JYU DISSERTATIONS 309

Katharina Ruuska

At the Nexus of Language, Identity and Ideology

Becoming and Being a Highly Proficient Second Language Speaker of Finnish

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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ABSTRACT

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This multiple case study focuses on second language speakers of Finnish and their lived experience of everyday language use in Finland. The participants are late multilinguals who moved to Finland and learned Finnish as adults, and have reached a very advanced second language competence in Finnish. Given that such speakers of Finnish are still often considered exceptional, the aim of the study is to explore the complex relationship between ideas about language and the position second language speakers take in the community of Finnish speakers. More specifically, drawing on perspectives from second language research, sociolinguistics and sociology, the study investigates the nexus of language ideologies about Finnish as a second language, processes of identity construction, and linguistic legitimacy. The data were collected over the course of two years and consist of qualitative interviews with twelve participants as well as ethnographic data (additional interviews, observations and recordings in different contexts of everyday life) from four focus participants. The data were analysed from the perspective of the three key concepts of ideology, identity and legitimacy, using tools from nexus analysis and narrative analysis. The study shows how the participants' identities and practices emerge against the background of language ideologies as well as their previous experiences with language use. In the context of Finland, very advanced second language proficiency in Finnish seems to require careful identity work in social situations, and in attempting to achieve legitimacy as language users, my participants employ a number of different and partly conflicting strategies. The study grants new empirical insights into the experiences of very advanced adult second language speakers of Finnish in Finland. From a theoretical perspective, it introduces the nexus of language, identity and ideology as a novel viewpoint in research on Finnish as a second language and second language research more broadly.

Keywords: Finnish as a second language, advanced second language learners, language ideologies, identity, linguistic legitimacy, nexus analysis

TIIVISTELMÄ

Ruuska, Katharina
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Tämä monitapaustutkimus keskittyy suomi toisena kielenä -puhujiin ja heidän arkikokemuksiinsa kielenkäyttäjinä Suomessa. Osallistujat ovat aikuisiässä Suomeen muuttaneita monikielisiä henkilöitä, jotka ovat saavuttaneet erittäin edistyneen suomen kielen taitotason. Tällaisia suomen kielen puhujia pidetään usein edelleen poikkeuksellisina, ja tutkimuksen tavoitteena onkin tarkastella kieltä koskevien käsitysten monisyistä suhdetta toisen kielen puhujien asemaan Suomen kieliyhteisössä. Tarkemmin ottaen tutkimus käsittelee suomea toisena kielenä koskevien kieli-ideologioiden, identiteetin rakentumisen ja kielellisen legitimiteetin neksusta eli risteymää toisen kielen oppimisen tutkimuksen, sosiolingvistiikan ja sosiologian tarjoamista näkökulmista. Tutkimuksen aineisto kerättiin kahden vuoden aikana, ja se koostuu kahdentoista osallistujan haastatteluista sekä laajemmasta etnografisesta aineistosta neljältä avainosallistujalta (jatkohaastattelut ja arkitilanteiden havainnointi osittain tallentaen). Aineisto analysoitiin ideologian, identiteetin ja legitimiteetin käsitteiden näkökulmasta hyödyntämällä neksusanalyysin ja narratiivisen analyysin työkaluja. Tutkimus osoittaa, miten osallistujien identiteetit ja käytänteet rakentuvat heidän kohtaamiensa kieli-ideologioiden ja heidän aiempien kielen käyttöä koskevien kokemustensa kautta. Suomen kontekstissa erittäin korkea suomi toisena kielenä -taitotaso vaikuttaa edellyttävän tarkkaa identiteettityötä sosiaalisissa tilanteissa, ja saavuttaakseen legitimiteetin kielenkäyttäjinä tutkimuksen osallistujat käyttävät erilaisia ja osittain keskenään ristiriitaisiakin strategioita. Tutkimus tuo esiin uutta empiiristä tietoa erittäin edistyneen kielitaitotason saavuttaneiden suomea toisena kielenä puhuvien aikuisten kokemuksista Suomessa. Teoreettisesti tutkimus nostaa kielen, identiteetin ja ideologian risteymän uudeksi tärkeäksi näkökulmaksi suomea toisena kielenä koskevaan tutkimukseen ja toisen kielen oppimisen tutkimukseen myös kansainvälisesti.

Asiasanat: suomi toisena kielenä, edistyneet kielenoppijat, kieli-ideologiat, identiteetti, kielellinen legitimiteetti, neksusanalyysi

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Jyväskylä, 14.10.2020
Katharina Ruuska

FIGURES

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

> "While Finns value English very highly, they clearly have an ambivalent attitude toward their own language. On the one hand, Finns are pleasantly surprised by foreigners' attempts to master their language, the command of which is also unceasingly commented upon. On the other hand, it seems that foreigners are not expected to learn, or maybe it is not even appreciated when they learn the language especially well, which is reflected in the myth Finns themselves keep alive of Finnish as 'the most difficult language in the world.'" (Latomaa 1998: 57)

> "Fortunately more and more people also take the highest level Finnish test, because these are successful immigrants who work as experts and are well integrated otherwise, too." (Heimonen 2014: 152; my translation)[1]

> "[…] Finns just don't expect at all that there could be people who speak Finnish in such a way that you don't hear it in the first sentence." (Sandra, L1 German)[2]

The three quotes above represent three different perspectives on high second language proficiency in Finnish. The first is from a study of Americans in Finland conducted by Latomaa (1998), who found that her participants encountered ambiguous attitudes towards them as learners of Finnish. On the one hand, they were praised for attempting to learn Finnish, and on the other, it became clear to them that they were not really expected to learn Finnish well. The second quote is from a report on the 20-year history of the National Certificates of Language Proficiency (NCLP) in Finland. It describes those who have reached a high level of Finnish as particularly successful and well-integrated immigrants, echoing widely held views about the connection between language proficiency and integration into society. Finally, the third quote is from an interview conducted in the context of the present study. A participant describes her experience of people's surprise at her level of proficiency in Finnish, implying that there is an expectation that fluent and proficient Finnish speakers must also be native Finns.

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1 "Onneksi myös suomen kielen ylimmän tason suorittajia on koko ajan enemmän, koska hehän ovat menestyjä-maahanmuuttajia, jotka työskentelevät asiantuntijatehtävissä ja ovat integroituneet muutenkin hyvin." (Heimonen 2014: 152).

2 See Chapter 5.1.2 for the original excerpt.

The first and second quotes are 16 years apart and many things have changed in these years. The number of second language speakers of Finnish has increased significantly, and hearing people with different backgrounds speaking different kinds of Finnish, including advanced second language Finnish, has become more common. However, while the contexts of language use can sometimes change quickly, ideas about language are often much slower to change. As the quote from my participant suggests, there are still Finns who seem to find it surprising to encounter speakers who have learned Finnish to a high level later in life. In this thesis, I explore this complex relationship between ideas about language and the position second language speakers take in a language community. I do this through the lens of the 'lived reality' (Busch 2017) of highly proficient adult second language speakers of Finnish, i.e. by investigating how they themselves experience and make sense of everyday situations of language use. Like myself, the twelve participants in my study are late multilinguals who moved to Finland and learned Finnish as adults, and have reached a very advanced second language competence in Finnish. In this thesis, they are referred to as 'highly proficient second language speakers' to highlight their competent participation in Finnish-speaking environments, as well as, occasionally, 'very advanced second language learners', especially when foregrounding trajectories and experiences of language learning.

The title of my thesis, *At the nexus of language, identity and ideology: becoming and being a highly proficient speaker of Finnish as a second language*, points to its location at the intersection of socially oriented second language research and the sociolinguistics of multilingualism. The first part of the title refers to the sociolinguistic perspective: language, identity and ideology are classic topics of sociolinguistic investigation. The addition of the term 'nexus' emphasises how these three dimensions are understood as constitutive of each other and as intersecting with one another, while also connecting to the more specific framework of *nexus analysis* (Scollon & Scollon 2004, 2007). The second part of the title refers to second language research and, more specifically, to socially oriented approaches to second language learning and use. The phrase 'becoming a speaker' points to an understanding of second language learning as going far beyond the acquisition of words, grammar and ways of speaking: it refers to a holistic process transforming not only learners' linguistic repertoires, but also their experiences, identities and social circumstances. Moreover, reaching what can be called high proficiency in a second language is not understood as a successful end to this process. Rather, it is assumed that being a speaker requires continuous identity work in a given sociolinguistic environment.

The thesis thus draws on insights from second language research and sociolinguistics as well as other areas of linguistics and sociology. In order to integrate different viewpoints, I make use of three central concepts: *language ideology* (e.g. Woolard & Schieffelin 1994; Woolard 1998; Kroskrity 2004), *identity/positioning* (e.g. Bucholtz & Hall 2005; Harré & van Langenhove 2003a) and *linguistic legitimacy* (Bourdieu 1977, 1991). With regard to methodology, I employ an ethnographic perspective (e.g. Blommaert & Dong Jie 2010) and draw on qualitative

interview data as well as observational data and recordings from different situations in everyday life. The aims of the thesis are both empirical and theoretical. It aims to increase knowledge about the day-to-day experiences of highly proficient adult speakers/very advanced late learners of Finnish as a second language, while also contributing to broader theoretical discussions about how the relationship between language ideologies, identities and the position of second language speakers/learners can be understood. The research questions are:

1. How are highly proficient speakers of Finnish as a second language perceived in everyday life, and how do language ideologies mediate these perceptions? How do such speakers react to these perceptions and ideologies with their own linguistic practices?
2. How do highly proficient speakers of Finnish position themselves with regard to and through language use? How do these positionings help them gain legitimacy as speakers?

In order to address these questions, the thesis proceeds as follows. In Chapter 2, I position my study in the sociolinguistic context of Finland as well as the academic context of research on Finnish as a second language. Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical framework and the most important concepts used in this thesis. In Chapter 4, I discuss the design and realisation of the study as well as methodological, ethical and practical issues. The chapter also introduces the tools used in the analysis of the data. Chapters 5-7 represent the empirical part of the thesis. In Chapters 5 and 6, I focus on interview data collected from all twelve participants in my study, whereas in Chapter 7, I analyse additional interview and ethnographic data collected from four focus participants. I conclude the thesis with a discussion of the broader implications of my study in Chapter 8.

2 RESEARCH CONTEXT

This chapter introduces the context of my research from two angles. First, in order to understand my participants' experiences and sense-making practices, it is necessary to understand the environments from which they arise and to which they respond (see Blommaert 2005: 43). I describe the current sociolinguistic, language ideological and language political situation in Finland, which forms the broader context for the real-life experiences of language use of second language speakers of Finnish (2.1 and 2.2). Secondly, I situate my study in its local academic and professional context by tracing the development of Finnish as a second language as a research field and a field of pedagogical practice (2.3). After this, I discuss how my thesis complements previous research on Finnish as a second language (2.4).

2.1 The sociolinguistic and language ideological landscape of Finland

The Finnish language is spoken as a first language by around 4.8 million people in Finland (Statistics Finland 2020a). As a Finno-Ugric language it belongs to the few non-Indo-European languages traditionally spoken in Europe. Finno-Ugric languages differ in a number of respects from Indo-European languages, although the structural differences are less pronounced than usually assumed (see Dahl 2008). Finnish is an agglutinative language with a rich morphology and phonological and morphophonological features typical of Finno-Ugric/Uralic languages (see J. Laakso 2011). Its central features include a small number of phonemes (21 altogether), fixed word-initial stress, phonemic vowel and consonant length, vowel harmony, systematic consonant gradation, 15 cases, a large number of inflectional, personal, possessive and derivational affixes, and a lack of articles and grammatical gender (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi 2005: 131; also see F. Karlsson 2015).

With regard to its status among the languages of the world, Finnish is what could be called a "marginal majority language" (T. Saarinen 2012: 157). While it is not very significant globally, it is by far the most important language within Finland, where it is spoken as a first language by about 87% of the population (Statistics Finland 2020a). However, Finland is by no means a monolingual country. Swedish has played a central role in the history of Finland, and today a little over 5% of the total population of Finland speak Swedish as their first language (Statistics Finland 2020a), mainly in the Western and Southern coastal areas and on the Åland islands (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi 2005: 129). In Section 17 of the Constitution of Finland, both Finnish and Swedish are granted the status of national languages of Finland (Constitution of Finland 1999) and the Language Act (Language Act 2003) establishes in more detail the right of speakers of Finnish and Swedish to use their own language, e.g. with the authorities. Section 17 of the Constitution also mentions the linguistic rights of users of Sámi languages, Romani, sign language as well as unspecified "other languages". Speakers of three indigenous Sámi languages have the right to use their language with the authorities in three municipalities in the far north of Finland (Sámi Language Act 2003). The "other languages" mentioned in the Constitution include other historical minority languages such as Karelian, Tatar, Yiddish, and Russian (see Latomaa & Nuolijärvi 2005: 174-175), as well as the more than 150 immigrant languages registered as first languages with the authorities, including Russian,[3] Estonian, Arabic, Somali, and English (Statistics Finland 2020a).

Finland was a country of emigration well into the 1960s and 1970s, when more than half a million Finns emigrated to Sweden in search of employment (Korkiasaari & Söderling 2003: 3). From the 1990s onwards the number of immigrants has grown considerably, at ever increasing speed. The first significant groups of immigrants were Chilean and Vietnamese refugees in the 1970s and 1980s, followed in the early 1990s by repatriated Ingrian Finns from the former Soviet Union as well as refugees from Somalia, the former Yugoslavia and other war-torn regions of the world (Pöyhönen & Tarnanen 2015: 109). After Finland joined the European Union in 1995, freedom of movement from other EU countries was promoted within the framework of EU law, and in the early 21st century work-related migration to Finland from both EU and non-EU countries increased (Pöyhönen & Tarnanen 2015: 109). A more recent and highly politicised event was the arrival of more than 30 000 asylum seekers in 2015, almost ten times the number of the previous year (see Wahlbeck 2019). Today, about 7.5% of the total

[3] In Finland, Russian is considered both a historical minority language and an immigrant language (see Lähteenmäki & Pöyhönen 2015: 92-95). Finnish and Russian speakers as well as speakers of other Finnic languages had always been in contact in what is now the border region between Finland and Russia. Significant historical immigration from Russia to Finland occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries, and again after the October Revolution in 1917. A more recent wave of immigration took place in the period during and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when an ethnically and culturally heterogeneous group of Russian speakers arrived, including, among others, repatriated Ingrians, Russians married to Finns, and Russians who moved to Finland for work. These immigrants make up the vast majority of Russian speakers in Finland today (Lähteenmäki & Pöyhönen 2015: 92).

population are registered as foreign language speakers (*vieraskieliset*) (Statistics Finland 2020a).[4] In the capital, Helsinki, the figure is even higher, around 16% (Statistics Finland 2020b; see Figure 1), and is projected to increase to 26-34% by 2035 (City of Helsinki 2019: 6). Finland is thus rapidly becoming more diverse, albeit at different rates in different parts of the country.

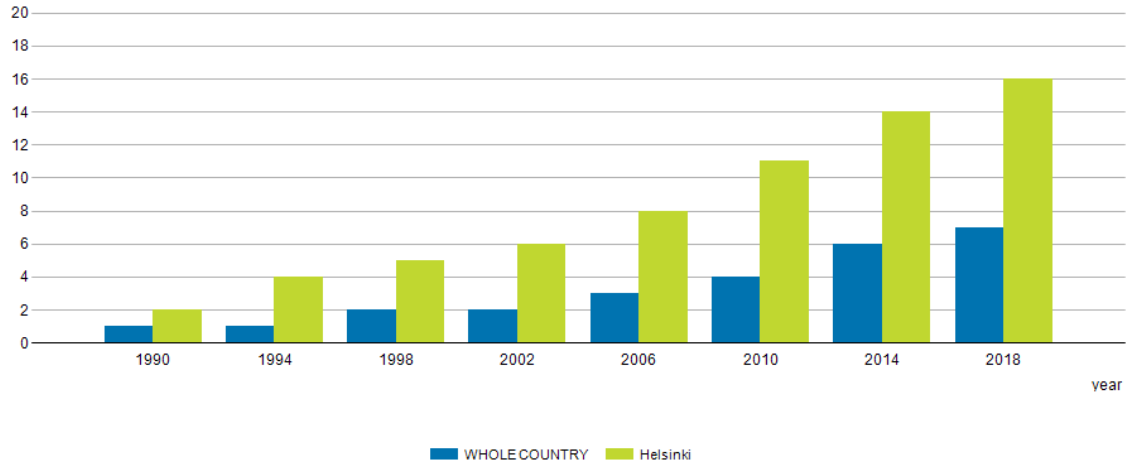

FIGURE 1 Share of foreign language speakers in Finland and Helsinki 1990-2018 in % (Statistics Finland 2020b)

Despite Finland's actual and officially recognised multilingualism, Finnish has quite a dominant role as the main language of public life in Finland: it is the most widely spoken language in everyday life and the main language of most educational institutions, public bodies, media outlets, etc. Historically, however, this has not always been the case. From the 14th century onwards, Finland was mostly part of the Swedish kingdom and, from 1809 until its independence in 1917, it was an autonomous grand duchy within the Russian Empire. Even though the first standards for written Finnish had been developed in the 1600s for clerical and educational use (see Kolehmainen 2009), the linguistic situation in Finland remained somewhat diglossic under Swedish rule as well as in the first decades of Russian rule: different regional varieties of Finnish were used as their every-

4 The term 'foreign language speakers' (*vieraskieliset*) is used for official purposes and refers to residents whose native language registered in the Population Information System is a language other than Finnish, Swedish or a Sámi language. The term and mode of registration is problematic in many ways: it ignores individual multilingualism by allowing each person to register only one mother tongue, and it ignores the reality of societal multilingualism by labelling those who speak an officially unrecognised language as foreign to Finland (Saukkonen 2019). It is also unclear how reliably the number of so-called foreign language speakers represents populations with different kinds of migration backgrounds (e.g. second or third generation immigrants; see Latomaa 2012). However, since other categories registered (e.g. country of birth or citizenship) are equally problematic, the rising number of foreign language speakers in Finland is referred to here as a general indicator of the diversification of Finnish society.

day language by the vast majority of the population, while Swedish was the language of the upper classes as well as the main language of administration, culture, science and education (Nordlund 2007: 235).

In the second half of the 19th century the status of Finnish started to change, although the development was not consistent (for an overview see Hakulinen et al. 2009: 22-29; Lindgren et al. 2011). In 1863, a decree signed by Czar Alexander II granted Finnish the same status as Swedish in matters regarding the Finnish speaking population. However, the 1890s saw an intensification of repressive language policies towards both Finnish and Swedish, and from 1900 there was increasing use of Russian as an administrative language. After a general strike in 1905, these Russification policies were largely abandoned, and laws and decrees were published in Russian, Finnish and Swedish (Hakulinen et al. 2009: 29). Overall, over the course of the 19th century, the social status of Finnish improved. From the 1850s onwards, the Swedish-speaking elite increasingly took an interest in learning and promoting the use of Finnish (Lindgren et al. 2011: 22). The modern standard form of (written and spoken) Finnish emerged and started to be used in all societal domains. The Finnish Literature Society (*Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura*, SKS) was founded in 1831, the first Finnish-medium school was established in 1858 (Lindgren et al. 2011: 21-26), the first Finnish language doctoral dissertation was defended in 1858 (Polén 1858) and the first novels written in Finnish were published in the 1870s (e.g. Kivi 1870).

The improved social status of Finnish was closely tied to the emergence of new definitions of national identity. As in many other European countries in the 19th and early 20th centuries, debates about language issues drew on romantic notions of the nation as united through language, and of language as expressing the unique spirit of a people (Lindgren et al. 2011: 21). Even if in the case of Finland the nationalist promotion of the Finnish language finally led to the creation of an officially bilingual state (Lindgren et al. 2011: 24), these debates contributed significantly to constructing ideological associations between language, nationality and ethnicity. For instance, the decision of many upper-class Swedish speakers to switch their home language to Finnish and send their children to Finnish-medium schools was clearly ideologically motivated, as these Swedish speakers' competence in Finnish was often limited (Lindgren et al. 2011: 30). Saukkonen (2012: 10) argues that the association of the Finnish language with Finnishness persists to this day, and that Finland can thus be regarded as a place where "some people are still generally considered more genuine Finns than others".[5]

It should be noted that Finnish itself is, of course, not a monolithic language. The modern written standard emerged from a long process involving debates and conscious decisions about which dialectal features to include in it (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi 2005: 132). Historically speaking, standard Finnish can therefore be regarded as a kind of compromise that combines features from various dialects

[5] The position of Swedish-speaking Finns is of course quite complex. Saukkonen (2012: 9) points out that Finnish national identity is commonly understood in two opposing ways: as rooted in an ideology of Finnish as the true common language of Finns or as rooted in an ideology of national bilingualism ('two languages – one nation').

and, in this sense, is not spoken as a first language by anyone. With regard to spoken language, contemporary Finnish includes a multitude of local dialects and more or less locally shaped colloquial varieties. At the same time, the boundaries between written standard Finnish and spoken colloquial Finnish are not fixed; rather, the two varieties form a stylistic continuum (see Viinikka & Voutilainen 2013; see also Chapter 6.2.2), and colloquial Finnish is used more and more in official contexts and informal written communication, especially in digital media.

Despite its historical and official multilingualism and the presence of different varieties of Finnish, Finland is widely perceived as a linguistically and ethnically relatively homogeneous country. For instance, in their study of newspaper debates about the increasingly prominent role of English in Finland, Leppänen and Pahta (2012) found that English was often depicted as a threat to the unique and rich language and culture of Finland. In their analysis, they suggest that such depictions involve a certain general discomfort with multilingualism, stemming from the still vital notion of language as the genuine spirit of a nation. They also argue that this discomfort is connected to more specific historical narratives of Finnish language and culture as being oppressed or even under attack (Leppänen & Pahta 2012: 165). Thus, their study identifies a common view of Finnish as a historically subordinate language, spoken by an ethnically homogeneous but somewhat marginal group of people ('the Finns').

