examples above and in the previous section are actually a rather representative example of the attitude and approach of the Aanaar Saami language planning and purism as put forth by Matti Morottaja, the grand old man of Aanaar Saami revitalisation. His hundred-page *Anarâškielâ ravvuuh* ('Advice on Aanaar Saami') provides a diverse collection of instructions on the correct use of language, but one of the recurring themes in this book—as well as in dozens of Morottaja's minor writings on the language—is the existence of authentic Aanaar Saami phrases, idioms, and other expressions where the Saami words are used 'the right way' (2007a, p. 24) in contrast to more or less Finnish-like expressions or downright calques that are unneeded and even a harmful source of potential misunderstandings in Aanaar Saami.

Morottaja's (2007a) examples extend all the way from a number of single words to expressions such as *peli meetter* [half metre] (cf. Finnish *puoli metriä*) instead of the more original *meetterpeeli* ['metre-half'] for 'half a metre' (p. 44) or continuous warnings against forgetting the richness of Aanaar Saami verbs at the expense of more analytic multi-word expressions typical of Finnish (p. 24), as in the above example: The use of verbs with the inchoative derivational suffix *-škyettiđ* to express the meaning 'begin to V' should be preferred instead of the multi-word *älgiđ* 'begin' + infinitive that is modelled after the Finnish *alkaa* + infinitive.

However, in light of the endless possibilities of combining thousands of words in both languages, unorganised examples of unwanted Finnicisms are prone to create the impression of a mixed bag of personal preferences

instead of analytic language planning. In any case, M. Morottaja must be credited for a constructive criticism of Finnish interference on virtually all levels of Aanaar Saami: He reminds his readers of the grammatical and lexical expressions that he considers more authentic, but even when expressing his reserved attitude towards unneeded Finnish influence, his instructions on the use of Aanaar Saami are seldom black and white. Instead, he differs from most language instructors with his underlying attitude that all aspiring speakers of Aanaar Saami should rather speak 'bad' Aanaar Saami than not speak Aanaar Saami at all (M. Morottaja, 2007a, p. 10).

In one instance, Olthuis (2009) makes an interesting remark where the contact-induced influence is claimed to be beneficial at times. However, there are no examples given, so it remains unclear what exactly is meant by positive influence and balance:

> *Motomin nube kielâ vaiguttâs nuubán puáhtá anneeđ **pyerrin**, mut motomin vuod nube kielâ rááhtus liijká-uv vaaigut **negatiivlávt** nube kielâ kevttimân. Talle lii koččâmuš nuuvt kočodum **interfereensist**. […] Jis nube kielâ vaiguttâs lii **pyeri**, talle sierâ kielah láá **täsitiädust**, iäge toh **hettii** mahten kyeimis.* (Olthuis, 2009, p. 84)

> 'Sometimes the influence of one language on another can be considered **good**, but sometimes the structure of one language still **negatively** affects the use of another. In those instances we are dealing with the so-called **interference**. […] If the influence of another language is **good**, the different languages are **in balance** and do not **interfere** with each other in any way.'

While it is true that we can find examples of two languages coexisting in the same geographical region in a state of balanced multilingualism (see, e.g., Lüpke, 2016; Morozova & Rusakov, 2021), Aanaar Saami and Finnish are not on an equal footing.

We might include in the first theme the discussion on the language competence of Aanaar Saami speakers. At present, the majority language is seen as an irremovable part of all Saami speakers' language competence, one of their native languages:

> *Eenâblovokielâ vievsâs status keežild jyehi sämikieltáiđusâš olmooš kalga mättiđ enâmis eenâblovokielâ. Nuuvtpa jyehi sämikiel sárnoo lii ucemustáá **kyevtkielâg**, maŋgii meiddei **maaŋgâkielâg**. Kielâtáiđu lii **págulâš***

