

L2-learners in Finland

How to support functional
bilingualism and L2 students?

Jenni Alisaari 2020 - University of Turku, Finland

Financial support from the government

- 86 % of the costs of organizing the instruction:
- Teaching Finnish or Swedish as a second language
- Instructional support with mother tongue
 - 3 hours/week for 4 persons group
 - Learners: less than **6 years** in basic education in Finland
- Mother tongue teaching
 - 2 hours/week/4 persons
 - Learners: the language can be mother tongue or an additional tongue which is learned for example abroad

Nursery

- No extra funding for Finnish / Swedish as a second language teaching from the government
- Special teachers guiding the work of kindergarten teachers
- Emphasis on language rich environment
- Small groups in Finnish & Swedish as a second language teaching

Preparatory classes

- Every child has a right for education
- Total costs financed by government
- Duration 1 year (6 – 10 y: 900 / 10 – 16 y: 1000 hours)
- Groups of 10 learners
- Children 6-9 years
- Children 10-12 years
- Children 13-16 years
- Mainly Finnish and maths, also some environmental studies, history and English
- Arts, music and p.e. integrated integrated to basic education classes
- Preschool, primary school, secondary school & upper secondary school
- + Preparatory vocational education and training

L2 teaching (Finnish / Swedish)

- Every child has a right for education & support that he/she needs
- Organization varies depending on location
- 1-5 hours per week
- During the Finnish / Swedish language and literature lessons
- Own curriculum: aims, contents, evaluation
- One syllabus of subject "Mother tongue and literature"
 - Other syllabuses: Finnish as a native language, sign language, Sami language, Swedish language, Romani language
- Qualified teachers: Finnish / Swedish language and literature teachers
- Heterogeneous groups
- Preschool, primary school, secondary school & upper secondary school, vocational education and training

Finnish / Swedish as L2

- To students whose Finnish / Swedish skills are not at the level that they could attend successfully in the Finnish / Swedish as a native language class
- Immigrants, ex-patriots, adopted children
- Only criterion is the level of the language
- Aim 1 = functional bilingualism
- Aim 2 = possibilities for further education

L2/L1?

- Teachers evaluate the language level
- The parents decide

Mother tongue teaching

- Everyone has a right to maintain and develop their language
- 2 hours / week
- Usually after the school day
- Really heterogeneous groups
- Not much materials available
- Teacher qualifications: pedagogical studies, subject studies of the language

Support in mother language

- Science, maths, history
- Contents of the subjects in mother tongue
- Little groups or two teachers in a bigger class simultaneously
- Only in few biggest cities

Support in Finnish / Swedish

- Science, maths, history
- Contents of the subjects in Finnish / Swedish
- Little groups or two teachers in a bigger class simultaneously
- Everyone has the right for support that is needed

Linguistically responsive teaching

- One aspect in curriculum for preschool, primary school, secondary school & upper secondary school
- Teachers must pay attention to the language they use during the lessons and the whole school day
- Everyday language, academic language and subject specific language

Awareness of languages

- Children from preschool to upper secondary school
- Raising the students' awareness of languages

 plurilingualism

General, intensified & special support

- earliest possible support to prevent the emergence and growth of problems
- three categories: general support, intensified support and special support
- general support:
 - for everyone
 - a natural part of everyday teaching and the learning process
- intensified & special support:
 - based on careful assessment and long-span planning in multi-professional teams and on individual learning plans for pupils

General, intensified & special support

- If general support is not enough?
 - pedagogical assessment
 - a plan for the intensified support made together with guardians
- If intensified support is not enough?
 - new and more extensive pedagogical statements
 - the education provider collects information from teachers and the school's welfare group
 - education provider makes an official decision concerning special support together with guardians
 - an individual education plan made together with guardians

Transitions

- Elementary -> upper secondary level
 - No entrance exams except language in vocational training (except if good enough evaluation from basic education)
 - Grades in school report -> upper secondary school
- Matriculation exam
 - Possibility to complete a Finnish as a second language exam instead of Finnish as a native language exam
 - No difference in other subjects

Facts of Finnish Education

- National core curriculum leaves room for local variations
- Education is free at all levels
- Every pupil and student has the right to educational support
- Support to language minorities and migrants
- Life-long learning in focus
- Educational autonomy is high at all levels
- Quality assurance is based on steering instead of controlling
- The most common pre-service requirement is a Master's degree
- Continuing teacher education is encouraged

Curriculum

- National Agency of Education organizes, supervises and supports the curriculum designing
- National Agency of Education: objectives and learning outcomes of the different subjects
- Each education provider: the local curriculum based on the national curriculum



Ella Alisaari

Děkuji! Kiitos!