This view resonates with popular discourses that emphasise the typological distinctiveness of the Finnish language within Europe, frequently constructing Finnish as a language that is small and internationally insignificant but structurally complex and exotic, culminating in the myth of Finnish being the "most difficult language in the world" (Latomaa 1998: 57; see also Kotilainen & Varteva 2002, and Martin 2007 for references to this discourse). Latomaa (1998) sees in this an ambivalent attitude towards Finnish and, subsequently, towards learners of Finnish. She argues that, on the one hand, Finns are often flattered that foreigners have made the effort to learn their supposedly small and insignificant language; on the other hand, the narratives of exoticism and difficulty, maybe once useful for establishing a sense of independence and of genuine Finnish identity, also contribute to drawing a boundary around an imagined community of native speakers, and construct the Finnish language itself as a resource that is not available to everyone (Latomaa 1998: 57). For instance, learners of Finnish often report that, as they transition from practising Finnish in the classroom to using it in real life situations, they experience what Kotilainen (2013) refers to as *englannittaminen* (lit. 'forcing someone to use English'), i.e., the default use of English in interactions with foreigners, even when the conversation was initiated in Finnish by the would-be learner.

At the same time, public discourses on immigration strongly highlight language as a key factor in the integration of immigrants (see the following section). As Latomaa (1998: 57) observes, adult immigrants' need to learn Finnish might be assessed differently according to their different backgrounds and immigration status: while some Western foreigners (such as the Americans in Latomaa's study)

might not necessarily be expected to learn much Finnish, other immigrants are encouraged to use Finnish from as early on as possible after their arrival. Thus, there seem to be conflicting discourses and beliefs about Finnish (as a second language) that lead to conflicting expectations towards Finnish language learners. In the following, I will describe in more detail the development of the teaching of Finnish as a second language, as well as the situation of speakers of Finnish as a second language in Finland.

2.2 Finnish as a second language in policy and society

Saarinen (A. Saarinen 2011: 146-150; also see Pöyhönen & Tarnanen 2015: 109-112) distinguishes five phases of integration policies and official discourses about integration in Finland. The first phase (1970s and 1980s) focused on humanitarian obligations, as most immigrants were refugees arriving from Chile and Vietnam. In the second phase (1990s), immigration was characterised by the arrival of large numbers of Ingrian Finns who were seeking repatriation after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the discourses accordingly centred on national-ethnic obligations.[6] After joining the EU in 1995, discourses of managed immigration became more prominent, with policies focusing on social security based on residence. Work-related migration increased in the early 21st century and discourses shifted to constructing immigration as a resource for a country with an ageing workforce. Integration into the labour market through, among other things, more efficient language training, was the central aim during this phase. Finally, the fifth and ongoing phase can be characterised as 'contested immigration'. While policies generally promote holistic integration rather than assimilation, immigration has no longer been actively promoted at a time of economic uncertainty and vociferous anti-immigration movements. What has remained from the 'immigration as a resource' perspective, however, is a strong emphasis on labour market integration and immigrants' skills (Pöyhönen & Tarnanen 2015: 111-112).

This is also reflected in the integration measures currently in place. Integration in Finland is funded by the state and participants receive benefits for the duration of the training. It is defined first and foremost as labour market training, and adult migrants who are registered as unemployed jobseekers are entitled to participate (the number of participants being around 13 000 yearly, see MEC 2016: 16). Integration training follows a national curriculum and is organised as labour market training or self-motivated training (e.g. language training, adult basic education, vocational training, higher education studies) (MEC 2016: 16). According to the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE 2012), the overall objective of the training is to enable migrants to be active members of Finnish society. Particular emphasis is placed on language skills, and the aim is for participants to "achieve functional basic proficiency in the Finnish or Swedish language" (FNBE

[6] However, from 2003 onwards Ingrian Finns had to pass a Finnish (or Swedish) test in addition to proving that they were of Finnish descent (Martikainen 2016: 46).

2012: 24). In addition to language skills, integration training also comprises instruction in Finnish society and in working life skills, and in recent years there have been efforts to more closely integrate language and practical work life training (see e.g. Ronkainen & Suni 2019).

'Functional basic proficiency' corresponds to level B1.1 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (see e.g. Little 2007), which ranges from level A1.1 to C2.2. In addition to being the official target of integration training, level B1.1 is the level required for citizenship (Tarnanen & Pöyhönen 2011: 146). It also used to be the entry level for vocational training, although this requirement has recently been revoked (MEC 2017). The overall focus of policy makers has thus been on the lower intermediate level of Finnish (and Swedish) skills. This is also reflected in the number of people taking the tests at the different levels of the National Certificate of Language Proficiency (NCLP): between 1994 and 2014, the basic level test in Finnish language (CEFR levels A1-A2) was taken by 2354 participants, the intermediate level test (CEFR levels B1-B2) by 44 862 participants, and the advanced level test (CEFR levels C1-C2) by 1584 participants (Neittaanmäki & Hirvelä 2014: 47). However, in practice it is far from clear what language skills can be regarded as sufficient for different purposes and in different contexts. Studies of immigrants' own assessment of their language skills suggest that the majority of immigrants regard their language skills as sufficient, although this can vary according to situation and activity (see Tarnanen & Pöyhönen 2011; see also Pöyhönen et al. 2009: 15-17; Nieminen & Larja 2015: 45). Integration training and labour market experts, on the other hand, generally consider level B1.1 insufficient for work purposes, even if this intermediate level might already be an unrealistically ambitious goal for some groups of immigrants (Tarnanen & Pöyhönen 2011: 149).

The issue of sufficient language skills is also connected to (perceived) employability. Statistics point to clear differences in migrants' and non-migrants' employment. In 2012, the unemployment rate among the foreign-born population was almost double that of the Finnish-born population (14.2 % and 7.5%, respectively; MEE 2014: 16). This cannot be explained by a generally lower level of education among migrants alone. According to a study commissioned by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, at least 23% of migrant job seekers are registered as holding a higher education degree (MEE 2014: 16), but the percentage of highly educated migrants is probably even higher (see Sutela & Larja 2015). While highly educated migrants are likelier to find employment than migrants with basic or no education (MEE 2014: 39), their employment trajectories are often unstable and involve positions below their level of qualification (Kyhä 2011: 228-229; also see Strömmer 2017b). Studies have also found clear indications of ethnic discrimination in hiring practices (see e.g. Ahmad 2005; Larja et al. 2012) and employers might be generally prejudiced against degrees obtained abroad (Saarikallio et al. 2008: 108). Rather than representing a real problem, the issue of language skills might therefore also be used to make discriminating hiring practices acceptable (see Strömmer 2017b: 155; also see Woolard & Schieffelin 1994: 62). According to a study by the Ministry of the Interior (Aaltonen et al. 2009: 38),

19% of job announcements required Finnish as a mother tongue or excellent Finnish skills, even if the requirement was not justified by the work tasks in any of the cases.

On the other hand, the actual levels of linguistic skills needed for working life can also be higher than expected. Jäppinen (2011) studied the social position and practices of second language speakers of Finnish in international companies. While the official language of many such companies is English, Finnish nevertheless has a strong presence, at least in informal social interactions at the workplace. Jäppinen argues that, given the time pressure on work-related interactions, at least level B2 is needed for employees to use Finnish as their long-term work language, but the threshold might be much higher for particularly demanding work environments (Jäppinen 2011: 206). Moreover, many professional contexts are now organised around networks, teams and project-based work which revolve around the production, processing and sharing of linguistic information (Jäppinen 2011: 193; see also A.-M. Karlsson 2009). For individuals, this means that many jobs nowadays require broader linguistic and conversational skills, including the ability to present things clearly and convincingly and to build trust with colleagues and clients (Jäppinen 2011: 194). Other complicating factors regarding the question of sufficient language skills in professional contexts are that many jobs also require highly specialised linguistic and communicative resources (see e.g. Seilonen et al. 2016 for the healthcare sector).

What language skills are sufficient for different kinds of Finnish as a second language speakers to "function in everyday life, Finnish society, working life and further education and training" (FNBE 2012: 24) is therefore highly context-dependent. Highly educated migrants who are seeking employment in their own field of work might find their language skills insufficient if the work is linguistically demanding; and those who have reached a high proficiency in Finnish might still face obstacles as they compete with first language speakers in an already tight labour market (see Suni 2017). Working in English opens up possibilities for some (e.g. international professionals in private companies), but does not support the development of the Finnish skills needed for other contexts (e.g. positions in the public sector) and career advancement. Pöyhönen and Tarnanen (2015: 108) point to a potential glass-ceiling effect, highlighting that all the stakeholders they interviewed for their study of integration policies (e.g. civil servants, social workers, employment counsellors) spoke Finnish as their first language. They argue that this reflects the current stratification of Finnish society, where it is rather unusual for migrant second language speakers of Finnish to hold very high positions in public institutions.

Of course, employment is not the only relevant perspective with regard to migrants' position in Finnish society. In recent years, the visibility of Finns with a migration or racialised background seems to have been increasing. For instance, the parliamentary elections of 2015 resulted in the first two seats for representatives with a migration background (YLE News 2015) and Finns of colour have

created new spaces for their voices and experiences (e.g. the online media platform *Ruskeat Tytöt* ['Brown Girls'][7] or the radio programme *Ali ja Husu* ['Ali and Husu'];[8] see also Keskinen 2018; Malmberg & Awad 2019). These developments and initiatives question the close association of Finnishness with nativeness and whiteness (see e.g. Tuori 2009: 73). However, negative attitudes and discrimination against racialised people in Finland prevail (see e.g. data on Finland in FRA 2018). Moreover, the visibility of migrant second language speakers of Finnish, and particularly of highly proficient late learners of Finnish, in the cultural and political spheres remains relatively low overall. In other words, native or native-like competence in Finnish is still closely associated with Finnishness.

While this study focuses on the lived experience of individual speakers, the larger political and societal developments outlined here form the background against which my participants negotiate their positionings and self-understandings in their everyday lives. As I will show in the analysis chapters, my participants frequently reference debates about what constitutes Finnishness or ideas about what kinds of Finnish language skills are sufficient in a professional context (see e.g. Chapters 6.1.2, 6.2.1 and 7.2.1). In the next section, I turn to the academic context of this study, i.e. the field of professional teaching of and research on Finnish as a second language.

2.3 Finnish as a second language in research and teaching practice

The professional teaching of Finnish as a second language can be considered a relatively young field, even though Finnish has been taught as a second language to Swedish-speaking Finns for a long time: the first materials for teaching Finnish as a second language were developed in the second half of the 19th century (see Vehkanen 2015), and Finnish as a second national language was part of some Swedish-medium secondary schools' curricula (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi 2005: 156) from about the same time. With school reforms in the 1970s, Finnish became compulsory for all Swedish-speaking pupils (and Swedish for Finnish-speaking pupils) in elementary education (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi 2005: 156-157). With regard to learners other than Swedish-speaking Finns, however, second language instruction only became a broader issue with the increased immigration of the early 1990s. In schools, the need for teaching in Finnish as a second language has been taken into account by official guidelines since 1994 and more detailed curricula were implemented in 2004 and 2014 (Martin 2007: 5; FNBE 2016). From the 1990s onwards the universities of Helsinki and Jyväskylä have offered studies in Finnish as a second and foreign language for teachers (Martin 2007: 6). In addition to this, a number of universities also offer Master's-level programmes in Finnish language and culture aimed at students coming to Finland from abroad. Over the

7 https://www.ruskeattytot.fi.
8 https://areena.yle.fi/1-1793778.

course of the years, a wide range of study materials has been developed for Finnish as a second language learners of all ages and backgrounds has been developed (see Jokinen et al. 2011).

From the 1990s onwards, academic interest in Finnish as a second language also started to increase. Martin (2007) and Suni (2012) provide overviews of the history of the field. Martin's (1995) study of Finnish learners' acquisition of the nominal inflection was the first doctoral dissertation to be completed in the emerging field of Finnish as a second language research. In the decades to follow, most larger studies have focused on the acquisition and use of forms and constructions (Martin 1995; Siitonen 1999; Kajander 2013; Seilonen 2013; Tilma 2014; Ivaska 2015; Mustonen 2015; Lesonen 2020) or have approached data from the viewpoint of cross-linguistic influence (Kaivapalu 2005; Nissilä 2011; Spoelman 2013). Other studies have broadened the focus to include topics such as language learning in interaction (Kurhila 2003, 2006; Suni 2008; Lilja 2010), language assessment (Tarnanen 2002; Toivola 2011; Martikainen 2019) and second language interaction (Lehtimaja 2012; Paananen 2019). Characteristic of the field of Finnish as a second language research is that, thanks to its relatively late emergence, earlier approaches in language learning research (e.g. error analysis) have been employed alongside more recent theories (e.g. corpus linguistics, construction grammar, usage-based approaches to language learning) from the very beginning (see Suni 2012).

The simultaneous emergence of the professional teaching of Finnish as a second language and research on the subject also means that many researchers active in the field are directly concerned with questions of teaching, assessment and other practical issues related to language learning (Martin 2007: 2). This is apparent, for instance, in large research projects such as CEFLING[9] (see Martin et al. 2012) and its follow-up project TOPLING[10] based at the University of Jyväskylä. Drawing in part on the large body of data collected in connection with the National Certificate of Language Proficiency (NCLP), different learners' linguistic skills as well as their development over time in relation to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) scale were investigated in these projects. In addition to developing theoretical and methodological models for language learning research, the aim of the projects was also to support pedagogical practice and language assessment. Similarly, the DIALUKI[11] project (see Nieminen et al. 2011), investigating foreign and second language reading and writing abilities and their assessment, aimed to support curriculum work, teaching materials and testing practices.

Despite the rapid development of the field, there are still some topics in Finnish as a second language research that have received comparatively little attention. As Suni (2012: 422) remarks, there have so far been relatively few studies

9 https://www.jyu.fi/hytk/fi/laitokset/kivi/tutkimus/hankkeet/paattyneet-tutkimushankkeet/cefling/suom.
10 https://www.jyu.fi/hytk/fi/laitokset/kivi/tutkimus/hankkeet/paattyneet-tutkimushankkeet/topling/en.
11 https://www.jyu.fi/hytk/fi/laitokset/solki/tutkimus/projektit/dialuki/en.

dealing with the decidedly social aspects of additional language learning, especially motivation and identity. She argues that such studies would be particularly important in the linguistic and sociopolitical context of Finland: in contrast to the commonly taught languages (e.g. English or French) that form the basis of much language learning research, Finnish is far from being a global mainstream language. Studying Finnish might therefore involve different motivations and individual choices, and might also feature issues of legitimacy, participation and linguistic ownership in a particularly prominent way (Suni 2012: 428).

In recent years, social perspectives on Finnish as a second language have indeed become more central. Lehtonen (2015) approached Finnish as a second language from a sociolinguistic viewpoint, studying how adolescent speakers in multi-ethnic Helsinki negotiate issues of ownership of language, or foreignness through their stylizing practices. A. Leinonen (2015) conducted a sociophonetic study of native speakers' perceptions of different accents in second language Finnish and an ongoing research project at the University of Jyväskylä investigates perceptions of 'foreign accent' by raters of the National Certificate of Language Proficiency tests.[12] With regard to second language learning, the aim of another research project based at the University of Jyväskylä [13] was to investigate language learning at work from a sociocognitive perspective. Virtanen (2017) and Strömmer (2017a) are examples of dissertations completed in association with the project. Both draw on ecological approaches to language learning and employ ethnographic methods to show connections between language learning and social participation (for a more detailed description of their studies, see Chapter 3.1.2). A focus on language learning and second language use outside of settings of formal language teaching, especially in working life, is also the topic of other recent and ongoing research projects at the universities of Helsinki,[14] Tampere[15] and Jyväskylä,[16] among others.

Another underdeveloped area is research on more advanced learners of Finnish. Most research on adult learners of Finnish as a second language has hitherto focused on learners on the beginning or intermediate levels. A notable exception is Siitonen's (1999) study of advanced Finnish learners' use of agentless verbs (so called u-derived verbs), whose behaviour is semantically and syntactically different from their agentive counterparts and which are therefore challenging even for advanced learners (also see Siitonen & Martin 2012). In a smaller

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12 'Broken Finnish': Accent perceptions in societal gatekeeping (2018-2022); https://www.jyu.fi/hytk/fi/laitokset/solki/broken-finnish/in-english.

13 Finnish as a work language: A sociocognitive perspective to work-related language skills of immigrants (2011-2013); https://www.jyu.fi/hytk/fi/laitokset/kivi/tutkimus/hankkeet/paattyneet-tutkimushankkeet/suomityokielena/en.

14 Finnish as a Second Language and Situated Learning (2016-2018); https://www.helsinki.fi/en/researchgroups/finnish-as-a-second-language-and-situated-learning.

15 Co-Designing Social Interactions in Everyday Life (2017-2019); https://research.uta.fi/avut-en/.

16 Building Blocks (2019-2023); https://www.jyu.fi/hytk/fi/laitokset/kivi/tutkimus/hankkeet/building-blocks-developing-second-language-resources-for-working-life.

longitudinal study, Siitonen and Niemelä (2011) investigate the linguistic development of three already advanced learners of Finnish. Ivaska's (2015) dissertation is a corpus study in the framework of Construction Grammar and usage-based language learning, and it examines advanced Finnish learners' use of constructions. The study draws on the Corpus of Advanced Learner Finnish (Ivaska 2014), which was started at the University of Turku in 2007 and comprises texts written by advanced learners of Finnish (mostly Master's students in Finnish language and culture). These studies have provided a better understanding of the characteristics of advanced second language profiency in Finnish from the viewpoint of linguistic structures. However, very advanced second language learners of Finnish have not been studied before in a more socially oriented framework.

2.4 Research rationale

So far in this chapter, I have introduced the context, Finland, the position of speakers of Finnish as a second language in Finnish society, and the field of Finnish as a second language research and teaching. While individual learners and speakers of Finnish as a second language have always been part of Finnish society, the sharp increase in immigration to Finland and the subsequent rise in the numbers of second language speakers of Finnish are part of an ongoing development that has already changed Finnish society. This also concerns Finnish as a second language as a field of research and professional practice, which has developed at a fast pace since becoming established in the 1990s. So far, however, policy makers and researchers have largely focused on Finnish language learning and learners on the beginning and lower intermediate levels, and much less on speakers with advanced or very advanced proficiency in Finnish. In this thesis, I argue that, despite (or precisely due to) their relatively marginal position with respect to linguistic policy and public discourse, highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish provide important insights into issues of language ideology, identity, and sociolinguistic legitimacy in the context of Finland. By investigating this group of speakers from a sociolinguistic viewpoint, my thesis also complements previous research on advanced learners of Finnish, in which social perspectives have so far been underrepresented.

In Section 2.1 of this chapter, I discussed the language situation in Finland in its historical context. I argued that due to the relatively short history of Finnish as a national language, popular discourses still frequently evoke images of a 'small', 'exotic', perhaps even 'oppressed', but in any case decidedly 'local' language that is tied up with ethnonational notions of Finnishness. With respect to Finnish as a second language, this raises the question of how those who learn Finnish later in life fit into this language ideological matrix. As Suni (2012: 408) argues, in learning a smaller, internationally insignificant national language, issues of authenticity and linguistic ownership are more obvious than when learning a widely taught, global language such as English (as is the case for minority languages as second languages; see e.g. O'Rourke & Ramallo 2013 and Chapter

3.1.3 of this thesis). Since Finnish is, moreover, often portrayed as a highly 'complex' language that is extremely 'difficult' to learn, the position of highly proficient adult speakers of Finnish as a second language is particularly interesting from a language ideological perspective. In the language ideological context of Finland, such speakers are often considered to be exceptional and are therefore somewhat 'unexpected' speakers (cf. Pennycook 2012: 100).[17]

The sociolinguistic and language ideological environment is also relevant to the lived experiences of adult migrant language learners, their emerging speaker identities, as well as their language learning trajectories (see also Latomaa 1998: 56). On arriving in Finland, migrant language learners not only become socialised into the language itself, but also encounter the ideologies surrounding that language, either in explicit discourse or implicitly in interactions with others. For instance, while not all learners experience Finnish as difficult to learn, they are likely to be aware of the common discourses about the difficulty of Finnish. The kinds of first and second language speakers whom newcomers encounter in this environment also play a formative role in their language learning trajectories. Dörnyei (2009a: 27) argues that already fluent second language speakers are an important point of reference and comparison for second language learners, as they are closest to their ideal linguistic self. This suggests that existing second language communities are vital to the ways in which language learners are enabled to imagine their future selves, to the attitudes that they adopt towards themselves as speakers, as well as to the experiences that they are likely to have. Given that highly proficient adult second language speakers of Finnish are still few in number and relatively invisible in society, larger second language communities might not always be available for such speakers.

In addition to addressing issues arising from the sociolinguistic context of Finland, the present work also aims to complement previous research on Finnish as a second language, and second language research in general. Highly proficient late bi- and multilinguals have generally been underrepresented in research on second language learning. Most studies that have explicitly dealt with very advanced second language speakers (see Chapter 5.2 for an overview) have focused on testing adult learners' nativelikeness, often defined as phonological and syntactical accuracy (see Piller 2002: 182-185). Such studies have also disregarded the ways in which very advanced proficiency is lived and experienced by speakers in their everyday life. Byrnes (2006b: 1-2) notes the strange contradiction between socio-political discourses that demand more advanced language learning outcomes faster and the lack of research on advanced language learning, and argues that advanced second language proficiency can and should be considered a reasonable goal for a much wider range of learners than the 'gifted few'. Going beyond seeing high second language proficiency solely as a matter of individual aptitude, however, makes it necessary to investigate what kinds of educational

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17 A clue to how proficient second language speakers of Finnish were clearly still perceived as an oddity some decades ago can be found in a study by Muhonen and Vaarala (2018). In a conversation, an elderly Finn, who migrated to Canada about 50 years ago, expresses her astonishment at having heard a Turkish person and a person of colour speaking clear and fluent Finnish (Muhonen & Vaarala 2018: 236-237).

structures, social networks, language ideological environments, and spaces for self-imagination support the advanced learning and use of a second language.