*ohtsâškode vátámâšâi tááhust. Algâaalgâst taat ideologia lii toimâm suddâdemideologian, mut šiev peeli lii tot, et tom puáhtá kevttiđ meiddei jorgoppel kielâmolsomân. Sämikielâ kieláiäláskittemuáinust älkkeemus lii valjiđ uáinu, et kielah iälusteh paldâluvái. Maccâm ovtkielâg sämikielâlii tilán ij innig lah*. (Olthuis, 2017, p. 15)

'Due to the strong status of the majority language, every Saami language speaker must know the majority language of their country. Thus, every Saami speaker is at least **bilingual**, often even **multilingual**. Language skills are **obligatory** in regard to society's demands. Originally, this ideology worked as an ideology of assimilation, but the advantage is that it can also be used for reverse language shift. From the point of Saami language revitalisation, it is easiest to adopt the view that the languages coexist. **There is no going back to the monolingual Saami language state**.'

Olthuis concedes that returning to a purported earlier state where every community member only spoke Saami is not possible. She refers to the term *reverse language shift* coined by Fishman (1991) and how multilingualism can be used to one's advantage. The same point is made by Pasanen et al. (2022, p. 69), who remind us that the aim of minority language revitalisation cannot realistically be monolingualism in the minority language but 'sustainable bilingualism or multilingualism'.

A less emphasised fact about language revitalisation is that when a language is severely endangered, language revitalisation or reversing language shift is an extremely demanding task, and it appears that most language revitalisation efforts do not reverse a language shift but usually only slow its progress. The Aanaar Saami have not taken their success for granted either. Instead, it is highly interesting to note that even one of the most central and celebrated figures of Aanaar Saami revitalisation has earlier been openly pessimistic and feared that his children would be the last speakers of the language (M. Morottaja, 1996, p. 15; Toivanen, 2001, p. 88; 2015, p. 100).

### 11.5.2    *Language Competence*

The issue of language competence is consistently raised in the texts through the juxtaposition of competences between different age groups: Present and future speakers are contrasted with older speakers by stating

that the older speakers' competence is stronger because they have orig-
inally acquired the language in a largely monolingual environment,
whereas for many younger speakers, Aanaar Saami is only one of their
languages. On the other hand, the younger speakers' language skills are
also described as 'different', because they have received their education in
Aanaar Saami unlike the generations before them. This echoes the same
view that some of the language masters in Pasanen's (2015) interviews
had: Determining proficiency is not always easy.

> [K]ielá puátteevuotâ lii kuuloold sirduumin tagarij suhâpuolvâi ärdei oolâ,
> kiäi sämikielâ eenikielâ táiđu ij lah siämmáá **nanos** ko puárrásub ulmuin.
> Nube tááhust nuoráb suhâpuolvâ kielâtáiđu lii **ereslágán** ko puárrásub
> ulmuin: táálááh suhâpuolvah láá jođeškuáttám škoovlâid sämikiellân, já sij
> haldâšeh anaráškielâ uđđâsub sänirááju, mii lii esken tai aigij puáttám
> kielân. (Olthuis, 2007, p. 316)

> 'The future of the language is gradually passing onto the shoulders of a
> generation whose native proficiency in Saami is not as **strong** as older
> people's. On the other hand, the younger generation's language skills are
> **different** from the older people's: current generations have gone to school
> in Saami, and they have command of the newer Aanaar Saami vocabulary
> that just entered the language in recent times.'

> Vanhemmat kielen käyttäjät saattavat tuntea, että inarinsaame on heille
> **läheisempi**, koska se on heidän ainoa **oikea** äidinkielensä. Nuoremmilla
> suomi on lähes poikkeuksetta toinen äidinkieli ja vähintäänkin yhtä **vahva**.
> (P. Morottaja, 2009, p. 73)

> 'Older language users may feel that for them Aanaar Saami is **closer**,
> because it is their only **true** mother tongue. For younger speakers Finnish
> is almost invariably a second native language and at the very least as
> **strong**.'

