L2-learners in Finland
How to support functional bilingualism and L2 students?

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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

> pluraligualism
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
Děkuji! Kiitos!