Furthermore, most language learning research, including socially oriented approaches, still focuses on classroom contexts, and research on language learning 'in the wild', i.e. language learning outside contexts of formal instruction (e.g. Benson & Reinders 2011; Wagner 2015; Kasper & Burch 2016; Eskildsen & Theodórsdóttir 2017; Lilja & Piirainen-Marsh 2019; also see Chapter 5.1), has only recently gained more attention. Second language learning and use beyond the classroom is an especially relevant perspective with regard to highly proficient late language learners, and even more so in the Finnish context, since formal language instruction for students on advanced levels is very limited. For instance, a survey conducted by T. Saarinen et al. (2016) shows that the Finnish courses organised for international students in Finnish institutions of higher education are concentrated on the beginning levels, and that opportunities to study Finnish on the highest levels (C1-C2) are scarce or non-existent (T. Saarinen et al. 2016: 38). Thus, learners who have managed to attain a high proficiency in Finnish have usually learned a significant part of their Finnish skills with friends and partners, at work and in other contexts of everyday life, which make this group of speakers particularly interesting with regard to experiences of language learning and use outside contexts of formal language learning.

Finally, an explicit focus on language ideologies is still quite marginal in language learning research (but see e.g. Razfar 2005; Volk & Angelova 2007; Razfar & Rumenapp 2011; De Costa 2011, 2016c). The relatively well established research area of beliefs about Second Language Acquisition (see e.g. Kalaja & Barcelos 2003; Barcelos & Kalaja 2011; Barcelos 2015) investigates the relationship between language development and learners' and teachers' beliefs about language, language learning and themselves as language learners. This strand of research has already moved from viewing beliefs about language learning as primarily individual, mental constructs to regarding them as dynamic and deeply social (De Costa 2011: 348; see also Aro 2009). However, it has still focused mainly on formal language learning and changes in individual beliefs (see Barcelos & Kalaja 2011: 283-284). De Costa (2011) draws on the notions of ideology and positioning, rooted in anthropology and social psychology respectively, and argues that research on beliefs about language learning can be substantially enriched by these concepts. In this thesis, I take the view that the concept of language ideology, together with the notions of identity and legitimacy (see Chapter 3.2), provide powerful tools for investigating the social embeddedness of second language learning and use by connecting individual experiences to the wider sociolinguistic and societal context.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I lay out the theoretical framework of this thesis. I first discuss the position of my work at the crossroads of second language research and sociolinguistics (2.1), before describing in more detail the three key theoretical concepts in this dissertation – ideology, identity and legitimacy – and linking them to the specific context of highly proficient second language use (2.2). Finally, I reflect on how nexus analysis provides a theoretical and methodological framework for integrating these perspectives and concepts (2.3).

3.1 A social perspective on second language learning and use

3.1.1 Linguistic-cognitive versus social approaches

Many, if not most, people learn one or several additional languages in their lifetime, be it at school, due to migration, friendships or family ties, or simply because of an interest in other languages. Most people also have ideas about what language is and what language learning entails. Rather than talking about learning 'language', we usually talk about learning 'a language', as in learning, for example, English, Portuguese, Thai or Finnish. Everyday notions of learning languages are often informed by experiences with foreign language instruction. Grammars, dictionaries and study books present language as a clearly defined object, consisting of sets of words and grammar rules that learners need to study and internalise (Dufva et al. 2011: 112). Everyday experiences with language, on the other hand, go far beyond this notion of language. We can observe, for instance, that different people talk in different ways, that communication sometimes involves misunderstandings, or that words often evoke strong emotions. As language learners, we experience these social aspects of language in a similar or even amplified way: we find that some people are impossibly difficult to understand, that participating in conversations and expressing opinions can be

challenging, and that using the new language in real-life situations is accompanied by many feelings, from insecurity and anxiety to excitement and pride.

These different everyday perspectives on language are also mirrored in academic approaches to language learning. 'Linguistic-cognitive' approaches (Ortega 2014: 33) tend to take a view of language as a self-contained system governed by abstract rules, and narrowly conceptualise language learning as 'acquisition', i.e., the cognitive integration of linguistic features in the mind of the learner. Such approaches, building on "quantitative, cognitive, positivist epistemologies" (Ortega 2013: 3), have dominated language learning research until recently. In contrast to this, a number of alternative approaches (Atkinson 2011a) take a social or sociocognitive perspective on language and language learning. These alternative approaches have given rise to perspectives that view language itself as a socially embedded process, and language learning as taking place at the intersection of cognition and language use, as well as in concrete social situations and within a specific sociocultural context.

It is such a social perspective on second language learning and use that forms the theoretical starting point of this thesis. However, the thesis itself is not about language learning. Rather, it is about multilingual speakers, whose biographies include more or less intense phases of language learning, and their experiences at a given time in a particular context. As I demonstrate in this chapter, taking a social perspective on language learning means that it is difficult to decide "where 'use' ends and 'acquisition' begins" (Firth & Wagner 1998: 91). Second language learning therefore has to be viewed as inseparable from language use, i.e., as usage-based (e.g. Cadierno & Eskildsen 2015). I also show that the separate study of 'learners' and 'speakers' along disciplinary boundaries between second language research and sociolinguistics obscures how both learning and using language take place in the same sociocultural environments and are thus mediated by the same social processes and linguistic ideologies. I argue that sociolinguistic insights into language use as well as sociological knowledge about human behaviour are vital to understanding language learning and learners, and that it is therefore necessary to study second language speakers and their experiences not only with regard to a (however theorised) acquisition process but also as complex social beings in their own right.

In the next section, I describe recent usage-based perspectives on language learning that aim to integrate cognitive and social aspects of language learning in their theoretical framework (3.1.2). In section 3.1.3, I discuss socially oriented second language research that has highlighted the role of identity, agency and social power in language learning. Finally, I explore emerging perspectives on multilingual speakers at the intersection of language learning research and (critical) sociolinguistics (3.1.4).

3.1.2 Language learning as usage-based, socially embedded and embodied

On first encountering it, the qualifier 'usage-based' seems oddly redundant when one is talking about approaches to language learning. After all, engaging with

language in some way – through listening, speaking, reading or writing, with or without formal instruction – is undoubtedly a necessary prerequisite for language learning. However, the term points to a more fundamental reconceptualisation of language and learning that has gained ground in language learning research over the past couple of decades. Cognitive-linguistic approaches to language learning have been decisively influenced by formal linguistics and, particularly, by Chomsky's distinction between competence and performance (Larsen-Freeman 2007: 774). Such approaches view language as an independent, rule-governed system, and language acquisition as the formation of a mental grammar reflecting this system in the mind of the learner. The social context is considered important only insofar as it provides the learner with linguistic input. The precise nature of this input and its social implications are deemed irrelevant, because sequences of second language development are assumed to be universal and their underlying cognitive-linguistic mechanisms are thought to be situated in learners' minds (cf. White 2003). Such approaches often ultimately rely on the idea of a language acquisition device, i.e., innate cognitive mechanisms directed towards language that regulate both first and second language acquisition (cf. O'Grady 1999; Hawkins 2008). Usage-based approaches to language, on the other hand, view the systematic properties of language as emerging from language use (phylogenetic development) and individuals' language knowledge as developing through exposure to and engagement with language-in-use (ontogenetic development) (see Tomasello 2003; Lantolf & Thorne 2006). They also hold that speakers have no (however abstract) innate language learning device. Rather, language knowledge is thought to emerge over time from the interaction between engagement with language and general (not specifically linguistic) cognitive processes. Consequently, as Tomasello (2000: 237-238) argues, even the most abstract linguistic knowledge of a speaker ultimately has its origin in comprehending and producing concrete utterances in concrete situations of language use.

Usage-based approaches reconceptualise several central assumptions of linguistic-cognitive language learning research. While approaches based on the structural and generative traditions in linguistics construct form and meaning (or structure and function) as separate entities (see van Lier 2002: 142), usage-based approaches regard constructions, i.e. "form-meaning-use composites" (Larsen-Freeman 2011: 53) as the units of learning (see Eskildsen 2009). Moreover, in usage-based approaches, how well constructions become entrenched in the repertoire depends on the frequency and salience with which they appear in the learner's environment (see e.g. N. C. Ellis 2012). It is also important to stress that, depending on the linguistic environment, individuals' language systems can contain resources from many languages, just as the notion of 'a language' has to be seen as an abstraction from what is in fact the intersection of and interaction between many individual language systems (see Blommaert & Backus 2011: 8). Moreover, from a usage-based perspective, differences between first and second language learning are linked to the amount and quality of learners' engagement with language. In small children, the development of language and more general

cognitive abilities is simultaneous and proceeds with great intensity. It also takes place largely unconsciously, and involves exposure to vast amounts of multi-faceted and socially contextualised input over many years. Additional language learning by adults, on the other hand, typically happens on a much shorter timescale with much less exposure to language, and it usually entails some level of metalinguistic reflection, often also formal instruction (Zyzik 2009: 54). Because individuals' language knowledge is shaped by their engagement with language, their linguistic systems are never complete or finished but continue to change and evolve in an emergent way throughout their life.

Usage-based approaches theorise language learning from a social perspective on various levels. First and most fundamentally, language is conceptualised as inherently social in that the human ability for joint attention and perspective-taking are prerequisites for the use of a symbolic system as complex as language (Tomasello 2003: 21-28). Secondly, usage-based approaches are based on a social-functional understanding of language, i.e., it is presumed that linguistic forms develop both phylogenetically and ontogenetically to serve the communicational needs of social beings. Finally, the language use learners are exposed to is always socially situated, i.e., it is saturated with contextual meaning afforded by the social situation in which the utterance is made (see van Lier 2004: 108). What follows from this is a way of conceptualising and studying language learning that is fundamentally different from innatist approaches. If language learning is conceptualised as the development of a mental grammar whose structure is partly innate, it makes sense to examine patterns in learner output through the lens of abstract syntactic structures. The contexts in which forms are acquired are secondary from this perspective, since what is seen as crucial are the linguistic-cognitive constraints at work in the learner's mind. If, however, language learning is understood as the emergence of an individual's linguistic system through engagement with language, the details of this engagement, i.e., the question of exactly how and what kind of language use shapes learning, become the focal point of study (see Zyzik 2009: 55).

Usage-based approaches include, for example, approaches based on sociocultural theory (SCT) (e.g. Lantolf 2000, 2011, 2012; Lantolf & Thorne 2006), which draw on and aim to develop further Vygotsky's work in the psychology of consciousness. SCT is a general theory of mind centring on the notion of *mediation*. Mediation is understood as the regulation of mental processes and communicative activity by means of both physical and abstract tools, such as linguistic and non-linguistic symbols (Lantolf 2011: 24-25; see also Wertsch 1991: 28-29). In early language acquisition, development towards cognitive self-regulation and language learning go hand in hand; in other words, children appropriate language while learning to do things through language (Wertsch 2007: 185). With respect to adult second language development, learners have to become able to use the target language to regulate their activity when faced with communicatively difficult tasks (Lantolf 2011: 26). In sociocultural approaches, development is thought to take place in an individual's Zone of Proximal Development (ZDP) (see e.g. Aljaafreh & Lantolf 1994: 467-468; Wertsch 1991: 28), a term originally

coined by Vygotsky (1978). The ZDP refers to the relationship between an individual's given level of development and their potential for further development with appropriate guidance, i.e., to "the difference between what individuals can do independently and what they can do with appropriate mediation from someone else" (Lantolf 2012: 57). Language development is thus thought of as a process that is qualitatively different for every individual learner: firstly, because individuals' ZDPs differ from each other, i.e., learners have diverging starting points and abilities to respond to mediational offers; and secondly, because learners encounter different types of mediation, e.g. different interactional patterns and cultural concepts, in their respective environments and in the course of their respective trajectories (Lantolf 2011: 37).

Building on and extending sociocultural approaches are ecological approaches to language learning (e.g. van Lier 2000, 2002, 2004; Kramsch 2002; Kramsch & Steffensen 2008). Ecological approaches and SCT share basic assumptions about language learning as relational, context-bound and emergent (see van Lier 2004: 18). However, ecological approaches aim to take an even broader and more holistic perspective on language learning in context. Context, here, means not only the immediate context of the language learning activities, such as classroom activities or teacher-learner interaction, but also the entire physical, social and symbolic environment (van Lier 2004: 21). That is, the context of language learning includes, for instance, language as a meaning-making system in its entirety, educational policies and institutions, linguistic practices and ideologies in the wider society, as well as the learner's own body and selves. An important notion developed by ecological approaches is *affordance*. This notion differs significantly from the concept of input based on an understanding of language as a fixed code and of language learning as a one-way cognitive processing of this code (van Lier 2004: 90). In contrast, the notion of affordance describes "relations of possibility" (van Lier 2004: 95) between learners and their environment, which includes other language users. Properties of the linguistic environment can become affordances when they are perceived as relevant and therefore become opportunities for linguistic action by learners (van Lier 2000: 252). Thus, ecological approaches, too, emphasise the individual nature of the language learning process, as each individual discerns different affordances in the environment.

Closely connected to ecological approaches, in turn, are approaches to language learning rooted in complexity (or chaos) theory (e.g. Larsen-Freeman 1997, 2002, 2011; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron 2008). Such approaches draw on theories of complex systems originating in the natural sciences and cybernetics. They view language (both shared and individual) as a complex system which emerges from interactions between speakers and subsequently behaves in dynamic and non-linear ways, adapting to changes in the environment through organising and re-organising itself (Larsen-Freeman 2011: 49-52). This allows going beyond reductionist views of language learning processes that aim to find cause-consequence relationships through decontextualisation and controlling variables. Instead, language learning is seen as the dynamic interplay between emerging structures and processes of adaptation, and as involving interaction between a

number of highly complex systems such as the language itself, language use in different contexts, and language development in the individual (Larsen-Freeman 2011: 52). Complexity theory approaches view language learning essentially as a probabilistic process (Larsen-Freeman 2011: 55) based on the fact that learners are exposed to some linguistic patterns (or constructions, see Tomasello 2003) with much greater frequency than others. However, the salience and transparency of the patterns that are encountered also contribute to their entrenchment, just as their social value and their function in the organisation of discourse affect how the patterns are categorised and integrated in their own linguistic systems by learners (Larsen-Freeman 2011: 56). Thus, a complexity theory perspective also emphasises the importance of learner agency, stressing that learning is not only shaped by the environment, but learners also shape their learning contexts (Larsen-Freeman 2011: 57), and that language is therefore located in the intersection of the brain, body and social interaction (Larsen-Freeman 2011: 66).

Usage-based approaches view language as a tool for action that is embodied (Eskildsen & Cadierno 2015: 1). Sociocognitive approaches (e.g. Atkinson 2002, 2011b) in particular emphasise the inseparability of cognition, body and social world in language learning. In contrast to an understanding of the mind as a self-contained entity operating according to internal rules, such approaches hold that cognition has to be seen as embodied and embedded in its social environment (for an overview, see N. C. Ellis 2019). This means that cognitive development can only take place in embodied and bodily engagement with the environment, and cognitive processes and bodily sensations, ways of being and emotions interact with one another (Atkinson 2011b: 145). Moreover, meaning-making through language crucially involves the body with respect to speech production, gestures, gaze, head movements, and other bodily resources. These bodily resources, in turn, facilitate anticipation, coordination and the performance of joint actions between participants (Atkinson 2011b: 148), and it is in these joint actions that language learning is thought to take place (see Firth & Wagner 2007: 807). Such a view of language, cognition and learning as embodied processes also resonates with calls for increased attention to the body in other areas of language study (see e.g. Bucholtz & Hall 2016).

In addition to the approaches outlined here, there are other specific approaches that subscribe to a usage-based understanding of language and language learning. Such approaches include, to name only a few, Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) approaches (e.g. Verspoor & Behrens 2011), emergentist views on language learning (e.g. N. C. Ellis & Larsen-Freeman 2006), constructionist usage-based SLA (e.g. Eskildsen 2009), as well as dialogic approaches (e.g. Hall et al. 2005; Dufva 2013).[18] Since describing all of these in detail is beyond the aim and scope of this overview, I have focused on a few approaches to outline some

[18] Different usage-based approaches have been applied widely in research on Finnish as a second language. For instance, Seilonen (2013), Ivaska (2015) and Mustonen (2015) all put forward usage-based perspectives on construction learning, while Suni (2008) studies language learning in interaction from a dialogical and sociocultural perspective. Tilma (2014) and Lesonen (2020) both apply a DST framework in their studies.

fundamental tenets of a usage-based understanding of language learning. To sum up, usage-based approaches to language learning share a fundamental understanding of language learning as socially embedded and embodied. Such an understanding goes beyond the simple insight that learners use language and are social beings. Rather, it conceptualises language, cognition and social activity as processes that are inextricably intertwined. As a result, the nature of learners' engagement with language as well as the social context of language learning are at the heart of usage-based approaches to language learning.

Many usage-based research approaches have already moved towards a closer study of language learning as a socially embedded activity. To name just one area of research, language learning research drawing on conversation analysis (CA-SLA) has embraced a usage-based perspective to study emerging language knowledge in interaction (e.g. Kasper & Wagner 2011), emphasising that factors like frequency and saliency of input are not simply statistical variables but part of real-life interactions (Eskildsen & Cadierno 2015: 5). However, as Ortega (2014: 47) points out, studying instances of language learning in interaction needs to be complemented with an examination of how and what kind of opportunities for language use emerge in the first place, i.e., what role issues of identity, agency and social power play in learners' everyday experience. That is to say, research focusing exclusively on either quantitative data or single instances of language learning cannot answer questions about how learning situations are embedded in learners' trajectories, social networks and self-understandings (*identity*), how learners take action to create and shape learning opportunities themselves (*agency*), and how their access to such opportunities can be restricted by factors they cannot themselves influence (*power*). Additional approaches are therefore needed in order to chart the relationship between emerging language knowledge, situational engagement with language, individual biographies, as well as the larger societal context. In the next section, I give an overview of some of these well-established approaches.

3.1.3 Identity, agency and power in language learning

For the past two decades, interest in identity has grown exponentially in language learning research (Norton & Toohey 2011: 413; also see e.g. Pavlenko 2002; Block 2007; Kramsch 2009; Norton 2013). Identity is seen as pervading all aspects of our linguistic lives: it is connected to our sense of who we are when we use language, to how others perceive and categorise us as speakers, as well as to the material and symbolic positions we occupy in our social and linguistic environments (identity as a concept will be defined in more detail in 3.2.2). As Duff (2012: 410) points out, even the different terms used to describe individuals engaging in additional language learning, like immigrants, non-native speakers, L2 learners or users, bilinguals, lingua franca speakers or *new speakers* (see 3.1.3), make claims about their identities, conveying assumptions about the nature of their competence and highlighting different aspects of their social and linguistic lives.

Early approaches to identity and language learning tended to conceptualise identity in terms of features like personality or learning style, thought of as individual, internal and fixed (Norton & Toohey 2011: 419). Following the 'social turn' (Block 2003) in language learning research, identity, alongside agency, has become established as a fundamentally social, rather than an internal and psychological dimension of language learning. Contemporary approaches to identity, agency and language learning are informed by poststructualism, feminist theory, sociocultural theory, and phenomenology, among others (Duff 2012: 413), and are associated with a range of qualitative, e.g. narrative, ethnographic or discourse analytic, approaches (Duff 2012: 416). These often critical approaches have also, importantly, drawn attention to the effects of social power on language learning.

An important entry point for theorising identity in language learning has been research on motivation. Here, alternative understandings of the relationship between identity, motivation and learning have challenged approaches developed within a positivist cognitive paradigm (Ushioda 2011: 11). Positivist cognitive approaches are associated with the study of individual differences in language learning outcomes, and their aim has generally been to measure the effects of factors like motivation, attitude and orientation on learning results using correlational methods (see e.g. the overview provided by Masgoret & Gardner 2003). While such research concedes that motivation stems at least partly from the desire to become a member of a linguistic community, and is thus connected to questions of identity (Masgoret & Gardner 2003: 176), social identity is conceptualised as identification with clearly defined, external groups (Dörnyei & Ushioda 2009: 2-3) and motivation is ultimately measured as a psychological quality. In contrast to this, motivation has more recently been reconceptualised in two different directions: a shift towards the individual experience of self and identity on the one hand and, on the other, a shift towards a sociological understanding of motivation and identity (Dörnyei & Ushioda 2009: 3). The first shift is represented by the development of new models of the relationship between motivation and identity. For instance, according to Dörnyei's (2005, 2009a) model of the 'L2 motivational self system', rather than identifying with external reference groups, learners orient to their own self-concepts (as members of real or imagined communities). This system consists of the *ideal L2 self*, i.e., the kind of L2 user a learner would like to become, the *ought-to L2 self*, which concerns beliefs about what kind of language competence a learner should acquire, and the self that emerges from the situated learning experience, which includes the specific requirements for action in the learner's immediate environment (Dörnyei 2009a: 29). Motivation is understood to emerge at the intersection of these selves, as learners are prompted to develop strategies for reducing the discrepancy between their current and imagined future selves as L2 speakers (Dörnyei 2009a: 18). Despite the focus on learners' internal worlds, this strand of research views motivation as socially mediated, emerging in dynamic interaction with learners' identities and experiences (Ushioda 2011: 22).