When addressing the theme of the language competence of present-day
Aanaar Saami speakers, the native Saami authors recognise that a lot has
changed in a short time span and acknowledge that Finnish influence
and rapid changes are inevitable. The older Saami speakers' competence
is regarded more highly because, while they cannot be called monolin-
gual, Aanaar Saami is more clearly the first language for them, and they
may not have learnt Finnish until primary school. This was the norm for

those who grew up before World War II, after which Finnish began to replace Aanaar Saami as the language spoken at home (Pasanen, 2015, p. 93). However, what consistently comes up in the texts as the most important thing for Aanaar Saami revitalisation is that the language is spoken, no matter the level or domain. There are also calls for both 'language support' and 'identity support' for families and parents, so that they can raise their children in Saami and cope with the challenges involved (Olthuis, 2018, p. 22).

### 11.5.3    Institutional Domain

The third theme we have identified in the texts concerns the domains of Aanaar Saami relative to Finnish. This involves the role of Aanaar Saami in official governmental and municipal settings such as bureaucracy, healthcare, and the legal system. It is stated, for example, that after the new Saami language law came into force in 2003, Aanaar Saami has become a language of administration in the municipalities of the Saami homeland in Finland. This has, in turn, created a need for new vocabulary and caused an 'enormous flood of neologisms' to make the language suitable for modern settings. Using Finnish as a model for these neologisms is 'obvious' because it is the dominant language in the society, has an established status as the language of governance, and has a longer literary tradition.

Neologisms are not only needed for governance but also for writing school textbooks. In this context, however, the influx of new vocabulary is seen in a positive light, as a sign that the language is living and active (Olthuis, 2003, p. 574; 2009, p. 84).

> *Suurimmaksi osaksi saamenkieliset oppikirjat ovatkin käännöksiä suomesta, mutta osin niitä on sovitettu inarinsaamelaislasten ympäristöön sopivammiksi. Juuri oppikirjatyössä on korostunut yksi kielen elvytyksen aktiivinen muoto: tietoinen sanaston kasvattaminen eli aktiivinen uudissanojen luominen, joka onkin yksi elpyvän kielen tuntomerkeistä.* (Olthuis, 2003, p. 574)

'For the most part, Saami textbooks are indeed translations from Finnish, but they have been partly adapted to be more suitable for the environment of Aanaar Saami children. Especially when editing textbooks, one form of language revitalisation is emphasised: the conscious building of

vocabulary—that is, the active coining of neologisms, which is one of the hallmarks of a reviving language.'

It is not easy to say whether translating is always the best choice for producing materials for schools, but it is inarguably a fast and cost-effective way. However, it has been argued that for cultural and linguistic reasons, they should not be translated verbatim but instead adapted (Mäenpää, 2016, p. 21). For example, the passive verb forms are much more frequent in Finnish than they are in Aanaar Saami, so in a word-for-word (or in this case form-to-form) translation from Finnish, the passive forms would likely be over-represented (Mäenpää, 2016, pp. 34–36, 54).

### 11.5.4    Tolerance

The fourth theme we have identified is the advocation of tolerance towards the non-standard or incorrect use of language. The question of non-standard language pertains to 'dialectal forms' and variant 'orthographic solutions', as many of the texts have been written in the early 2000s, when the contemporary Aanaar Saami orthography (revised in 1996) was still less than ten years old, and the standardisation of literary language was in its infancy (Olthuis, 2003, p. 576).

Both Olthuis and M. Morottaja have consistently emphasised the importance of encouraging people to speak and write Aanaar Saami regardless of whether their language is grammatically or orthographically faultless:

*Inarinsaamelaisia on tuettava äidinkielensä kirjoittamisessa, ja heitä on rohkaistava kirjoittamaan omalla äidinkielellään, **virheitä pelkäämättä**.* (Olthuis, 2003, p. 577)

'Aanaar Saami people must be supported and encouraged to write in their mother tongue, **without fear of mistakes**.'

*Pyereeb lii sárnuđ ruokkâdávt váhá **hyeneeb-uv** sämikielâ, ko tipteđ kielâ lappuđ kevttimettumvuođâ keežild.* […] *Mii aavhijđ lii jaamâ putes kielâst?* (M. Morottaja, 1991, p. 2)

'It is better to boldly speak Saami even a little **poorly** than to let the language disappear due to disuse. […] What good is a dead, pure language?'