The second reconceptualisation of motivation is associated with Norton's (Norton Peirce 1995; Norton 2013) work on adult immigrants' language learning

and identity. Norton (2013: 4) defines identity as "the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future". Consequently, she argues that a conceptualisation of learner identity and motivation as internal and psychological fails to provide a systematic account of the complex ways in which language learning is connected to larger social processes. Drawing on Bourdieu's notion of symbolic capital, Norton argues that motivation in language learning might be better understood as *investment* (Norton Peirce 1995; also see Darvin & Norton 2015). Norton's understanding of investment differs from instrumental motivation in that it does not simply refer to resources learners need to achieve their communicative goals, but to a complex 'market' of symbolic power that language learners enter and that inevitably forces them to negotiate their identity with regard to their position in the social world (Norton Peirce 1995: 18). That is, language learners in real-life contexts strive to increase their social and symbolic capital by acquiring new resources, while constantly weighing up learning opportunities against the costs of their investment and potential threats to their social identity. For example, a language learner who can be considered highly motivated might still drop out of a language course if treated by the teacher in a way that runs counter to their self-understanding (Norton 2001). Attention must therefore be paid not only to how language learners see themselves as speakers, but also to how they and their language use are positioned by others in different situations (e.g. as legitimate or illegitimate; see Duff 2012: 413).

Closely connected to accounts of motivation and identity in language learning is the notion of *agency*. Duff (2012: 413) argues that language learning is not a process of passive participation, but that learners also have agency, they "can make informed choices, exert influence, resist (e.g., remain silent, quit courses), or comply". Definitions of agency often emphasise individuals' capacity to act freely and autonomously, as well as the ways in which this capacity is already structured and possibly restricted. Ahearn (2001: 112) defines agency as the "socioculturally mediated capacity to act", which includes both the production and the interpretation of actions. She criticises both definitions that conceptualise agency as free will, thus ignoring the influence of culture on actions, and a simplifying equation of agency with resistance, which ignores other kinds of agency (Ahearn 2001: 115). Bucholtz and Hall (2010: 26) argue that agency should be seen as "the accomplishment of social action" in the most general sense. This is because there are other ways of acting upon the world that go beyond action taken consciously and intentionally by an individual: habitual action may not be conscious, but it has real consequences; actions may be accomplished cooperatively by several social actors and thus be intersubjective; and finally, agency is also a matter of ascription, i.e. of the socially and culturally specific discourses by which processes are represented as actions and people or entities as actors (Bucholtz & Hall 2010: 26). For instance, Virtanen's (2016) study of migrant nursing students in Finland demonstrates how agency and language learning are connected on many levels. The study found that, on the one hand, agency was ascribed to the

students through institutional discourses that place emphasis on their individual responsibility in becoming proficient speakers, simultaneously justifying insufficient language training. On the other hand, it showed that work practices and students' positionings as professional actors at the hospital supported the development of individual agency, enhancing their perception and utilisation of affordances and thus facilitating language learning.

Like identity, agency is always embedded in a social and historical context as well as in concrete practices. Restrictions on learners' agency become especially salient in situations where societal structures and the identities ascribed to learners affect their learning trajectories in a negative way. Different socioeconomic backgrounds (see e.g. Kanno & Cromley 2013) as well as gender- or race-based discrimination (see. e.g. Norton & Toohey 2011: 423-426) are linked to unequal chances of participation in society, with the result that some learners have fewer choices regarding their language learning than others. Such social power effects and their impact on language learning are captured in the notion of *access* (e.g. Pavlenko 2000; Palfreyman 2006; Norton 2013). If learning is facilitated by affordances in the learner's environment, access to material resources such as textbooks and social resources such as personal networks (Palfreyman 2006: 354-357) is an essential prerequisite for successful language learning. However, as Pavlenko (2000: 88) points out, individuals' access to different resources is often already mediated by their identities, for example with regard to gender, ethnicity, linguistic status or socioeconomic position. In her study of migrant cleaners in Finland, Strömmer (2016) showed that outsourced cleaning work offered few opportunities for language learning, ultimately leading nowhere with regard to both migrants' working life and their language learning trajectories (see also Sandwall 2010). Studying migrant women's language learning in Canada, Norton (2013: 98-111) describes how at the workplace of one of her participants, the "better jobs" were given to those who were already relatively fluent in English; as a result, they had more contact with customers and better chances of forming social relationships at work. It was only after a long and exhausting struggle with the power structures at work that her participant finally gained access to the relevant networks (Norton 2013: 99). However, access to resources for language learning can also be denied in categorical ways, for instance when first language speakers simply refuse to speak to learners of their language (Pavlenko 2000: 91), or when they automatically turn to another lingua franca (e.g. English) in interaction with beginning learners (see e.g. Theodórsdóttir 2011).

A focus on agency and identity in language learning necessarily foregrounds individuals and their subjective experiences (see e.g. Kramsch 2009). This has also drawn attention to the affective and emotional dimensions of language learning. In more traditional approaches, negative emotions, notably anxiety, have mostly been treated as measureable variables influencing language learning in statistically significant ways (see e.g. Horwitz 2001). In recent years, however, many researchers have called for a more holistic approach to emotions and language learning (see e.g. Bown & White 2010; Pavlenko 2013; De Costa 2016b). Swain (2013) criticises the exclusion of more complex and vague emotions

such as enjoyment, envy, relief, pride, shame or boredom, and suggests an understanding of emotions and learning as "linked and united in a complex process of internalization over time" (Swain 2013: 205). She emphasises that emotions are bodily phenomena at the same time as they are social and cultural: the meaning of an emotion is always constructed and internalised in a sociocultural context (e.g. the culture-specific meaning of shame or pride) and against the backdrop of broader socio-historical processes (e.g. language shame in minoritised communities) (Swain 2013: 204).

Drawing on a phenomenological framework, Busch (2012, 2017) also stresses the inseparability of emotions, language and learning. She argues that instead of mere exposure to language, it is the "emotionally charged experience of outstanding or repeated situations of interaction with others that keeps alive the process of inscribing language experience into body memory" (Busch 2017: 352). This includes both positive and negative emotions. Language learning research revolving around issues of identity, agency and social power provides plenty of examples of how such emotionally charged, lived experience mediates language learning and learners' trajectories. In their ethnographic study of Japanese learners of English in Australia, Piller and Takahashi (2006) show that their participants' motivation for learning English was very high. However, their language learning paths were closely intertwined with their emotional lives which, in turn, were substantially complicated by stereotypes about Japanese women as sexually available, submissive and lacking English skills. In her study of immigrant women in Canada, Norton (2013: 166-167) recounts a situation in which one of her participants felt deeply humiliated when framed as a "strange woman" by her colleague; this lead to a breakdown in communication and made her feel even more excluded at her workplace. In the context of Finland, a participant in Suni's (2017) study describes being denied support at her workplace and assigned tasks below her qualification, making her feel delegitimised and like an outsider. Only at her subsequent workplace, where she was treated as a professional, was she able to regain a sense of agency (Suni 2017: 206-2011). These examples show that learners' emotions are closely intertwined with their social identities as well as agency, a connection also investigated in a recent dissertation (Scotson 2020) on speakers of Finnish as a second language.

In contrast to research conducted within a linguistic-cognitive approach or within some usage-based approaches, research concerned with identity, agency and social power in language learning has been exclusively qualitative, focusing on individual learners in the wider social context, and aiming to explore personal struggles and contradictory experiences in depth, rather than seeking to produce consistent or generalisable outcomes (Duff 2012: 413). It has also paid more attention to processes of identity construction and how they might affect language learning than to how linguistic patterns are acquired and used by language learners (Duff 2012: 413). However, some researchers have attempted to integrate these issues with usage-based perspectives on language learning. For instance, researchers in the area of CA-SLA have brought together issues of identity and positioning with a fine-grained analysis of learning processes in interaction (e.g.

Wagner 2015; Eskildsen & Theodórsdóttir 2017; see also Chapter 5.1), while other scholars have accounted for identity processes within a sociocultural framework (Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000).

At the same time, issues of identity, agency and social power have come to be at the heart of contemporary (critical) sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. Work done in these fields offers another point of contact for socially oriented language learning research. In the next section, I discuss some relevant concepts and insights, as well as the ways in which they have already been applied to contexts of language learning. I argue that, just like any other language users, language learners, especially outside formal instructional settings, are positioned within, and not outside, the "sociolinguistic matrix" (Jaffe 2009b: 3) of their environments. This matrix includes culturally intelligible and socially sanctioned identities, linguistic varieties, groups of speakers and attitudes towards them, as well as ideologies of and discourses about language.

3.1.4 Sociolinguistics and second language learning and use

Sociolinguistics is concerned with language use in its social and societal context. Until recently, it has had only marginal impact in the field of second language research. As discussed above, linguistic-cognitive approaches to language learning have focused on individuals' internal processes and have restricted context to issues of input. Traditional perspectives in sociolinguistics, on the other hand, have been applied to investigate linguistic variation with regard to regional or social group-based differences in language use, focusing mainly on existing communities and only marginally on learning and individual development. The relatively separate development of these fields has created gaps that need to be bridged in order to achieve an integrated view of language learners as sociolinguistic beings. To give one example, with regard to the notion of native speaker, Doerr (2009: 16-17) has pointed out that there has been little exchange between research investigating the relationship between native and non-native speakers (or learners and target language speakers), and research investigating relationships among different kinds of native speakers (e.g. dialect and standard language speakers). According to Doerr (2009: 16), the former tradition, broadly associated with applied linguistics and second language research, has focused on describing differences in native and non-native linguistic competence and practice, at the same time as critical voices have also exposed the ideological underpinnings of this binary (e.g. Rampton 1990; Davies 2003). The latter tradition, more closely associated with sociolinguistics, has focused on processes of standardisation and sociolinguistic hierarchisation within a community of native speakers, sidelining those who are still 'peripheral participants' (cf. Lave & Wenger 1991), i.e., learners. What is needed, then, is an integrated perspective that takes into account the complex interaction between processes of language learning, hierarchic relationships between different kinds of native and non-native speakers in a given sociocultural context, and the linguistic ideologies that mediate them (see Rampton 2013: 376). In recent times, synergies between sociolinguistics and second language research have emerged, not least because of a

move towards socially informed, constructionist and critical perspectives in these fields over the past couple of decades (e.g. Pennycook 2001; Blommaert 2010; Piller 2016).

With respect to one of the most traditional sociolinguistic areas of inquiry, efforts to apply variationist sociolinguistic perspectives to second language learning and use have existed for some time (e.g. Preston 1989, 1996), although they have only recently resulted in a new wave of study in language learning research (Howard et al. 2013: 340). Both second language research and sociolinguistics are centrally concerned with inter- and intra-speaker variation. However, SLA research has traditionally looked at this issue in terms of differences in level of attainment, as well as in terms of target-like and non-target-like expressions within individual learners' output. Sociolinguistics, on the other hand, has traditionally treated variation as relating either to (L1 speakers') social group membership or to style-shifting across situations. For instance, Howard (2004: 143), points out that, traditionally, second language research has focused on the learning of "categorical", i.e., relatively fixed or even obligatory features of the target language, rather than on the acquisition of those features that are used variably by L1 speakers themselves. However, given that sociolinguistic variation is usually taken to be part of what constitutes 'native' competence, the question of how and to what extent L2 learners use sociolinguistically variable features of their target language is important particularly with respect to advanced L2 competence. Howard et al. (2013) provide an overview of research investigating this question. According to them, studies show that informal and vernacular variants are generally underused in L2 speech, although L2 speakers' usage of such features increases with exposure to target-language use in naturalistic environments (2013: 342-343). They also review studies that have demonstrated that at least some extralinguistic (social) factors (e.g. gender or social class) constrain the use of sociolinguistic variants in similar ways among L2 and L1 speakers, suggesting that L2 speakers similarly construct their social identities through sociolinguistic variation (Howard et al. 2013: 347). However, they conclude that more qualitative research is needed to gain insights into how learners' meta-awareness of and meta-knowledge about sociolinguistic variation, as well as their identities, affect their acquisition of sociolinguistic competence (Howard et al. 2013: 354-355).

Another important point of contact between sociolinguistic perspectives and perspectives on second language learning and use is research on bi- and multilingualism. In linguistic-cognitive approaches to language learning, multilingualism has usually been treated as a matter of *transfer*, i.e., the unidirectional (and undesirable) influence of L1 structures on L2 acquisition and use (Pavlenko & Jarvis 2002: 190). This can be seen as symptomatic of a general monolingual bias in the field of SLA (see e.g. Kachru 1994; Block 2003: 34-36). However, second language researchers have now started to acknowledge the need to move towards a view of language learning as developing multilingualism, and of language learners as multilingual speakers (see e.g. Ortega 2013; May 2014) in complex sociolinguistic ecologies (see e.g. Kramsch & Whiteside 2008). As Ortega

(2014: 33-37) points out, many concepts in SLA research (e.g. interlanguage, ultimate attainment) rely on the construct of native and monolingual competence, problematically framing L2 competence as necessarily 'deficient'. Meanwhile, sociolinguistics, traditionally concerned with multilingualism on the level of society and communities, has been increasingly confronted with language use and language users that do not easily fit traditional sociolinguistic paradigms and are characterised by individual and emergent ways of using language(s). The deconstruction of the ideological notion of language as a bounded entity (e.g. Makoni & Pennycook 2005) has blurred the distinction between monolingual and multilingual, at the same time as processes of globalisation, transnational migration and digitalisation have created 'superdiverse' (Vertovec 2007) multilingual environments. This is also reflected in the emergence of concepts such as translanguaging (e.g. García 2008; García & Li Wei 2014), polylanguaging (e.g. Jørgensen 2008; Jørgensen et al. 2011), and metrolingualism (e.g. Otsuji & Pennycook 2010), which aim to capture multilingual practices that go beyond the separate use of languages.

One way of describing and investigating multilingual individuals' diverse linguistic competences is through the notion of repertoire. The originally community-based concept of repertoire, coined in linguistic anthropology (see Gumperz 2001 [1968]), has been reinterpreted to refer to the range of linguistic resources available to mobile individuals (e.g. Blommaert & Backus 2011; Busch 2012; Muhonen 2013; Rymes 2014). This revised understanding of repertoire is evidence of an increased sociolinguistic interest in individual speakers and their learning trajectories. At the same time, the notion of repertoire challenges the focus on the learning and knowledge of entire languages, a focus commonly privileged in second language research. Instead, it emphasises the dynamic and fragmented nature of individual linguistic repertoires, which contain not entire languages but resources associated with different languages, purposes, contexts, and modes of production, and are thus 'truncated' repertoires (Blommaert 2010: 103; also see Blommaert et al. 2005). Moreover, linguistic repertoires are tied to the socioeconomic and political conditions in which speakers make use of symbolic resources (Heller & Pavlenko 2010: 78). The repertoire can therefore also be seen as a set of resources that a speaker had to acquire in order to comply with norms of social acceptability and "make sense to others" (Blommaert and Backus 2011: 23). Resarchers have also emphasised that while repertoires can be taken to refer to the entirety of an individual's potential for linguistic communication, competence is not a property of an individual and cannot be measured objectively. Rather, it is always defined and ascribed to speakers in social contexts shaped by particular language ideologies (see e.g. Blommaert et al. 2005; Eliaso Magnusson & Stroud 2012).

A strand of sociolinguistic research in the field of multilingualism that pays particular attention to such ideological processes is research organised around the term *new speaker* (e.g. O'Rourke & Ramallo 2013; O'Rourke et al. 2015). The term new speaker (from Catalan *neofalantes*; see e.g. O'Rourke & Ramallo 2015)

was coined in the European context to refer to speakers of regional minority languages (e.g. Catalan, Galician, Irish, Welsh) who are not native speakers, but learned the language later in life as a heritage language or due to migration to the region. Research in this area[19] has brought out perspectives that are highly relevant to second language speakers in general, and the scope of the term has indeed already been broadened to encompass immigration and transnational work migration outside minority language contexts (see e.g. Márquez-Reiter & Martín Rojo 2014; Suni 2017).

One such perspective concerns the language ideologies that shape new speakers' contexts of language learning and use, in particular ideologies of nativeness, ownership of language, and sociolinguistic authenticity. For instance, in their study of new speakers of Galician, O'Rourke & Ramallo (2013) show how these speakers negotiate their understanding of their language learning and use against the backdrop of language ideologies as well as the sociolinguistic status of Galician as a language. They find that because native speakers of Galician are still idealised as the authentic heirs and true owners of the language, it is often difficult for those who learn the language later in life to claim legitimacy as speakers. More explicitly than in many other strands of sociolinguistics, research on new speakers has also put individuals in focus, exploring what it means to them to become new speakers of a language, and investigating how they navigate their complex, multilingual environments. For instance, researchers have highlighted the importance of critical turning points in a speaker's trajectory of language learning and use (in the literature often called *mudes*, see e.g. Pujolar & Puigdevall 2015; Pujolar 2019). Such perspectives provide a strong point of contact with language learning research focusing on learners' identities and subjectivities (see Section 3.2.2).

Finally, it is worth discussing two individual studies that seek to bridge some of the gaps between language learning research and sociolinguistics. Rampton (2013) studies stylisation in narratives produced by an L1 Punjabi speaker, who migrated to London as an adult and considers himself a late L2 English learner/speaker.[20] His analysis shows that his informant incorporated different varieties (e.g. Punjabi English, RP English, London vernacular) in his accounts, especially when using reported speech. While the informant did not possess full control over the phonological aspects of these varieties, he used lexical, grammatical and other semiotic resources to style utterances (Rampton 2013: 389-369). Rampton argues that such practices should be understood neither in terms of a priori assumptions about L2 speakers and their supposedly deficient competence, nor in terms of an unreflected celebration of multilinguals' creativity (2013: 377). Rather, they have to be seen as rooted both in individual (and sometimes limited) repertoires, and in a particular sociolinguistic setting, where linguistic resources have become imbued with social meanings. In the case of Rampton's informant,

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19 See, e.g., the EU-funded research network New Speakers in a Multilingual Europe (COST Action IS1306, 2014): http://www.nspk.org.uk/.

20 In the context of Finland, Lehtonen (2015) has studied stylising in the language use of adolescent speakers with a migration background.

the presence of large numbers of (sometimes British-born) Punjabi/English bilinguals in the community means that there are possibilities for indexing localness other than through the persistent use of Anglo-accented English (2013: 376). Rampton concludes that L2 speakers have to be seen as being participants in, rather than outsiders to, the sociolinguistic economy of a place, and that studying them has to go beyond a perspective on competence in the target-language to embrace an understanding of language as *total linguistic fact* (Silverstein 1985: 220; see Section 3.2.1 in this chapter), which takes into account the relationships between forms, situated language use, and linguistic ideology (Rampton 2013: 376-377).

In their study of multilingual young adults in Sweden, Eliaso Magnusson and Stroud (2012) raise similar points from a somewhat different perspective. Their study approaches the question of nativelikeness (see also Chapter 5.2) from a sociolinguistic perspective by showing how their participants, who were Swedish-born and usually taken to be 'native speakers' of Swedish in everyday interactions, came to be treated as second language speakers in instances of heightened metalinguistic reflexivity (Eliaso Magnusson & Stroud 2012: 324). For instance, one participant who works at a call centre reported an incident in which his failure to understand a customer who spoke unclearly resulted in the customer demanding to talk to "someone Swedish" (Eliaso Magnusson & Stroud 2012: 329). When asked in the interview why the customer might have thought he was not Swedish, the participant responded that it was "probably a little accent", although he himself was reluctant to categorise his accent as non-native or markedly ethnic (Eliaso Magnusson & Stroud 2012: 330). The incident is telling not only of how categorisations of nativeness/non-nativeness are constructed interaction, but also of how nonstandardness, non-nativelikeness and non-Swedishness are ideologically linked in the context of Sweden (Eliaso Magnusson & Stroud 2012: 330), and how this ideological cluster informed the categorisation of the participant in interaction. The authors conclude that through the creation of cross-disciplinary synergies between sociolinguistics and second language research, an a priori division of language users into learners and speakers can be avoided, and research can attend in a holistic way to "the role of context, learner variability, and diversity; the polycentric and heterogeneous idea of language; and the identities and self-representations, authenticity, and imaginations of speakers encountering, appropriating, and performing new linguistic forms" (Eliaso Magnusson & Stroud 2012: 342).

The emerging perspectives and approaches described above are of particular relevance to the speakers investigated in this thesis. The few studies that have investigated sociolinguistic variation in a second language have focused particularly on advanced learners (Howard et al. 2013: 342), and sociolinguistic competence is an interesting object of study both with respect to what it means to be highly proficient in a second language and with respect to the mediating role of identity in language learning and use. Research on new speakers, on the other hand, generally focuses on adult second language users and issues of speakerness rather than second language development per se. Moreover, many issues

concerning regional minority languages can also be relevant to contexts involving smaller national languages, such as Finnish. As discussed in Chapter 2, attitudes towards Finnish as a second language have sometimes been ambivalent, drawing on ideologies of an ethnonational ownership of Finnish and bewilderment as to why anyone would want to learn such an insignificant, yet difficult language (Latomaa 1998). Finally, the studies by Rampton (2013) and Eliaso Magnusson and Stroud (2012) illustrate the importance of avoiding a priori assumptions about native and non-native speakers. They show that speakers draw on their multilingual repertoires (with their affordances and restrictions), at the same time as their practices and identities are being co-constructed by interlocutors as well as mediated by the language ideologies and patterns of indexicality present in a sociolinguistic ecology.