In fact, language ideological tolerance has been seen as one of the linchpins in the success of Aanaar Saami revitalisation (Toivanen, 2015, pp. 100–101; Pasanen, 2018, pp. 369–370). This is reflected in the texts: Corpus planning should be 'careful', because too much purism in the form of strong statements on the 'superiority of one language form over another' and 'correcting other people's speech' can 'suffocate the language' and 'scare' people away from using it (Olthuis, 2003, p. 576). In language revitalisation in general, tolerance can be beneficial, while excessive purism and disputes over which language variety or varieties are worthy of standardisation may hinder revitalisation efforts (Huss, 1999).

The theme of tolerance is also echoed in Olthuis's acknowledgement that standardisation is still an ongoing process:

*Motomin kielâtipšoo jurduuh láá čappâduboh, ko teevstâst kávnoo interferens nube kielâst. Kielâtipšoo tivo feeilâid ääigis, mut motomin kuittâg sáttá leđe aggâ noormâi täärhistmân.* (Olthuis, 2009, pp. 84–85)

'Sometimes the proofreader's thoughts are gloomier when s/he finds interference from another language in the text. The proofreader keeps correcting the mistakes for a while, but at some point there may be a reason to revise the [language] norms.'

In other words, if actual language use strays away from the established standards, the solution may be to change the standards. In fact, the negotiations appear to have more to do with which norms can or should be loosened. Although native linguists and language planners of Aanaar Saami can be considered relatively liberal as regards language change, this ideology does not extend to everything. For instance, the changes in argument marking (see Sect. 11.4) are still unanimously considered unwanted (Olthuis, 2018; Seipiharju, 2022, pp. 21–23; see also M. Morottaja, 2007a, pp. 34, 54); similar phenomena have also been documented and likewise rejected in North Saami, the closest relative of Aanaar Saami (Vuolab-Lohi, 2007, p. 426; Länsman, 2008; Magga and Pulska, 2019). However, certain other types of contact-induced variation in Aanaar Saami argument marking have found favour among native scholars. An example of this was presented in the previous section: The official language guidance group at the time discussed whether the Finnish-type agreement for certain verbs should be allowed as a variant alongside the more original agreement. The decision was that *lijkkuđ*

'like' may from then on have its argument in both the illative and locative, the latter having become so common that it could no longer be ignored.

## 11.6 Discussion and Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined some previously overlooked aspects of Aanaar Saami revitalisation, their effects on the structure of the language, and how native speakers have addressed the issue. Almost all the native speakers' remarks in literature pertain to syntactic structures, phraseology, and lexicology that are in some way influenced by Finnish:

- The interference of Finnish argument marking and case government with the original Aanaar Saami system,
- The modelling of phraseological multi-word expressions after Finnish expressions, and
- Difficulty in choosing the correct word from a set of close synonyms when there is a many-to-one correspondence between Aanaar Saami and Finnish.

Interestingly, Finnish influence on Aanaar Saami phonology and pronunciation is barely mentioned in the texts. Nevertheless, such influence is reported especially in terms of quantity distinctions in the spoken language, one possible reason being that some of these distinctions are unmarked in the orthography (Valtonen et al., 2022, p. 182). It is possible that pronunciation is either less discernible than syntactic and lexical interference or it has not been seen as nearly as pressing an issue.

As for the themes pertaining to Finnish influence on Aanaar Saami, we have identified four recurring themes in the literature: (1) good vs. poor language, (2) language competence, (3) institutional domain, and (4) tolerance. Regarding the first theme, the view repeatedly expressed especially by Matti Morottaja, one of the central figures in Aanaar Saami revitalisation, is that contact-induced changes in Aanaar Saami are most often detrimental to the language, and that prescriptive measures are required to correct the situation. Another revitalisation activist, Marja-Liisa Olthuis, is less critical but recognises the Finnish interference in the language. However, she holds that in some instances, the contact-induced changes are inevitable and instead may demand a re-evaluation of prevailing language norms, lest the prescriptive standard stray away too far