This chapter started out with an account of usage-based theories of language learning, and moved on to a discussion of sociolinguistic approaches to multilingual language users. These two perspectives seem at first sight to be rather remote from each other. However, I have argued that language use in a social and cultural environment is the basis of any language learning, and that the ways in which learners are positioned in and act upon their environments crucially shape their learning trajectories. This means that the social, cultural and ideological aspects of this environment across all scales (Lemke 2000; Blommaert 2007) have to be seen as central to language learning processes (see also Ruuska 2016, 2019). Therefore, a theoretical divide between language learning research as the study of individual development and sociolinguistics as the study of language in society obscures how issues such as multilingualism, developing repertoires, identities and ideologies concern all language users, regardless of whether they are traditionally viewed as learners or speakers. In this dissertation, I mobilise concepts from sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology and sociology to study the experiences of very advanced late learners/highly proficient adult second language speakers of Finnish. In Section 3.2 I delineate the three key concepts – ideology, identity, and legitimacy – of my study. Section 3.3 then introduces nexus analysis as a framework in which these key concepts are operationalised for studying speakers' practices and experiences in a wider social and societal context.

3.2 Key concepts

3.2.1 Language ideology

The concept of language ideology, originating in work in linguistic anthropology, is a central notion in contemporary sociolinguistics. Language ideologies have been defined as a "cultural [...] system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests" (Irvine 1989: 255)", as "sets of interested positions about language that represent themselves as forms of common sense" (Hill 2008: 33-34), or simply as "people's ideas

about language" (Jaffe 2009b: 390). Rather than merely adding another topic to the agenda of sociolinguistic research, the emergence of language ideological perspectives has been intertwined with more profound epistemological and practical changes in the field. The wide adoption of and commitment to social constructivist and poststructuralist perspectives has shifted the sociolinguistic interest from matching static language varieties with given social categories (like class or gender) to explaining how language use and social categories are mutually constitutive (Irwin 2011). At the same time, processes of globalisation, international migration and technological development have brought into focus social and linguistic configurations that challenge some traditional concepts in language studies (e.g. 'language' or 'speech community') (see e.g. Blommaert 2010). These processes of change have also drawn attention to the ideological underpinnings of (socio)linguistics itself. Here, a language ideological perspective has contributed to the understanding that the objects of sociolinguistic inquiry are constructed not only by speakers in their everyday lives but also in linguistic research (Gal & Irvine 1995; Heller 2011: 6).

Another argument for the importance of a language ideological perspective is that an ideological dimension is integral to language itself. At its most fundamental, the notion of language ideology recognises that language is never neutral, and that language use can therefore never be regarded as 'innocent behaviour' (Coupland & Jaworski 2004: 36). Meaning-making through language use is a complex phenomenon that goes far beyond the conventionalised meanings ascribed to certain linguistic forms. Rather, it relies on processes that contextualise what is said or written: the notion of indexicality (e.g. Silverstein 2003, 2009) refers to how linguistic forms index social meanings, while the concept of enregisterment (Agha 2007) describes the process whereby social meanings become encoded linguistically. For instance, honorific systems (e.g. the T/V distinction) do not carry any inherent, denotational meaning, but index the relative social positions of interlocutors as well as the type of situation (Duranti 2012: 14), thus coconstructing the very context in which they are interpreted. Language ideologies are central to such processes, as they can be seen as a "mediating link between social structures and forms of talk" (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994: 55). In order to identify social actors in interaction, we need to have an idea about what kinds of linguistic forms, actions or modes of presentation contain information about their identities (Agha 1998: 151). Such an understanding of language and meaning-making is captured in Silverstein's (1985) notion of the 'total linguistic fact', which he defines as the "unstable mutual interaction of meaningful sign forms, contextualized to situations of interested human use and mediated by the fact of cultural ideology" (Silverstein 1985: 220). Such an understanding of language is relevant to this thesis in that it proposes that language ideologies are present whenever language is used, even in the most mundane everyday interactions.

Pietikäinen defines language ideologies as "discursive constructs on the nature and meaning of languages, historically embedded and locally appropriated" (2015: 207). Ideology and discourse are partially overlapping concepts, not least because both terms aim at deconstructing supposedly neutral or natural ways of

thinking and talking about the world. A precise conceptual delimitation is already impossible because both terms have their own complex history of usage (for an overview see Määttä 2014; Määttä & Pietikäinen 2014). According to Gee (2013: 1), discourse can be understood simply as "any stretch of language in use ("discourse" with a little "d") or as a far more abstract formation involving knowledge production and social power relations ("Discourse" with a capital "D"). Ideology, in turn, can be defined in a fairly neutral fashion as socially shared ways of viewing the world, or as politically partial or even distorted belief systems (Woolard 1998: 5-9). Both discourse and ideology can be treated as theoretical concepts or operationalised as analytical tools, but the term 'language ideologies' is generally preferred when the analysed data is about language (Määttä 2014: 63).

Discourse is also a central concept of nexus analysis (see Sections 3.3 and 4.3.3), even though the term has been replaced by language ideology in some nexus analytical studies of language use (e.g. Karjalainen 2015). In this thesis, I employ the notion of discourse alongside the key concept of language ideology. I follow Gee (1996), who takes the view that ideologies are at work in any form of discourse. He defines the relationship between discourse and ideology as follows:

> "Each Discourse incorporates a usually taken for granted tacit 'theory' of what counts as a 'normal' person and the 'right' ways to think, feel, and behave. […] Such theories [...] are what I call in this book *ideologies*. And, thus, too, I claim that language is inextricably bound up with ideology and cannot be analyzed or understood apart from it." (Gee 1996: ix; emphasis in original).

Ideologies and discourses can thus be understood as both forming part of the processes in which language use and social behaviour are evaluated. In my analysis, I use the term discourse for explicit talk about and relatively specific ideas relating to language, while I use the term language ideologies to refer to the established ways of conceptualising language, language use and speakers that are implicit in and at the same time reproduced by such discourses. For instance, discourses about Finnish as a 'difficult language' are enabled by ideologies of languages as bounded entities ('the Finnish language') as well as ideologies of nativeness, which construct late language learning as challenging and the Finnish language as inaccessible to 'foreigners'. However, as discourses about language and language ideologies are closely connected, some overlap and even a certain degree of conflict between the two concepts cannot be avoided.

Irvine and Gal (2000) identify three fundamental and closely intertwined processes of language ideologies. The first process is *iconisation*, and refers to a process whereby linguistic features that index membership in a social group are taken to represent the group's "inherent nature or essence" (Irvine and Gal 2000: 37). An example of this process that is relevant to the context of second language learning and use is the 'native speaker' model (Doerr 2009: 18). Here, ways of speaking associated with first language speakers can be seen as becoming icons of an idealised 'native' competence. In a further move, this idealised competence is then naturalised as somehow complete and intuitive (see e.g. Rampton 1990),

often becoming connected to other iconic indexes such as nationality. The second process is *fractal recursivity*, and refers to the replication of an ideologically constructed opposition on several planes (Irvine & Gal 2000: 38). Applied again to the 'native speaker', fractal recursivity means that, once the (seemingly linguistic) opposition between 'native' and 'non-native' has been constructed, other linguistic and non-linguistic relationships (e.g. 'Finn' and 'foreigner', 'speaker' and 'learner') can be projected onto this difference. Finally, the process of *erasure* (Irvine & Gal 2000: 38) sustains ideologies of language by reducing the social and linguistic complexity of the real world. To stay with my previous example, ideologies of nativeness highlight differences and erase similarities between 'native' and 'non-native' speakers, while at the same time rendering invisible variation in language use within both groups (see Cook 1999; Hall et al. 2006). As a result, the processes of iconisation, fractal recursivity and erasure serve to construct relations of linguistic difference, while at the same time concealing the social origin of their construction by presenting these relations as universally and timelessly valid (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994: 58; also see Agha 1998: 189).

Language ideologies are socially constructed and are therefore shared notions, but they are also conflicting and subject to continuous contestation. According to Pietikäinen (2012: 412), language ideologies are best thought of as dynamic processes that are at the same time historically constructed and situationally instantiated, just as any instance of language usage echoes all previous and future usages at the same time as it constitutes a unique real-time event. Thus, language ideologies cannot be regarded as clearly defined objects of discovery, but have to be seen as analytical abstractions that are useful in exploring the complex connections between social structures and situations of language use. In this sense, language ideologies themselves cannot be considered ontologically real. However, they can become real in their material consequences for speakers and contexts of language use. Definitions of language ideologies as ideas or beliefs give the impression that language ideologies are thoughts that people have and are able to explicate. However, most scholars hold that language ideologies can be studied as either "explicitly articulated or embodied in communicative practice" (Kroskrity 2004: 496). In other words, they view language ideologies not as located in the mind alone but as equally "behavioral, practical, prereflective, or structural" (Woolard 1998: 6). Blommaert (2005: 164) describes ideologies as "materially mediated ideational phenomena" and emphasises that "[i]deas themselves do not define ideologies; they need to be inserted in material practices of modulation and reproduction". In addition to being located in practice, language ideologies are also individually experienced (Pietikäinen 2012: 441). An example of the material and embodied quality of language ideologies can be found in Jaffe's (2009b) study of language ideologies in a classroom in Corsica. Her analysis shows that, rather than through explicit discourse, diglossic ideologies of Corse and French are reproduced through classroom practice, e.g., through teachers' and students' language choices and stances (Jaffe 2009b: 394). Importantly, she stresses that, through such practices, language ideologies are also

inscribed in speakers' experience, thus becoming part of their habitus (Jaffe 2009b: 394; see also Section 3.2.3 of this chapter).

Language ideologies accompany linguistic phenomena of any scale. On the micro-level of concrete instances of language use, language ideologies help construct and interpret what is said. This perspective goes back to Silverstein's (e.g. 1985, 1993) metapragmatics, which focuses on the important role of language ideologies in language change. Here, the concept of language ideologies can be seen as an attempt to understand the relationship between language or action and the language that is used to describe language or action (Silverstein 2001: 382). The reflexive properties of language form the starting point: not only does language-in-use have the ability to explicitly refer to itself and its functions ('talk about talk'), but it also comprises a metalinguistic and metapragmatic dimension without which meaningful communication would not be possible (Verschueren 2000). Every real-time utterance contains elements that contextualise what is said and signals how what is said should be interpreted (see Gumperz' *contextualization cues*, Gumperz 1982; for an application in a second language context see e.g. Ishida 2006). Elements of such a metapragmatic dimension that have become established as interpretative frames whose meanings and functions are taken for granted, and thus remain unquestioned, can be called language ideologies (Verschueren 2000: 450). For instance, Hanell (2017) argues that the way in which social actors understand communication itself has important consequences for how particular discourses (e.g. health information) are transformed into action (e.g. patients' behaviour regarding their health). She is thus able to show that ideologies concerning the content of communication (i.e., topics like parenting and child health) are inseparable from ideologies concerning the nature of communication (Hanell 2017: 53). In this first sense, language ideologies can then be understood as a "culturally determined, historically grounded set of interpretive standards for understanding linguistic [...] communication" (Parmentier 1994: 142).

On the other hand, language ideology can be taken to concern larger-scale linguistic phenomena (Woolard 1998: 4). A second main strand of research on language ideology in sociolinguistics, sociology of language and anthropology, has taken language ideologies to refer to more macro-level linguistic entities and phenomena, such as whole language varieties, or groups or types of speakers. Where metapragmatics approaches language ideology as relating to communication in a general (though language specific) way, these approaches apply a language ideological perspective on concrete, socio-historically formed discursive configurations. Research in this tradition has typically focused on making visible and deconstructing hegemonic language ideologies, such as ideologies of distinct languages (e.g. Blommaert 1999; Makoni & Pennycook 2005, 2007), linguistic purism (e.g. Thomas 1991), or monolingualism (e.g. Blackledge 2000); language ideologies based on nationalism (e.g. Blommaert & Verschueren 1998) and racism (Hill 2008); or the ideological notion of the 'native speaker' (e.g. Rampton 1990, Davies 2003, Doerr 2009, Bonfiglio 2010).

Wortham (2001: 256) points out that, at first sight, these two strands of research on language ideology appear to deal with quite distinct phenomena: one describing micro-level interpretational frames for concrete utterances within concrete speech events, and the other investigating macro-level ideas about language varieties and their speakers. However, despite their differences in scope and origin, it can be argued that the two senses of language ideology are closely intertwined. First, more specific ideologies of language are always embedded in more fundamental beliefs about what language is and how it works (see Jaffe 2009b). For instance, the idea that meaning is first and foremost denotational, i.e., that words have relatively fixed meanings, is what makes it possible to see languages as bounded entities with object-like properties (Blommaert 2006: 511). This construction of individual languages, in turn, provides the ideological basis for the mobilisation of bounded codes for social differentiation (Jaffe 2009b: 392). Second, a clear distinction between micro and macro planes of ideology is impossible since, in keeping with a social constructionist view (Berger & Luckmann 1967), larger-scale cultural beliefs and conceptualisations are ultimately constructed and reiterated in the social interactions of everyday life. This is because any instance of language use comprises metapragmatic elements that relate not only to the sphere of the ongoing interaction but also to more enduring cultural patterns and concepts.

Wortham (2001: 256) proposes that both approaches to language ideology are ultimately directed at processes of identity construction. With respect to identity in interaction, language ideologies exert a mediating function that falls into the domain of both its micro and macro dimensions: without interpretive frames for linguistic interaction we would not be able to produce and recognise interactional stances (Jaffe 2009a), interpret how speakers position themselves and each other, and how these positionings inform the construction of meaning in interaction. Without a framework of cultural beliefs about language, on the other hand, the indexical scope of linguistic features would not extend beyond the immediate interactional context and it would be impossible, for instance, to invoke larger-scale social identities in our interactional positioning (see Bucholtz & Hall 2005). Thus, language ideologies in both of the senses outlined here are in fact part of the same process, and can be seen as being at work whenever language is used. Considering that the more stable aspects of both individual and group identities emerge over time from similar positionings (Wortham 2001: 256), both micro and macro ideologies of language contribute to and mediate the construction of identities. Such an understanding of the interdependence of language ideology and linguistic identity is central to the perspective of this thesis. However, identity itself is a broad and complex notion, and notoriously difficult to define. In the following, I discuss different approaches to and understandings of identity and the closely related concept of positioning.

3.2.2 Identity and positioning

In contrast to language learning research, where identity approaches have only recently gained more support (see 3.1.2), the question of the relationship between

'who someone is' as a social being and 'how someone speaks' has been the main interest of sociolinguistics since its beginnings. While early sociolinguistic approaches did not explicitly refer to this question as an identity issue (Drummond & Schleef 2016: 73), the term identity is now widely used in sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology and related fields as well as the social sciences (Block 2010: 337; Bucholtz & Hall 2010: 18). Identity can take on many different meanings: it can refer to someone's own sense of who they are, to how they present themselves to others, or to how others perceive them both as an individual and as a member of a social group. Thus, there have been discussions about whether the term 'identity' is useful at all. The term has been criticised for reifying everyday understandings of identity and for being too comprehensive to analytically capture any meaningful processes at all. Some scholars have argued for giving up the notion altogether and instead they talk about processes of *identification* rather than *identities* (Brubaker & Cooper 2000). In this thesis, I take the stance that if identity is carefully discussed, accepted in its complexity and approached from the viewpoint of ongoing processes of identity formation, it does contribute to understanding the relationship between (linguistic) practices and conceptions of who we are.

Early sociolinguistics dealt with identity mainly in terms of macro-social categories such as class, race or gender. These categories were seen as more or less stable entities, against which linguistic forms and patterns of language use could be statistically matched (Irwin 2011). In language learning research, on the other hand, learners' identities have often been treated as internal phenomena relating to aptitude and motivation (see Section 3.1.3). Both views essentialise identity as either membership in objectively existing, clear-cut social categories, or as aspects of an individual's psychological reality. The arrival of social constructionist (see Irwin 2011) and poststructuralist perspectives (see García et al. 2017) in language studies has challenged such essentialist readings of identity in fundamental ways. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) provide a detailed account of how identity can be understood and investigated in a poststructuralist framework. They define identity as "the social positioning of self and other" (2005: 586) and formulate the following five principles:

> "(1) identity is the product rather than the source of linguistic and other semiotic practices and therefore is a social and cultural rather than primarily internal psychological phenomenon; (2) identities encompass macro-level demographic categories, temporary and interactionally specific stances and participant roles, and local, ethnographically emergent cultural positions; (3) identities may be linguistically indexed through labels, implicatures, stances, styles, or linguistic structures and systems; (4) identities are relationally constructed through several, often overlapping, aspects of the relationship between self and other, including similarity/difference, genuineness/artifice and authority/delegitimacy; and (5) identity may be in part intentional, in part habitual and less than fully conscious, in part an outcome of interactional negotiation, in part a construct of others' perceptions and representations, and in part an outcome of larger ideological processes and structures." (Bucholtz & Hall 2005: 585)

The first principle ("identity is the product rather than the source of linguistic and other semiotic practices") emphasises the constructedness of identity. This means, on the one hand, that identity cannot be seen as merely reflecting social

differences, but that social categories themselves have to be understood as socially constructed. With a focus on language use, this means that while certain ways of speaking might correlate with certain social identities, these ways of speaking do not simply mirror these identities, but are constitutive of them. Norton (2013: 4) notes that, from a poststructuralist perspective, even an individual's sense of self, subjectivity, cannot be seen as a fixed and coherent core. Rather, subjectivity is discursively constructed, dynamic and sometimes contradictory. It is also necessarily embedded in a social and historical context; that is to say, while we do make choices with regard to how we perceive and present ourselves, the options among which we choose are not determined by us (Appiah 1994: 154-155).

The second principle ("identities encompass macro-level demographic categories, temporary and interactionally specific stances and participant roles, and local, ethnographically emergent cultural positions") concerns the resources for identity construction in interaction. Here, social categories can be understood not as the source of identity, but as a resource for identity construction, and they are complemented by less stable and encompassing elements such as interactional roles and emergent positionings. Thus, any instance of identity construction potentially invokes multiple scales of social organisation (Lemke 2002). The different stances, roles and macro-categories drawn on in identity construction can support each other or be perceived as being in conflict, making processes of identity construction multiple and overlapping, temporary and situational, or even contradictory. This second principle is closely connected to the third ("identities may be linguistically indexed through labels, implicatures, stances, styles, or linguistic structures and systems"). As I discussed earlier in this chapter, indexicality refers to how linguistic features come to be associated with and ultimately stand for particular social identities. Thus, in order for macro-level categories to become a resource for identity construction in interaction, they have to be indexically linked to linguistic (or other semiotic) resources that can be used by participants in interaction.

The fourth principle ("identities are relationally constructed") refers to the view that identification *as* something or someone always includes identification *as not* something or someone else. This is particularly salient in cases where linguistic features are taken to index identities that are ideologically constructed as being part of a binary opposition. For instance, the ideology of the 'native speaker' is based on the construction of the categories of native and non-native speakers as mutually exclusive (see e.g. Cook 1999: 187; Motha 2014: 94). Thus, identifying someone as a 'native speaker' inevitably implies not identifying them as a 'non-native' speaker and vice versa. Finally, the fifth principle ("identity may be in part intentional, in part habitual […], in part an outcome of interactional negotiation, in part a construct of others' perceptions and representations, and in part an outcome of larger ideological processes and structures") is concerned with the locations and trajectories of identity construction. This principle is important for the context of second language learning and use, as language learning is a holistic

process that involves conscious efforts towards speaker identities, changing embodied dispositions for language use, as well as encounters with other speakers and ideas about language.

A notion closely related to identity and often employed alongside it (see Bucholtz & Hall 2005) is that of positioning. The notion was first proposed in the social psychological work of Davies and Harré (1990) and was developed significantly in later approaches (De Fina 2013: 41). Taking a constructivist stance, positioning theorists hold that discourse should not be seen as reflecting or expressing an assumed psychological reality, but as the locus of the construction of psychological phenomena themselves (Harré & van Langenhove 2003b: 4). Positioning analysis draws on a large body of sociological research, especially Goffman's work on face-to-face interactions (e.g. Goffman 1982 [1967], 1983). For Goffman, any face-to-face interaction involves the presentation (or production) of 'self', i.e., the ways in which participants attempt to manage the impression of themselves that they give to their interlocutors (Goffman 1983). Goffman sees the logic of interactions and the logic of self-presentation as closely intertwined: what happens between participants in social situations is ultimately determined by participants' needs to construct a presentational self (Rawls 1987: 136). At the same time, the self can only be performed in encounters with others, and it therefore crucially depends on interaction (Rawls 1987: 139). Put briefly, interaction is where the self takes place, and there is no interaction without a performance of self. This also means that a lot is at stake for participants even in the most mundane of interactions. If participants fail to create and sustain a coherent impression of themselves, they might lose 'face' (Goffman 1982 [1967]: 5-45). Because all participants face the danger of embarrassment, all participants acquire certain rights and obligations when they enter an interaction: they commit to sustaining the interaction and to accepting, at least by default, the way in which other participants choose to present themselves (Rawls 1987: 140). Yet the presentation of self is not entirely spontaneous or free. Rather, in any given context participants draw on a repertoire of socially intelligible and acceptable personae (Harré & Langenhove 2003b: 7), and a self-presentation that is in line with the social identity attributed to them by others is strongly encouraged (Goffman 1986 [1963]: 2).

Positioning theorists criticise sociology's reliance on social roles, rules, and expectations, and instead emphasise the idiosyncratic aspects of social episodes (Harré & van Langenhove 2003b: 6). Positioning theorists emphasise that identities are not only dictated by social categories and imposed by others, but are negotiated in practice and so also involve social actors' agency and their attempts to position themselves (Norton 2013: 5; see Section 3.1.3). According to Harré and van Langenhove (2003b: 6), any analysis then has to take into account three basic features of interactions: "i. the moral positions of the participants and the rights and duties they have to say certain things, ii. the conversational history and the sequence of things already being said, iii. the actual sayings with their power to shape certain aspects of the social world". In other words, while participants' roles and expectations ("rights and duties") are an important aspect of the interaction order, the ongoing interaction itself contributes to shaping the situational

context, and participants can even actively influence the course of events. This view of positioning has been further developed in narrative analysis (e.g. De Fina et al. 2006; Deppermann 2013b). I discuss narrative perspectives on positioning and their relevance for the analysis of my interview data in more detail in Chapter 4.3.3.

In sum, identity in contemporary socio-cultural linguistic research is seen as positioning that is situational, in that it is temporary, fluid, or even contradictory, and is situated in that it is always embedded in a social and historical context. As pointed out earlier, macro-social structures such as culture, ideology or social categories determine the range of recognisable and intelligible identities in any given context. This repertoire of identities structures what is possible in interactions at the same time as it is shaped and reshaped by these very interactions. From the perspective of the individual social actor or speaker, on the other hand, identity construction involves self-positionings as well as positionings by others. Thus, identity is a concept that we can use to explore the relationship between language and the social, and between subjective experience of language, language use in interaction, and more enduring social and cultural configurations (Lemke 2008: 21).

The emphasis on identity as constructed in interaction, and therefore as situational and temporary, is important in that it avoids an essentialist conceptualisation of identity as the inner core of an individual. However, this does not mean that there are no stable and continuous aspects of identity at all. As identities are constructed and re-enacted in interaction, their performance becomes deeply inscribed in our bodies (see Scollon 2001 and the notion of *historical body*, further described in Section 3.3; also see Butler 1993). For instance, while speakers are generally able to choose what they say as well as how they say it, they are usually not able to change their voice, accent or other thoroughly embodied features of language completely and at will. Moreover, speakers' linguistic repertoires (and particularly those of second language speakers) always comprise only a small part of all the possibilities for meaning-making that language offers. Thus, identity construction through language is also contingent on speakers' embodied dispositions for linguistic practice, their *linguistic habitus* (Bourdieu 1991). Importantly, which linguistic resources and practices become embodied by speakers depends on the sociolinguistic environments into which they are socialised, and is therefore not (always) a matter of individual choice. Consequently, both the linguistic habitus and the identity constructions afforded by it are sensitive to social power effects, as the low prestige of a social group is transferred to their linguistic variety, and stigmatised ways of talking put their speakers in a vulnerable position. In the following, I will discuss such dynamics from the perspective of *linguistic legitimacy* (Bourdieu 1977).

3.2.3 Linguistic legitimacy

The notion of linguistic legitimacy stems from Bourdieu's writings on language and symbolic power (see especially Bourdieu 1977, 1991). In this body of work,

Bourdieu criticises the idea of language as an independent system and of language use as the (neutral and equal) exchange of linguistic symbols for the purpose of communication. Instead, he proposes a sociologically informed notion of language and language use. Such a notion approaches communication from a perspective of social power, emphasising that, in addition to serving communicative purposes, any linguistic exchange also actualises the relations of power between speakers and the groups they represent (Bourdieu 1991: 37).

This perspective on language and power reconceptualises a range of common concepts in language studies. First, it views grammaticalness not as an inherent feature of language but as a socially constructed norm of acceptability (Bourdieu 1977: 649), which resonates with the sociolinguistic notion of appropriateness (see Hymes 1972 [1971]). Second, it shifts the interest from meaning in communication to the effectiveness (Bourdieu 1991: 107) of communication, i.e., the question of whose communication is given value and authority under what circumstances. Finally, it reinterprets the concept of linguistic competence as being integrated in a speaker's habitus, as constituting part of their symbolic capital, and as transforming into the right to speech (Bourdieu 1977: 648). In the context of second language learning and use, these reconceptualisations help draw attention to important questions. For instance, instead of defining competence in the second language simply as the linguistic resources learners have acquired, we are prompted to ask what learners can do with these resources in what kinds of situations and with what effects.

Habitus is a central notion in Bourdieu's work. It can be broadly defined as a set of embodied dispositions, i.e., of ways of being in the world, and it tries to explain how social behaviour can be subject to regulation without following explicit rules (Bourdieu 1990: 81). In Bourdieu's thinking, habitus denotes both the disposition of a particular social group (e.g. class habitus) and individuals' embodiment of this collective disposition. The embodiment of collective dispositions takes place in everyday conditioning processes in a particular material, social and cultural environment, and results in, for instance, class-specific tastes (Bourdieu 1984) and group-based ways of speaking (Bourdieu 1977). At the same time, habitus is understood as the 'generative principle' (Bourdieu 1990: 57) of practices, in other words, as ways of acting, thinking and perceiving that are constitutive of practices. The habitus therefore enables stability as well as flexibility and change: it is a "structured structure", which is the result of individual experiences and shared conditions of life, as well as "a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices" (Bourdieu 1984: 170). However, the habitus does not determine what people do or how they do it; rather, it marks off the limits of what is possible or likely, enabling 'regulated improvisations' (Bourdieu 1990: 57) within a practice. With regard to language, Bourdieu speaks of the language habitus or linguistic habitus, which he defines as "a permanent disposition towards language and interactions which is objectively adjusted to a given level of acceptability" (1977: 655; see also Bourdieu 1991: 53). The linguistic habitus can be thought of as comprising all the linguistic and com-

municative resources a speaker has accumulated throughout their linguistic trajectory and that have become embodied, and it is therefore close to the notion of linguistic repertoire (see 3.1.3). These resources have been acquired in social environments, in which their use is common and appropriate (or, in Bourdieu's phrasing, acceptable). However, the language habitus goes beyond purely linguistic resources in that it constitutes a holistic disposition towards how language is used in interaction, thus also comprising cultural, subcultural or group-based ways of speaking and doing things.

At the same time, linguistic competence is understood by Bourdieu as symbolic capital in a market of linguistic exchanges (Bourdieu 1977: 651). In this market, ways of speaking are differentiated and organised in a hierarchical system that reflects and reproduces social hierarchies. For Bourdieu, these hierarchical differences are first and foremost connected to social class, so that the ways of speaking of the dominant classes are the most prestigious while those of the lower classes are stigmatised. Such hierarchies can easily be observed in many other areas of language use, for instance when dialects are considered less valuable than standard language (e.g. Milroy 2001), spoken discourse is regarded as inferior to written forms of language (e.g. Linell 2005), or non-native varieties are considered to be less legitimate than native varieties of a language (e.g. Jenkins 2009). At any rate, linguistic hierarchies are based on social hierarchies, that is, "a language is worth what those who speak it are worth" (Bourdieu 1977: 652). Being subject to ideological processes that naturalise the differentiation and unequal valuation of linguistic varieties (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994: 58; also see Irvine & Gal 2000), the relationship between social and linguistic hierarchies usually remains invisible to speakers, who take them to be self-evident and somehow intrinsic to language. For instance, standard language is often simply regarded as the proper or most correct way of speaking, obscuring the fact that such an evaluation is ultimately derived not from language itself but from social power relations (Hanks 2005: 77). Bourdieu thus maintains that any study of language should be first and foremost concerned with the social conditions of language use, i.e., "who (*de facto* and *de jure*) may speak, to whom, and how" (Bourdieu 1977: 649).

It is against this background that Bourdieu establishes an understanding of linguistic competence as "the right to speech, i.e. to legitimate language, the authorized language which is also the language of authority" (1977: 648). In contrast to a notion of competence as the property of a speaker, this understanding concerns the relationship between the linguistic habitus of a speaker and the symbolic value which their way of speaking has in the linguistic market. To give an example from the area of migration and multilingualism, speakers who have developed their linguistic habitus in a multilingual context and speak several languages can still be constructed as "speaking no language" after migrating to another place where none of their languages has any currency in local linguistic markets (Blommaert et al. 2005: 210). For Bourdieu, the dynamics of symbolic capital and the linguistic market generally support the reproduction of social power relations, as different forms of symbolic capital tend to accumulate with

speakers. For instance, Gee (1996: 60) shows how school teachers teaching upper streams and lower streams for English had very different ideas about the literacy skills they wanted their students to learn (e.g. "thinking critically" and "filling out forms", respectively), thus assigning different values to different groups of people. The notion of habitus has sometimes been criticised for placing too much weight on social reproduction and for ultimately being unable to explain social transformation (see e.g. Ahearn 2001: 118). Language learning later in life, however, is a process of transformation par excellence and inevitably involves crossing the boundaries of one's linguistic habitus. In my view, it is precisely because of the tension between possibilities and constraints inherent in the habitus, as well as the relationship between the habitus and the linguistic market, that Bourdieu's notion of linguistic legitimacy provides a valuable perspective on (late) second language learning and use.

Bourdieu emphasises the importance of institutions, and especially the educational system, in reproducing relations of symbolic power (see Bourdieu 1991: 49). Indeed, linguistic legitimacy is often granted through institutionalised procedures. For instance, the right to study at university or apply for citizenship often requires proof of language skills that are assessed according to an established standard in language tests. However, more relevant to the perspective of this thesis, linguistic legitimacy can be constructed in much less explicit (but not less powerful) ways, drawing on implicit cultural and linguistic norms, language ideologies, as well as issues of authenticity and speaker identity. For once, the 'right to speech' can be interpreted quite literally: while some people are given space to speak in certain situations, others are excluded from communication (Bourdieu 1977: 648). Examples of how language learners are denied access to opportunities for language use abound in the second language literature (see Pavlenko 2000 and Section 3.1.2). But even if speakers are participating in the communication, they can still be deprived of the right to speak through being positioned as illegitimate. For instance, Martín Rojo (2015: 8-12) demonstrates how in a high school career counselling session, migrant students were unable to construct an interactional positioning based on their own, rather than the school counsellor's, idea of their capabilities and potential, making them complicit in the counsellor's attempt to discourage them from pursuing a prestigious education. Such interactional asymmetries are consequential beyond the situation where they are constructed, as the outcomes of counselling sessions or job interviews can have long-lasting effects on participants' linguistic and socioeconomic trajectories. It is the construction of unequal power relations between interlocutors in everyday interactions both inside outside institutions that ultimately consolidates the status of legitimate speakers and ways of speaking. Here, it is also important to stress again that delegitimising experiences can evoke strong negative emotions (like humiliation, shame, or embarrassment) which, as the 'lived experience of language' (Busch 2017), can inscribe themselves in the body of the language user.

Moreover, from the perspective of linguistic legitimacy, speakers with a different habitus can also be seen as having unequal rights to use particular forms or varieties of language. Bourdieu emphasises that the speaker's social identity

crucially determines how their speech is interpreted. He states that "what speaks is not the utterance, [or] the language, but the whole social person" (1977: 653). Thus, the same linguistic products can be awarded radically different values, depending on who the speaker is (Bourdieu 1977: 655). This process is also regulated through the habitus. For instance, speakers who have been socialised into and have therefore embodied the dominant language (e.g., a middle-class standard) assert their legitimacy by producing such language quite casually, and can sometimes even afford to use hypocorrect forms of speech (Bourdieu 1991: 125). Bourdieu calls this the ability to display "relaxation in tension" (Bourdieu 1977: 659). Speakers who recognise the norms of the dominant language but do not use them habitually (perhaps because they are working-class speakers of a dialect) cannot attain legitimacy in the same way. This is precisely because their pursuit of the dominant language (e.g. through control of their pronunciation or hypercorrect forms of speech) is perceived as a conscious attempt rather than an effortless achievement (Bourdieu 1977: 655-656). This is a particularly relevant observation for the context of highly proficient second language speakers. While such speakers often objectively use the same standard or non-standard forms of discourse as 'native speakers', their overall performance might still be interpreted differently against the background of their status or linguistic habitus (see also Jaspers 2016). Consequently, in order to achieve linguistic legitimacy in the target language, second language speakers may feel they have to strive for correctness, while for 'native speakers' of that language there is greater scope for creativity.

Bourdieu's remarks about the importance of effortlessness in achieving legitimacy also connects with the notion of authenticity. Recent work in sociolinguistics has turned away from regarding authenticity as an essential realness and has instead investigated it in terms of processes of authentication involving ideologies about languages and speakers (Bucholtz 2003). Kramsch (2012) discusses the relationship between legitimacy and authenticity in second language use. She analyses a passage from a bilingual writer's autobiographical novel, where the narrator, an elite student and fluent second language speaker of English, is overwhelmed by a sense of artifice after attempting to respond to her interlocutor in "some kind of American" with "equal spontaneity" (Hoffman 1989: 21; cited in Kramsch 2012: 111). Although her interlocutor seems satisfied with her response, the narrator is overcome by a feeling of paralysis and speechlessness. Kramsch argues that Hoffman's speechlessness did not stem from an actual lack of linguistic competence or from a negative reaction on the part of her interlocutor, but from the fear of being an illegitimate impostor who might just not be "'American' enough to use English the way American native speakers use it" (Kramsch 2012: 212). This example shows that linguistic (il)legitimacy is not always a question of outside regulation of speakers but can also take the form of self-censorship (Bourdieu 1991: 77).

The notion of linguistic legitimacy brings together the issues of language ideology and identity and positioning discussed earlier in this chapter. Like language ideology, the notion of linguistic legitimacy is grounded in an understanding of language not as neutral or innocent (Coupland & Jaworski 2004: 36), but

as deeply embedded in historical processes of social power and political interest. Like approaches to identity and positioning, it draws attention to how power circulates through the individual habitus and through social situations. Linguistic legitimacy can then be seen as concerning the intersection of societal power and socioculturally constituted speakers. In order to investigate such a nexus of multilayered processes, an equally multilayered theoretical framework is needed. Pietikäinen (2012: 411) argues that the discourse analytical approach of nexus analysis offers a particularly suitable framework for studying how language, large-scale historical processes and societal ideological processes dynamically interact with the smaller-scale ideological processes constructed and experienced by individuals in local and situational contexts. The next section introduces nexus analysis and discusses its potential for the study of second language speakers from the perspective of language ideology, identity and linguistic legitimacy.

3.3 Nexus analysis

3.3.1 Nexus analysis as a theoretical framework

Nexus analysis (Scollon & Scollon 2004, 2007) is a discourse analytical approach developed by linguistic anthropologists Ron Scollon and Suzie Wong Scollon that places social action at the centre of the analysis. It is an approach to discourse in that it is interested in "all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural and historical patterns and developments of use" (Blommaert 2005: 3). Nexus analysis views such activity as involving the use of mediational means, for instance, language or physical objects. Beyond social action, it focuses its attention on different nexus of practice, i.e., junctions or intersections of actions, practices, ideas and objects that come to form socially significant links (Scollon 2001: 140-158). Nexus analysis is sometimes referred to (e.g. Al Zidjaly 2012: 3) as the methodological framework of *mediated discourse analysis* (MDA, R. Scollon 2001), while elsewhere MDA is referred to as the term used in the Scollons' earlier work and nexus analysis as the term used in later publications (Scollon & Scollon 2007: 615). Both terms, in any case, refer to a holistic approach to discourse based on the same theoretical constructs, and they are often used interchangeably. In this thesis, I refer to nexus analysis as an umbrella term for the collection of theoretical and methodological dimensions involved in the analysis of mediated discourse. This section discusses nexus analysis as a theoretical framework; in other words, I explore the view it takes on social action in general and language in particular, as well as its implications for studying second language speakers. Nexus analysis as a methodological framework, insofar as it is relevant to this study, is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Nexus analysis can be described as a critical approach that is driven by a deep concern with social inequality. Indeed, nexus analysis was originally developed in response to the Scollons' difficulties in identifying exactly where and how social inequality is ultimately reproduced. They found that there was no

single social situation or context in which discrimination could have been thought to originate, as all the situations and contexts they studied were linked to other situations and contexts in a network; discrimination therefore had to be understood as emerging from nexus points (Scollon & Scollon 2007: 615). In a specific sense, the term *nexus* refers to the *nexus of practice* as an established type of action in which social practices intersect in a regular fashion (R. Scollon 2001: 142; Scollon & Scollon 2004: 12). However, *nexus* can also designate any connection between "two different ideas or objects which links them in a series or network" (Scollon & Scollon 2004: viii). From a nexus analytical point of view, everything is connected – past and future interactions, social actors and their histories, ideas and discourses – and it is the task of nexus analysis to explore precisely these linkages.

According to R. Scollon (2001), nexus analysis represents neither an entirely new theory nor a new methodology, as it draws heavily on concepts from other fields of research in linguistics and linguistic anthropology. Instead, it can be seen as an attempt to create a theoretical and analytical focal point, mediated action, around which work in these different areas can be brought together (R. Scollon 2001: 8). Nexus analysis shares with interactional sociolinguistics and conversation analysis an interest in the close linguistic analysis of interaction. At the same time, it subscribes to the premise of sociological practice theory, according to which social structures are produced and reproduced in concrete instances of social action and, conversely, an analysis of any such instances has to take into account the sociocultural embeddedness of the mediational means and the habitus (R. Scollon 2001: 9). Critical discourse analysis, in turn, provides a theoretical perspective for studying how power circulates in semiotic ecologies (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 136). Finally, the commitment of nexus analysis to ethnography as a theoretical and methodological approach draws on ethnographic traditions in anthropology and sociology, while also departing from them by taking social action, rather than a specific social group or culture, as a starting point (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 13). Bringing together these (and other) strands of research creates a comprehensive theoretical and methodological framework that allows for the concurrent analysis of micro and macro aspects of social reality, processes happening on different timescales (Lemke 2000), linguistic and non-linguistic forms of semiotic activity, the joint construction of social action, as well as social actors' individual trajectories, while also providing a useful terminology (see the discussion below). Nexus analysis as a framework calls for analytical complexity and ambiguity (R. Scollon 2001: 11) and is eclectic in its use of methods of data collection and analysis.

It is therefore not surprising that nexus analysis has been applied in the study of a wide array of topics. The Scollons themselves have used a nexus analytical framework in the study of child interaction and socialisation (e.g. R. Scollon 2001) and online practices (e.g. Scollon & Scollon 2004). Other scholars have worked with nexus analysis in, for example, the fields of language policy (e.g. Hult 2010; Savski 2015), language education (Dressler 2012; Källkvist 2013; Hult 2017; Kuure et al. 2018), minority languages (Lane 2009; Pietikäinen 2012,

2015; Karjalainen 2015; Brannick 2016), multilingual work places (e.g. Chopin 2016; Strömmer 2017a; Virtanen 2017), health communication (e.g. Hanell 2017), translation and interpreting studies (e.g. Koskinen 2008; Määttä 2017), and online communities (e.g. Martinviita 2017). In this thesis, I draw on a nexus analytical framework to explore the experiences of highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish. In Section 3.3.3, I argue that nexus analysis offers a holistic perspective that is able to take into account the experiential, interactional and ideological aspects of second language use. First, however, I introduce the nexus analytical concepts used in this study in more detail (3.3.2).

3.3.2 Central concepts of nexus analysis

Unlike many other discourse analytical approaches, nexus analysis does not start with language but takes the notion of social action as its starting point and unit of analysis. The reason for this is the Scollons' conviction that language is only one element of social action, and that the whole picture needs to be explored in order to grasp the role of language (Al Zidjaly 2012: 2). Looking exclusively at the content and structure of discourse, whether written texts or spoken words, does not tell us much about what it is that people actually do with discourse in social situations. As Jones and Norris (2005a: 4) argue, meaning is not located in discourse itself but emerges from the ways in which people employ discourse in their actions. In order to understand discourse, we therefore need to understand its relationship with action. This is only possible if we direct our analytical focus to social action in all its complexity.

Scollon and Scollon (2004: 11) define social action as "any action taken by an individual with reference to a social network, [i.e.] a mediated action." This definition implies that a social action is thought of not as an isolated and self-contained event but as connected to and constituted by actions that have taken place elsewhere in time and space. The process through which such previous actions enter the here-and-now is captured by the notion of *mediation*, a concept stemming from sociocultural theory (see e.g. Wertsch 1991, 2007). Sociocultural theory holds that any social action is mediated through the use of cultural tools, such as bodies, material artefacts, communities, practices and identities as well as semiotic systems (see Section 3.1.2). These tools are neither given nor fixed but they have developed and are continuously developing in time through a long chain of actions.[21]

Cultural tools mediate social action by providing affordances for action (see van Lier 2004: 90-105) and imposing constraints on the kinds of actions that can be taken. For instance, language can be seen as a cultural tool affording a broad

[21] For instance, a road sign can be seen not only as a material and semiotic artefact that can be used as a tool for navigating, but also as the result of social actors commissioning, planning, designing and putting up the sign, i.e., of actions undertaken at an earlier moment in time that have become 'frozen actions' (see Norris 2004: 13-14). For somebody driving a car, the road sign is merely an object and its history is insignificant. Yet the presence of the sign as well as its particular design as an outcome of earlier action make a difference in terms of the action a social actor can undertake in the here-and-now.

range of utterances and actions but also setting limits to what it is possible to say. At the same time, linguistic conventions are not able to predict what actual utterances will be made by speakers at particular moments in time; they merely offer possibilities for meaning-making (cf. Halliday 1978: 39). Mediated actions are therefore characterised by a dynamic struggle between the scope of possible actions provided by the mediational means and the unique real-time implementation of these means in action (see Wertsch 1994: 205). It is also important to stress that the term action does not (or not only) refer to conscious and intentional behaviour on the part of acting individuals. Rather, social action is often distributed and jointly constructed by multiple participants (R. Scollon 2002: 233). What is more, individual agency is not disconnected from its social and cultural contexts (see 3.1.3). A nexus analytical approach therefore regards agency as "integrated – and in tension with – the actor's *habitus*, the mediational means employed and the social practices involved in constructing a mediated action" (Jones & Norris 2005b: 169; italics in original).

From this perspective, social action appears to be a thoroughly complex and historically layered (cf. Blommaert 2005: 131) object of analysis. Rather than providing a narrow definition of what social action is or is not (see Scollon & Scollon 2007: 608), the Scollons address this complexity by directing the analytical focus towards three elements at whose intersection they understand social action to take place (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 19): the participants' *historical bodies*, i.e., the embodied experience participants bring to a situation; the *interaction order*, i.e., the social roles taken by and the relationship between participants in the situation; and the *discourses in place*, i.e., any meaning-making activities carried out by participants in or surrounding the social action. These elements are often schematised as circles or half-circles in graphic representations (see Figure 2), but they are not understood as static or fixed units. Rather, the Scollons emphasise that they have to be seen as 'discourse cycles' (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 18-34) or 'discourse itineraries' (R. Scollon 2008) which 'aggregate' in real-time instances of social action (Blommaert & Huang 2009: 272).