from actual language use. This ties into the theme of tolerance which has consistently been the guiding principle in Aanaar Saami revitalisation: The most important thing is that anyone capable should use the language in all possible arenas, without fear of mistakes or being reprimanded for their language skills. The third theme, language competence, refers to individuals' linguistic repertoire: The younger generations of Aanaar Saami speakers in particular are practically bilingual in Finnish and Aanaar Saami, and Finnish is actually the stronger language for many. Older speakers are contrasted to this group in that their proficiency in Aanaar Saami is better in general, but younger generations are more familiar with modern-day vocabulary. The final theme of institutional domains pertains to the language's role as one of the official languages in Finland and the novel uses it has in administration as a consequence. The influence of Finnish is readily observable as the model for neologisms in modern written Aanaar Saami for example. On one hand, this increases the amount of perceived foreign influence, but on the other, the active creation of new words also means that the language is being used.

As discussed in Sect. 11.4, some of the guidelines for 'correct' language (especially by M. Morottaja) seem to stem from personally preferring certain constructions over others. This raises a question: How much of the emphasis on grammatical and structural differences between Finnish and Aanaar Saami is based on modern-day efforts to differentiate Aanaar Saami from Finnish? This would not be surprising, since it is one of the more common ideologies in (minority) language standardisation to wish to keep one's language internally coherent and clearly define it relative to others (Puura, 2019, p. 37; see also Pietikäinen, 2012). The research on the oldest Aanaar Saami language materials is still lacking, but at times it appears that there was already considerable Finnish influence in the older language when there were no official standards or normative guidelines. However, this topic must be left for a more thorough investigation.

Of course, it must be granted that there are considerable challenges in the corpus planning of a language that has rather sparse recorded attestations up to the 1990s. For most of its history, Aanaar Saami has been transmitted mainly orally, and in a very short time it has been forced to transition into a full-fledged literary language to be used not only at home and in traditional livelihoods but also in education, government, and mass media. This means there was and still is an urgent need for standardisation and guidelines to be crafted by the language authorities, who often

need to rely mostly on their personal competence of the language and gut feeling.

In the course of its history, we can say that Aanaar Saami has experienced a bottleneck. The transmission of the language to children has been disrupted but, thanks to revitalisation efforts, it survived the ordeal, and its transmission has continued. However, the break in transmission has resulted in some abrupt changes: The structural influence of Finnish has increased due to new types of speakers and intense multilingualism, and the new domains created by societal modernisation require vocabulary that needs to be consciously coined. So, to put it dramatically, the traditional Aanaar Saami as a mostly spoken language confined to the home and traditional livelihoods has had to make way for a new Aanaar Saami, a language of administration, education, and media with a rapidly developing written tradition.

Of course, after a 'neo-language' has emerged from the revitalisation bottleneck, this does not automatically mean that it is structurally very different from the older language (see Kennard, 2019, for Breton and NeSmith, 2003, for Hawaiian). When Pasanen (2015, pp. 279–287) interviewed the Aanaar Saami language masters about their experiences working with the L2 learners in the CASLE project, some of them mention that the students used and taught them new, previously unknown words. Thus, it may be that the most notable difference between the traditional Aanaar Saami and neo-Aanaar Saami is in fact lexical; the rapid influx of new words into the language may feel somewhat alienating to the older speakers who are not accustomed to their native language being used in modern settings. Therefore, paradoxically, as the language has spread to domains that improve its status and increase its use in society, some speakers may feel it has become unfamiliar to them.

All in all, a synthesis of structural and ideological perspectives on language change yields interesting results. It reveals that language norms, language ideologies, and language 'in the wild' form a network of influences where one reacts to the other. The attitudes of eminent language revitalisers are reflected in the language norms, in the shaping of which they often partake, and for a successful revitalisation, official language norms must be based on the way people actually speak. In the case of an endangered minority language, this necessarily involves taking a stance towards majority language interference. However, as the revitalisation of Aanaar Saami has shown, even large-scale contact-induced changes

need not result in a loss of linguistic or cultural identity among minority language speakers.

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