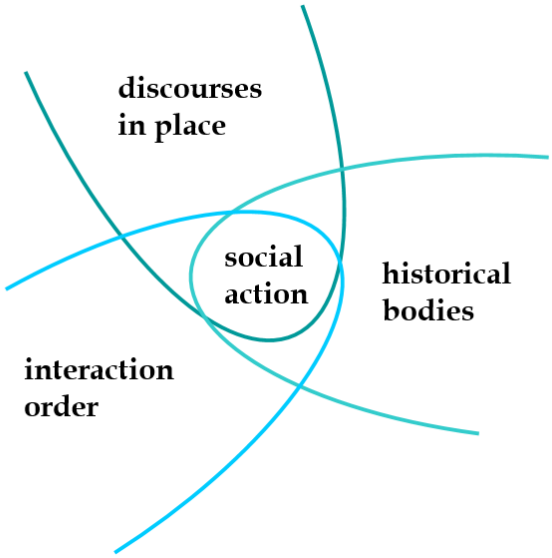

FIGURE 2 Social action at the intersection of historical bodies, the interaction order and discourses in place (adapted from Scollon 2004: 20)

These discourse itineraries are formed in sequences of previous actions and they change with every action through which they circulate (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 28). Thus, in addition to observing what happens in the synchronic intersection of the three discourse cycles, nexus analysis is also interested in their trajectories, e.g. the circulation of a particular discourse or participants' histories of socialisation into a practice. This enables a better understanding of the ways in which an action unfolds in the here-and-now and of how it is connected to other social actions. In the following, I will examine each of the three elements or discourse cycles more closely and discuss their relationship with related theoretical concepts. I will discuss their particular relevance with regard to language, language learning and second language speakers in Section 3.3.3.

Historical body

The first element of social action is the historical body, a notion borrowed from Japanese philosopher Kitarō Nishida (1998 [1937]) who set out to develop an ontology that goes beyond materialist and idealist traditions towards an understanding of reality as the "world in which we are actively involved" (Nishida 1998 [1937]: 39). His basic assumption is that any human action creates something, it leaves a material trace in the world, which in turn acts on the person who created it as well as on other people (Nishida 1998 [1937]: 40). A simple example would be the act of inventing a tool or transforming an already existing one – an act which alters the historical world by adding a material and cultural item to it, thereby affording new or different actions in the future. The world can then be understood as a 'transactional world', i.e. a world that is shaped by people and that simultaneously shapes those who are involved in it (Nishida 1998 [1937]: 40). Crucially, in Nishida's philosophy, this interaction between individual consciousness and historical world is mediated by the human body. The body is the

basis of all action: it enables a person to be a subject that acts on the world as well as an object that can be acted on by others (Grosz 2014: 148). In other words, we need our bodies in order to transform ideas into materialities (buildings, works of art, words spoken or written), at the same time as our consciousness is shaped through bodily engagement with those materialities already present in the world. For Nishida, human existence is therefore "a mutual determination of consciousness and world" (Grosz 2014: 147).

Nishida's historical body bears some similarity to Bourdieu's (1990) notion of habitus (R. Scollon 2001: 167), discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.3. While the Scollons frequently draw on Bourdieu and the concept of habitus, their preferred term is 'historical body'. One reason for this is the ambiguity in Bourdieu's theory about whether the habitus is thought of as individual dispositions or whether it is to be found in the collective dispositions of a social group (R. Scollon 2001: 143). From a nexus analytical perspective, social actors and their historical bodies are not conceptualised as representatives of an a priori defined social group but as each having their individual history of experience, which can bear more or fewer similarities to that of other individuals (see R. Scollon 2001: 157). In nexus analysis, the historical body is thus defined as an individual's "accumulated experience of social actions" (R. Scollon 2001: 6), which shapes this individual's physical skills, linguistic repertoires, cultural habits and ways of thinking (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 46). Hence, whenever a social actor enters into a situation, the historical body represents both a resource and a kind of 'baggage' (Blommaert & Huang 2009: 273). It enables individuals to act but also places constraints on what they can do, think or perceive.

Another important aspect of the notion of historical body is that, as a term, it draws attention to physical bodies and forwards an understanding of experience not as exclusively mental, but as bodily and embodied. Social actions always have a material reality and "[w]hat is actually perceived, and acted upon semiotically by other people is a body in a particular space" (Blommaert & Huang 2009: 274). The emphasis on the body also takes seriously the very concrete ways in which most everyday social actions (e.g. buying a coffee in a coffee shop) require a large number of lower-level actions crucially involving embodied routines (e.g. queuing, handling money, or picking up a coffee cup; see Scollon 2001: 1).

Interaction order

The second element of the Scollons' concept of social action is the interaction order, a term borrowed from Goffman (1983). In its original sense, the interaction order concerns face-to-face interactions, i.e., "environments in which two or more individuals are physically in one another's response presence" (Goffman 1983: 2). Goffman's central argument is that what happens in interactions cannot be sufficiently explained on the basis of explicit rules of behaviour, macrosociological categories or external norms and values. Nor is it reducible to participants – after all, the same people can behave very differently in different situations. Consequently, the interaction order is thought to exist independently of both structures

and individuals (Rawls 1987: 139). Goffman (1983: 2) therefore argues that interactions, with their unique dynamics and effects, can and should be an area of sociological investigation in their own right.

In the context of nexus analysis, the interaction order can be understood as referring to social arrangements in which participants gather to carry out social actions such as conversations, meetings or lessons (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 19) – in short, to the different ways in which individuals can be in each other's presence.[22] Different interaction orders are linked to different ways of participating as well as different expectations about the course of the interaction. The interaction order also affects the relationships between participants in an interaction. For example, a traditional university lecture is performed by a lecturer and an audience engaged in speaking and listening practices, respectively, it is usually set in a room designed precisely for this purpose, and it has a clear structure and time frame. A study meeting among classmates could, instead, take place in the library, the participants will probably be gathered around a table, and their roles as well as the course of the meeting will be negotiable at least to some extent.

Discourses in place

The final element of social action is referred to by the Scollons as discourses in place. Following Gee's (2013) differentiation between 'discourse' and 'Discourse', discourses in place can be understood in two ways. On the one hand, they can be thought of as the concrete 'language stuff' (e.g. words, speech, texts) that is drawn on when carrying out a social action. On the other hand, discourses in place can be seen as more abstract discursive constructs, or Discourses, regulating the semiotic relationship between linguistic conventions, actions and social identities (Gee 1999: 13; Gee 2013: 1). Nexus analysis is interested in discourse in both of these senses. It is interested in language and other semiotic means, but it keeps the focus on how these are put into use to achieve a particular social action in time. At the same time, nexus analysis acknowledges that the use of language in social action is usually linked to, or invokes, more abstract Discourses. R. Scollon (2001: 2) gives the example of a paper coffee cup, which not only serves as a material tool in the action of having a coffee, but its inscriptions also bring in a whole range of Discourses, stretching from commercial branding to manufacturing information. The crucial question for nexus analysis is when and in what way the action, the situated language use that accompanies it, and the Discourses

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22 Of course, not all ways in which people come together consist of typical face-to-face interactions. Scollon and Scollon (2004) use the term to compare the interaction order of a class taught face-to-face in a traditional "panopticon classroom" (2004: 39) with the interaction order of a course taught online. A considerable body of nexus analytical work has since investigated digital communication, re-conceptualising the notion of interaction order to describe interaction in online communities (e.g. Martinviita 2017). Applying a nexus analytical perspective to the analysis of policy texts, Hult has suggested thinking about the 'interaction order' of textual artifacts (2010: 12), while some nexus analysts (Pietikäinen 2012; Karjalainen 2015) have preferred the notion of 'genre' over 'interaction order' in their work, emphasising that types of interactions are inextricably linked to particular normed and recognisable ways of using language (Karjalainen 2015: 88).

present become connected, and how we are to understand this connection. Because social action is necessarily situated in a concrete, material environment (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 14), the discourses involved in any action are always 'in place', that is to say, they are spatially and temporally situated discourses (see also Scollon & Scollon 2003).

Four perspectives are central to the Scollons' understanding of discourse. First, in contrast to approaches to discourse that focus exclusively on what is expressed through language by analysing conversations, narratives, media texts or political speeches, nexus analysis investigates discourse as one element of social action among others, and conceptualises it as material and semiotic but not necessarily encoded by linguistic means. Second, discourses are understood as circulating on different timescales (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 14; see also Lemke 2000; Blommaert 2005, 2007). The duration of a simple verbal exchange can be as short as minutes or seconds, a printed book can circulate for decades, whereas buildings may be a hundred years old or more, and will therefore appear as a static element rather than a discourse itinerary from the perspective of day-to-day life. In this way, much of the 'historical world' consists in fact of processes or discourses circulating on very slow timescales (see Scollon & Scollon 2004: 168). Third, while usually a multitude of discourses is available in any given situation, these discourses always have to be 'activated' in interaction. From a nexus analytical perspective it is thus important to analyse what is treated as relevant or irrelevant by participants (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 14), and to consider the relationship between action and Discourses a matter of empirical investigation (R. Scollon 2001: 3). Fourth, accomplishing the goals set by these three perspectives requires an ethnographic orientation to discourse (R. Scollon 2001: 158) that looks closely at instances of social action while also taking into account their broader spatial and temporal context. Nexus analysis can thus also be considered a critical and ethnographic approach to discourse that is able to take into account issues of linguistic resources, production, circulation and access (see Blommaert 2005: 35).

3.3.3 Studying second language speakers in a nexus analytical framework

In Section 3.1, I outlined how cognitive-linguistic approaches to language learning are largely based on a view of languages as bounded systems that are acquired by learners in universal sequences of development. I described how in the course of the 'social turn' in second language research (Block 2003), a range of alternative views have emerged that argue for a theoretical integration of social and cognitive aspects of language learning. While these approaches share many basic assumptions with nexus analysis (e.g., an emergentist view of language and an understanding of language as embodied), the number of studies applying nexus analysis to contexts of language learning and teaching is still relatively modest (for an overview see Kuure et al. 2018). At the same time, there is little explicit theorisation of adult additional language learning in the Scollons' work, even though learning processes occupy a central position in their theoretical thinking and they have frequently addressed issues of early language socialisation (e.g. R. Scollon 2001).

In this thesis, I take the view that there are valuable intersections between nexus analysis and socially oriented theorisations of second language learning and use, especially in the notion of historical body. This notion strongly resonates with a usage-based conceptualisation of linguistic repertoire (see Section 3.1.4). Underlying the notion of linguistic repertoire is an understanding of language not as a bounded system but as a process, unfolding in a dynamic relationship between speakers, linguistic resources and creative instances of language use, and of language learning as the entrenchment of linguistic resources through experiences with language in the social world. Individual repertoires can thus be defined as "biographically assembled patchworks of functionally distributed communicative resources" (Blommaert & Backus 2011: 23), comprising resources from different linguistic varieties but never covering the entirety of what is thought to be 'a language'. Similarly, Scollon (2002: 130) speaks of *idiolect* not as an individual's knowledge of 'a language' but as a person's entirety of experiences with language. This is in line with the definition of the historical body as "an individual's accumulated experience of social actions" (Scollon 2001: 6), as well as with an understanding of learning as "a process of appropriation in the habitus over time of the knowledge of and ability to use the external, objective world" (Scollon 2002: 136-137). A nexus analytical perspective thus approaches second language speakers' repertoires not in terms of 'competence', but in terms of their historical bodies, including past trajectories, current resources and embodied dispositions for linguistic practice. Through their historical bodies, second language speakers can draw on resources and strategies for language learning and use, at the same time as they are restricted by embodied patterns of behaviour.

Approaching second language speakers from a nexus analytical perspective also avoids the a priori division of language users into 'native' and 'non-native' speakers, often present in everyday discourse as well as much of language learning research. Rather, with a perspective on historical bodies, we can think of groups of speakers having a homologous, i.e., similarly structured, habitus (Bourdieu 1990; also discussed by Scollon 2001: 37-40), while the respective habitus of other groups of individuals may be very different. According to Scollon (2001: 37), a homologous habitus can be observed when individuals jointly engage in a social action "without thought, comment, or consideration, that is, unconsciously undertaking this action out of habitus". With respect to language, one could, for instance, think of two speakers with the same first language who, despite having different individual repertoires, will usually be able to engage in a conversation without paying explicit attention to language use itself. A conversation between speakers of different varieties or levels of competence, on the other hand, will be more likely to involve negotiations of meaning (see e.g. Varonis & Gass 1985), thereby foregrounding differences in linguistic habitus (although this is not necessarily the case, see e.g. Kurhila 2004; Firth 2009).

A perspective of practice rather than competence also means that second language learners need not be understood as 'deficient' speakers. Rather, from this perspective, they are social actors whose appropriation of the target language

as a mediational means will be initially restricted to a small number of practices (e.g. making an order in a restaurant, asking for the time) but, further on in their learning process, may start to include other, more complex practices (e.g. writing a course assignment, participating in a discussion). From this perspective, language learners are individuals whose linguistic historical bodies initially differ significantly from those of target language speakers but who, through engaging in social action with these speakers, can accumulate experience of using the second language, thus changing their historical bodies. This, however, does not mean that speakers can erase the embodied history of their previous engagement with language. For instance, it is well attested that many, particularly late, language learners retain features of pronunciation stemming from earlier experience with language (an 'accent') (see e.g. Piske et al. 2001: 195-197; for the context of Finnish as a second language see Aho et al. 2016). The important point is that, from a nexus analytical perspective, such effects cannot be framed in terms of 'deficient' linguistic competence, but are seen as part of speakers' historical bodies and resulting from their individual learning trajectories.

Like the concept of linguistic repertoire, the notion of historical body as the accumulated experience of social actions does not conceptualise knowledge of linguistic forms as separate from knowledge about other aspects of semiotic activity. Because each instance of language use takes place within a complex and multi-layered social action, experiences with language use are also shaped by interactional conventions, discourses about language, cultural knowledge, and expectations brought in by participants. This makes it impossible to separate linguistic resources from their situated use as well as from other, non-linguistic means of meaning-making. Thus, the linguistic historical body needs to be understood as developing from holistic experiences of language use and as comprising linguistic resources as well as pragmatic and cultural knowledge (Blommaert & Backus 2011: 7). With respect to language learning, this also means that any instance of learning through language use has a subjective dimension of experience. As Busch (2012, 2017) points out, the development of the linguistic repertoire is not just based on frequency or salience of linguistic forms, but the subjective 'lived experience' (*Spracherleben*) of language use in everyday interactions is also crucial to its formation: "Moments of lived experience of language inscribe themselves into the linguistic memory, they become [...] part of the linguistic repertoire, either because they represent a special event with a strong emotional impact [...] or because they occur repeatedly" (Busch 2017: 343). The notion of linguistic historical body is therefore also useful for capturing the bodily, sensatory and emotional aspects of experience with language.

This understanding of language experiences shaping repertoires also makes relevant the other central notions discussed above: interaction order and discourses in place. All experiences with language take place at specific moments in time in which the historical bodies of social actors, interactional conventions and discourses about language(s) and speakers cross paths. As every discourse cycle has its own trajectory, this also means that it is not enough to look at instances of second language use or assumed moments of learning in isolation. Instead, it is

important to pay attention to how these instances came about, how regular or habitual they are for participants, what is not said or is avoided, and what are the possible consequences for future interactions (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 152-178). This can be seen as a way of approaching questions of power and access to linguistic resources and learning opportunities, especially (but not exclusively) outside contexts of formal instruction. For instance, as I pointed out earlier (see 3.1.3), being physically present in a workplace does not mean being talked to by colleagues, and even when communication takes place it can still be socially exclusive or dismissive of second language users' social identities, thus discouraging further communication. Methodologically, such a view on second language learning and use in its social context calls for a broad ethnographic approach that takes into account participants' linguistic resources, the identities they are enabled to construct in interaction, as well as possible consequences for future encounters and learning opportunities. In the next chapter, I discuss how I have implemented such a perspective in my research design.

4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present and reflect on the practical and methodological choices involved in designing my study. As is characteristic of qualitative research, my study aims at a deeper understanding of human experience through an interpretative approach. As a multiple case study, it does not try to provide generalisable results, but rather seeks to illuminate socially situated phenomena in depth, and to highlight participants' subjective (and sometimes contradictory) points of view. In this chapter, I first engage in general epistemological and methodological reflections on the process of designing the study (4.1). I structure my discussion according to the three stages of nexus analysis suggested by Scollon and Scollon (2004): *engaging*, *navigating* and *changing the nexus of practice*. The first stage, engaging the nexus of practice, refers to selecting a research focus by mapping a field of interest. The second stage, navigating can be thought of as the analytical process of interrogating data and tracing discourse cycles. And the final stage of changing the nexus of practice the points to the (unpredictable) effects of research (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 153-178). In 4.2, I describe the practical realisation of the study, from the selection criteria and recruitment of participants to the collection and processing of interview and observational data. I also discuss ethical issues that emerged during the realisation of the study and reflect on my researcher positionality in the field. Finally, I give an overview of the approaches and tools used in the data analysis. I first discuss thematic content analysis and narrative analysis, before turning to ethnographic and nexus analytical approaches to discourse (4.3).

4.1 Engaging, navigating and changing the nexus of practice

4.1.1 Autoethnographic reflections on becoming and being a speaker of Finnish as a second language

The stage of *engaging the nexus of practice* is described by Scollon & Scollon (2004: 154) in the following way: "Establish the social issue you will study. Find the crucial social actors. Observe the interaction order. Determine the most significant cycles of discourse. Establish your zone of identification." In the case of this study, engaging the nexus of practice started much earlier than at the beginning of this PhD project. It was my own experience of becoming a speaker of Finnish, as well as my encounter with discourses surrounding the use of Finnish as a second language, that gave me my first insights into the topic of this dissertation. In addition, I conducted an interview study with speakers of Finnish as a second language for my Master's thesis (Zobel 2013), and in this way I also became familiar with accounts of other speakers' experiences. The steps outlined in Scollon & Scollon (2004) were therefore taken in somewhat reverse order: I first entered the nexus by becoming a learner and later a proficient speaker of Finnish myself, in the course of which I encountered discourses about Finnish circulating in Finland, and gained first-hand experience of participating in various interaction orders as a speaker of Finnish as a second language. I then became familiar with sociolinguistic theories (especially the notion of language ideologies) as well as accounts of other speakers' experiences while working on my Master's thesis, and finally established linguistic legitimacy and the special case of highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish as the focus of my further research.

Throughout this process, my own 'lived experience of language' (Busch 2017) served as a meaningful lens through which I looked at issues surrounding Finnish as a second language. Growing up in Germany, I had not contact with Finland or the Finnish language until I reached adulthood. I first came to Finland for an intensive language course, and this was followed by a year-long Erasmus study exchange and an internship before I settled down more permanently and started my PhD studies in Finland. My background in linguistics and my extensive experience with language learning, both in the context of instruction and through living abroad, had prepared me well for the first stage of my life in Finland: I made quick progress in learning Finnish and was soon able to use the language in simple conversations and practical, everyday situations. However, as time went by, I realised that becoming part of the linguistic and cultural community was not simply about learning new words but was also a challenging social and emotional project. For a long time I would, for instance, be regularly addressed in English by native Finnish speakers, even if I had initiated the interaction in Finnish, and I found this deeply discouraging. Conversely, any situation in which I felt that I was taken seriously as a speaker of Finnish was encouraging and motivating. I also realised that my feelings of inadequacy did not entirely disappear as soon as I was able to hold a conversation in Finnish. The more I was able to participate in Finnish-speaking contexts and activities in

which 'native speakers' set the pace, the more I became aware of my comparatively slower speech, poorer comprehension of the nuances of the topics discussed, as well as my lack of sociocultural knowledge. I was frustrated at not being able to express myself better, but I also felt uncomfortable and even humiliated whenever my interlocutors used simplified speech or were markedly supportive of my participating in the conversation. Even if my Finnish skills became 'advanced' relatively early on in my language learning process, it took me many years to reach a point where I felt at ease and somewhat authentic when using Finnish.

All these rather subtly nuanced experiences took place against the backdrop of the discourses about Finnish as a second language I came across in different everyday situations: from the often rather enthusiastic or even exaggerated praise for my Finnish skills that I encountered when meeting new people, to the ubiquitous statements about how Finnish really is one of the most difficult languages in the world, to media discourses about immigration and the issues of language learning and linguistic integration arising in this context. In short, as my experiences with using Finnish in everyday life and my awareness of ongoing debates in Finland grew, I stopped conceiving of language learning as a primarily intellectual project. Instead, I realised that how others perceived me, what I thought they thought of me and why, and how I felt about who I was and what I could do as a speaker of Finnish were central to my experience of language learning and use. Particularly revelatory in this respect was my (simultaneously flattering, confusing and challenging) experience of passing for a native speaker (see Piller 2002), which made me curious about other speakers of Finnish as a second language who occasionally experienced this. Reflecting on these personal experiences against the backdrop of my knowledge of sociolinguistic and sociological theory finally led me to identify highly proficient use of Finnish as a second language at the intersection of language ideology, identity and linguistic legitimacy as a topic I wanted to investigate further.

Against the background of this intimate involvement with my own research topic, my reflections on the experience of my participants have inevitably involved autoethnographic aspects. Autoethnography is defined by C. Ellis et al. (2011: 1; italics in original) as "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*)". It not only acknowledges but also utilises the researcher's insights into their own experiences, emotions, and social identities and their impact on the research process (C. Ellis et al. 2011: 3-4). With regard to second language learning and use, autoethnographic approaches have been used in research for in-depth explorations of learners', teachers' and language users' personal experiences (see e.g. Simon-Maeda 2011 for an autoethnography of becoming a speaker of Japanese; Canagarajah 2012 for an autoethnography of teacher development; Hult 2014 for an autoethnographic account of a bilingual speaker's practices of language choice).

While this dissertation focuses on the experiences of other speakers and does not explicitly draw on autoethnographic data, it can be seen as involving an

autoethnographic perspective. In the context of Finnish as a second language, the vast majority of qualitative research is still produced by first language speakers of Finnish. In contrast to this, my study can be regarded as a type of 'native' (C. Ellis et al. 2011: 16) or 'at-home' (Alvesson 2009) ethnography; that is, research conducted in a setting that is personally familiar to the researcher and in which they can be considered an 'insider'. Moreover, ethnographic approaches in general and nexus analysis in particular stress the importance of reflexivity (see e.g. Blommaert & Dong Jie 2010: 65-67; S. Scollon 2001). Consequently, introspection and reflection on my own experiences played a crucial role not only in formulating my research topic, but also in the data analysis. As Janesick (2011: 148) notes, qualitative analysis also relies on "informed hunches, intuition, and serendipitous occurrences that, in turn, will lead to a richer and more powerful explanation of the setting, context, and participants". Arguably, such intuitive 'hunches' emanate from the historical body of the researcher, making it important to maintain a reflexive stance throughout the research process and to be aware of when it becomes necessary to distance onself from the research topic (see Section 4.2.3).

4.1.2 Epistemological and methodological considerations

In nexus analysis, the stage following the engagement process is called *navigating*. It focuses on the semiotic cycles of discourses in place, historical bodies and the interaction order. The Scollons use the term *mapping* for a closer examination of the semiotic cycles that circulate through a given moment, the links and interactions between them, and their modes of operation on different timescales (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 159-171). According to the Scollons, this can be achieved through a closer analysis of the discourse data (linguistic and non-linguistic), drawing on a variety of analytical tools from, among others, critical discourse analysis, interactional sociolinguistics or linguistic anthropology (2004: 172-175). In the context of this dissertation, having engaged in the nexus of practice through my own experience as a second language speaker of Finnish, the process of navigating essentially amounted to collecting and analysing data from speakers who shared a similar background with me but who could be expected to have somewhat different experiences. The practical realisation of the study is described in more detail in Section 4.2, while the analytical tools employed are presented in Section 4.3. In the remainder of this section, I reflect more broadly on the epistemological and methodological choices I made, especially with regard to the main types of data collected, i.e., interviews and ethnographic observations.

The goal of the study was to learn more about ideologies of Finnish as a second language, highly proficient second language speakers' experiences of categorisation and positioning, as well as processes of linguistic legitimisation. Such an interest in discourses, identity and experiences naturally calls for a qualitative approach (e.g. Mackey & Gass 2005: 162-184), i.e., an interpretative and explorative, in-depth approach to data, as well as a case-study approach (e.g. van Lier 2005; Duff 2014), i.e., the investigation of a somehow delineated place, community, or small set of individuals. Highly proficient adult speakers of

Finnish as a second language were identified as being of interest because of the dissonance (as perceived by myself) between common conceptions about Finnish as a second language (e.g. of Finnish as a supposedly difficult language) and the high level of proficiency of these late learners. Since such speakers do not form a group or community, nor can they be found in any particular place or institution, the study inevitably took the form of a multiple case study (see e.g. Duff 2014: 237-239) involving multi-site fieldwork (see e.g. Marcus 1995).

Two main interests guided my choices with regard to data collection and analysis. On the one hand, I was interested in practices of identity construction and language use in real-life contexts. On the other, I was interested in how my participants themselves experienced, accounted for and made sense of these practices. These interests motivated the decision to combine qualitative interviews with observations and recordings from different everyday situations. However, the two types of data were not played off, as it were, against each other; the goal was not to point out discrepancies between what my participants said they did and what I could actually observe they did in practice. Rather, interviews were seen as an important way of learning about common and recurrent everyday experiences not easily accessible by direct observation, while at the same time they elicited narratives in which these experiences were constructed within a culturally and ideologically mediated frame of meaning-making. According to Stroud and Wee (2007: 35, footnote 1), semi- or unstructured interview data are valuable precisely because they allow insights into the speakers' subjectively experienced and 'imagined' social realities of speakers, as well as their metalinguistic judgments of linguistic practices. Similarly, as Baynham (2000: 100) puts it, narrative data, such as interviews, provide a way of accessing "how participants construct what they do according to which ideologies and values, which historical trajectories, as well as what kind of self-presentation or identity work they are currently engaged in". Given that ideologies, trajectories of language learning and identity work are focal points in this thesis, qualitative interviews were as fundamental to the ethnographic orientation of the study as observational data.

Many scholars have pointed out the importance of treating interviews not only as sources of information but also as social events in themselves (e.g. Talmy 2010; De Fina & Perrino 2011). In this sense, interviews are themselves 'sites of engagement', i.e., windows of opportunity for joint social action (R. Scollon 2001: 3-4): the interaction order of the interview typically involves particular practices and roles (interviewers asking questions and interviewees responding to them), the historical bodies of interviewer and interviewee regulate their behaviour and the relationship between them, and preformulated interview questions become discourses in place. It is therefore important to be aware of how the interactional format, participants' roles and relationships, and the topics discussed shape the course of interviews (see De Fina & Perrino 2011), even if a detailed analysis of the co-constructedness of interview discourse (see e.g. Marková et al. 2007; Laihonen 2008) is beyond the scope of most studies, including this one. I return to this issue in Section 4.2.3, in which I discuss my positionality as a researcher,

and in Section 4.3.3, in which I describe the different levels on which interview data can be analysed.

The second type of data, collected with a smaller number of participants, consisted of observations, often captured in fieldnotes, as well as recordings from communicative situations in which I either was or was not participating as an interlocutor myself. These data were also important and insightful with respect to the general ethnographic perspective on discourse taken in this dissertation, even if such a perspective amounts to much more than types of data and fieldwork techniques (Blommaert & Dong Jie 2010: 4). Ethnography is a comprehensive epistemological paradigm providing theoretically grounded approaches to and tools for describing social life (Blommaert & Dong Jie 2010: 6). It is an inductive, data-driven approach that usually relies on the study of individual cases to suggest, explore and further develop theoretical issues and perspectives (Blommaert & Dong Jie 2010: 12). Importantly with regard to (second) language learning and use, an ethnographic approach conceptualises language as a social tool and communicative resource, as contextualised by and contextualising interaction, and as being inseparable from culture and society (Blommaert & Dong Jie 2010: 7-8). An ethnographic perspective on language thus focuses on the question of "who produces what discourse, how, why, and with what effects" (Heller 2008: 518). Moreover, in ethnography, what can be called the object-level (observable social actions involving language) and the metalevel of language (interpretations of these actions mediated by ideas about and the social value of language) are inseparable (Blommaert & Dong Jie 2010: 9).

Observations and especially recordings of supposedly naturally occurring communication are often taken to be more authentic and trustworthy in their representation of real-life contexts than elicited interview data. However, as R. Scollon points out, it is important to realise that collecting ethnographic data is always a "construction of a body of data out of the flow of the events of life" (R. Scollon 2001: 30). That is, not only are ethnographers necessarily selective in their perception, the process of transforming social action into data (e.g. observations into fieldnotes and interactions into recordings and later transcripts) also changes the material modality and reduces the complexity of real-life occurrences. Within the context of my study, the observations and recordings were highly diverse in terms of their context and setting, while also being limited in number and scope. These data therefore cannot be understood as providing a comprehensive ethnographic picture of a singular place, group, or phenomenon. Rather, they were treated as allowing glimpses into the lived realities of some of my participants, which in turn informed my analysis of the interview data. In practical terms, the border between natural communication and informal interviews was also often hazy, as conversations in which I was an active participant often revolved around topics raised in previous interviews.

Qualitative case-studies, relying on interpretations of interviews and observations from a limited number of participants, inevitably face questions about their reliability, validity and generalisability. In contrast to quantitative research, where contextual factors are carefully regulated, qualitative research

cannot be expected to produce results that are repeatable and consistent over time. C. Ellis et al. (2011) suggest reformulations of the criteria of reliability, validity and generalisability for ethnographic studies. In place of reliability they propose *credibility* (of the researcher as having been in the field), in place of validity *coherence* (of the researcher's account as a plausible reconstruction of events), and in place of generalisability *relatability* (of the researcher's experience) (C. Ellis et al. 2011: 32-35). Moreover, as Duff (2012: 419) points out, qualitative research is also judged based on whether it is able to provide convincing evidence for its claims and on whether these claims are relevant to existing or emerging theoretical perspectives.

With regard to the relationship between data and theory, this dissertation takes a deliberate middle-ground approach between data-driven and theory-driven inquiry. As discussed in Section 4.1.1, my choice of research focus was mediated by my own experience as a speaker of Finnish as a second language, and by the sociolinguistic and anthropological theories with which I was already familiar. Concepts from these theories, in particular the key notions of language ideology, identity, and linguistic legitimacy, took the role of "sensitizing concepts", defined by Layder (1998: 23) as "individual concepts drawn from a wider body of theory or knowledge", which provide "a preliminary means of ordering and giving shape to a mass of data". Thus, while analysis of the data was exploratory in that it did not orient toward a preformulated hypothesis, it was more targeted than in strictly inductive approaches (cf. e.g. Glaser & Strauss 1967). The data analysis thus took the form of an ongoing dialogue between theoretical concepts (e.g. linguistic legitimacy; see Chapter 3.2.3), participants' responses to predefined topics (e.g. passing for a native speaker; see Chapter 5.2), new issues introduced by participants (e.g. being the only foreigner in a context; see Chapter 6.3), as well as reflections on my own experience as a speaker, pushing me to continually re-examine both my understanding of theory and my interpretation of the data.

4.1.3 Limitations of the study

The last stage of nexus analytical research is changing the nexus of practice. The notion acknowledges that researchers are not only investigating the nexus of practice, but through engaging in their research activities (such as interviewing, meeting participants, writing notes and reports, etc.) they themselves become part of these nexus (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 177). Given the strong commitment to social justice in nexus analysis, Scollon and Scollon (2004: 178) encourage researchers to reflect on what kinds of social change their involvement in the nexus can bring (or not bring) about. In the following, I make use of the notion of changing the nexus of practice to reflect on some limitations of this study.

The present study is to a large degree based on secondary data (e.g. Auer 1995), i.e., participants' accounts of experiences rather than direct observations of social actions. The limited scope of the observational data therefore does not allow for a more systematic or detailed (nexus) analysis of my participants' practices. Moreover, my participation in and observation of different contexts was

mostly dictated by questions of practical feasibility (e.g. in terms of geographical place, participants' wishes, or research permits). Consequently, I was unable to identify and access all or even most contexts that are likely to be key situations for the construction of linguistic identity and legitimacy. However, since the central interest of this study is in the 'lived experience of language' (Busch 2017), i.e. how participants themselves experience and make sense of their and others' linguistic practices, such accounts still provide rich and multi-layered data.

A second limitation of my study is the relatively homogeneous and socially privileged background of the participants, especially given that the theoretical framework of this dissertation places considerable emphasis on the effects of social power as theorised in the notions of language ideology and linguistic legitimacy. All the participants in this study are highly educated, middle-class Europeans, most of whom had had significant experience with learning languages before coming to Finland. They thus fit squarely into the group of WEIRD research participants, i.e. people from "Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies" (Henrich et al. 2010: 61), still staggeringly overrepresented in studies of second language learning and use (Andringa & Godfroid 2019). In the case of my study, access to linguistic resources and learning opportunities, as well as the chances of constructing legitimate and desirable speaker identities, were thus not complicated (or were complicated to a much lesser extent) by effects of racial, ethnic or socioeconomic discrimination (cf. Pavlenko 2000).

On the other hand, in my view, an investigation of proficient and privileged second language speakers also offers unique insights into the difficulties that such speakers face (see also De Costa 2016b). Harrison (2013) shows that, regardless of actual levels of linguistic competence, second language speakers' professional advancement can be decisively mediated by (real or perceived) prejudice against non-native speakers, as well as by second language speakers' feelings of linguistic deficiency or inferiority, pointing to potential glass ceiling effects. Understood more broadly, the metaphor of the glass ceiling also resonates with the concept of ultimate attainment (e.g. Birdsong 2004) in second language learning. Here, much of SLA research has disregarded social context by simply assuming ideal conditions for second language learning (Thorne 2000). However, as Bourdieu (1977, 1991) argues, social power pervades all linguistic interactions and practices. What my study can demonstrate, then, is that advanced language learning skills and privileged access to linguistic resources do not entirely eliminate issues of power, identity, and linguistic legitimacy in language learning, but that these can reappear as subtler forms of othering and exclusion.

4.2 Realisation of the study

4.2.1 Participants

Alongside more theoretical interests, the practical objective of this study was to learn more about the everyday experiences of highly proficient, adult second language speakers of Finnish in Finland. The first criterion for the recruitment of participants was therefore a very advanced level of proficiency in Finnish. This was partly motivated by the expectation that highly proficient speakers could provide valuable insights into questions of language ideology, identity, and linguistic legitimacy, because their experience with language use goes beyond acquiring communicative competence in the sense of grammatical accuracy and pragmatic appropriateness (see Kramsch 2012: 110). In the study, advancedness was not defined in terms of official proficiency levels (e.g. on the CEFRL scale), but was based on potential participants' self-assessment. The recruitment message was addressed to second language speakers of Finnish "who have attained an advanced and wide-ranging command of the Finnish language" (*jotka ovat saavuttaneet hyvin monipuolisen ja korkeatasoisen suomen kielen taidon*). Self-assessment was chosen because the study was interested in subjective experiences of speakerness and because especially highly proficient speakers who have developed their competence to a significant extent outside the context of formal language instruction could not necessarily be expected to have formal proof of their proficiency level.

In addition, it was stated that participants should have experienced "situations in which they are not identified as second language speakers" (*joilla on kokemusta tilanteista, joissa heitä ei tunnisteta toisen kielen puhujiksi*). This criterion mainly stemmed from my particular interest in the phenomenon of passing for a native speaker (e.g. Piller 2002). However, the terms 'native speaker' and 'Finn' (*mennä suomalaisesta*, 'pass for a Finn', would probably be the most natural way of referring to the phenomenon in Finnish), were consciously avoided because both these terms evoke strong assumptions about the relationship between competence and ethnonational affiliation. Moreover, the description was kept intentionally broad as I was interested in how participants themselves defined and experienced such situations, and I wanted to be open to the possibility of this passing as a native speaker taking place at different rates (from one-time occurrences to daily experience) and in different situations (e.g. service encounters, small talk), and as involving different modalities (e.g. emails, face-to-face conversations, non-verbal interaction).

The second main recruitment criterion was based on the interest of the study in late multilinguals. Second language research has long dealt with the question of whether or not there is and what can be defined as a 'critical period' in language learning (see e.g. Birdsong & Molis 2001), i.e. until what age children acquire nativelike competence (see also Chapter 5.2.1). While there is no clear agreement among researchers about this, the idea that children learn additional

languages faster and better, while adult learners almost always retain non-target-like features in their speech, is generally supported by evidence and is also a widespread folklinguistic belief (see Hickey 2012: 2). Thus, second language speakers who acquired the language only in adulthood are usually not expected to sound nativelike, which makes highly proficient late multilinguals an interesting object of research with respect to identity construction/positioning as well as language ideologies. Against this background, participants were required to not have had any significant exposure to Finnish before the age of 18 (*jotka aloittivat suomen kielen opiskelun vasta aikuisiällä [18-vuotiaina tai myöhemmin]*), intentionally excluding, for instance, speakers who came to Finland as children with their families or who grew up abroad with a Finnish-speaking parent.

The final criterion for participation was that participants should be residing in Finland but should only have moved to Finland in or after the year 2000 (*jotka muuttivat Suomeen vuoden 2000 jälkeen ja asuvat Suomessa pysyvästi*), in other words, at the earliest 15 years before the beginning of data collection in 2015. This criterion was formulated against the backdrop of the significant increase in immigration to Finland around the turn of the millennium (see Chapter 2.1). It was expected that such participants could contribute in important ways to understanding the language ideological climate of an increasingly diverse, international and globalised Finland. In practice, the criterion also targeted younger adults (between 20 and 45 years of age), who could be assumed to still be building their lives in Finland and as speakers of Finnish (e.g. through pursuing an education, gaining work experience, and establishing social networks).

The practical recruitment of participants was achieved through a variation of the snowball technique (see e.g. Lanza 2008: 83-84). Once the recruitment message was drafted, it was sent via email to friends and colleagues (many of them second language speakers of Finnish from the Helsinki area or people working in language teaching or research) who were, in turn, asked to forward the message to their own contacts. Later on in the course of the study, some participants were also recommended by participants I had already interviewed. Given that my own acquaintances were mainly highly educated Europeans with a strong interest in language learning and in Finnish as a second language, this method of recruitment was likely to result in a biased sample of participants with a similar background. However, the snowball technique is often the only (or only viable) method of reaching 'hidden' or 'hard-to-reach' populations (Atkinson & Flint 2001), such as, arguably, highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish. Thus, another advantage of the snowball technique was that participants did not have to be recruited through particular programmes or institutions. This ensured diversity with regard to participants' nationalities, places of residence in Finland, occupational fields, and such like.

The participant profiles can then be seen as an outcome of both recruitment criteria and sampling technique, and show similarities as well as differences. In addition to being highly proficient in Finnish and using the language in various contexts of everyday life, participants shared a similar background in that they

were all Europeans and young adults (aged 25-39 at the time of the first interview), who had reached a high level of formal education (all but one had completed university studies at the time of the first interview) and lived in medium-sized or large towns in Finland. They had also all grown up monolingually, in the sense of speaking the national language of their country of origin as their first and only home language, although most of them had learned one or more other languages (usually including English) in addition to Finnish later in life. On the other hand, there were also a number of differences between the participants. The 12 participants (see Figure 3 in Section 4.2.2) were from six different countries (Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Russia) and had lived in Finland for between a few months to thirteen years at the time of the first interview. Some of them had started learning Finnish before arriving in Finland (and even studied the language at university level), while others had only started taking language courses as late as a year after their migration. They also differed in their family situation (most had a Finnish partner although some did not; only one participant had children at the time of the first interview) and occupational background (some worked in positions corresponding to their field and level of education, others retrained in Finland for a new, more practically oriented profession). Finally, the participants were dispersed across Finland, from the Helsinki region to smaller and geographically more remote towns.

4.2.2 Data collection and processing

The data collection took place in two overlapping rounds. In the first round (May 2015-October 2016), individual interviews were conducted with all 12 participants (one interview per participant), while the second round of data collection (March 2016-March 2017) focused on four of the participants interviewed in the first round and also included observations and recordings from different everyday situations. The first round of interviews not only generated data for later analysis, but was also a necessary practical step in navigating my research topic, as the interview study allowed me to gain a first impression of participants' social environments, trajectories and experiences, and to chart their interest in participating in further data collection and the practicalities of their doing so. The interviews provided valuable data also because the focus of my research on individuals and their experiences did not allow for the most traditional kind of ethnography, in other words, long-term immersion in a group or community (cf. De Fina 2013: 46).

The interviews conducted in the first round were semi-structured, i.e., orienting to topics and questions laid out in an interview guide prepared beforehand, but allowing for rephrasing questions and reacting to participants' responses in the interview situation (see e.g. Codó 2008). The interview guide (see Appendix 3) centred on participants' linguistic trajectories, multilingual practices and identities. It was designed partly on the basis of my own experiences as a speaker of Finnish as a second language (see Section 4.1.1), and partly with regard to the theoretical issues central to this dissertation and other planned pub-

lications (Ruuska 2016, 2019; see especially the questions on multilingual practices in the interview guide). All the interviews were conducted in Finnish, with the exception of those with the three German participants, which were conducted in their and my first language, German.[23] Nine interviews took place at participants' homes, while three were conducted elsewhere (at a café and in university facilities), and in all cases I travelled to meet the participants in their home towns. The interviews lasted between 60 and 135 minutes, and were audio-recorded in mp3 format with a small digital device.

All the interviews from the first round were then transcribed by myself with the help of a simple transcription software.[24] The transcription followed conventions somewhere between a detailed conversation analytical transcript (e.g. Jefferson 2004) and a tidied up 'play script' (Johnstone 2002: 19). The transcription was verbatim, so it did not omit, for instance, repetitions or pronounced hesitation markers, it approximately rendered turn-taking between interviewer and interviewee, and particularly salient features such as laughter, sighs, longer pauses and emphases were marked in the transcript (see the transcription key in Appendix 1). However, the transcription did not reproduce details of pronunciation, pitch, quality of voice or overlaps between speakers. The English translations of the original Finnish or German language data omitted further details, including characteristics of (advanced) second language Finnish. Overall, this approach to transcription supported the representation of the interviews as social interactions, while keeping the focus on the content and the narrative-discursive choices in participants' accounts as well as making the data excerpts reader-friendly. To ensure analytical rigour, I also listened to the original interview recordings during the data analysis, which allowed me to take more subtle conversational features into account in my interpretation.

Once transcription of the interviews was completed, I coded the digital transcripts manually, i.e. I assigned key words or phrases to passages of the transcripts. Following Saldaña (2013: 4), I understand coding as an exploratory and interpretative process. The coding of my interview data was exploratory in that different coding methods (e.g. structural coding, descriptive coding, in-vivo coding; see Saldaña 2013: 261-286) were employed to gain a thorough overview of the emerging topics. That is, rather than attempting to rigorously categorise phenomena and build taxonomic relationships between categories, the coding process was open to emerging themes as well as to the complex and multilayered nature of social life in general (see Saldaña 2013: 207-208). It was an interpretative process in that coding and theory building were seen as integrated (see Saldaña 2013: 216). In other words, identifying topics and categorising experiences always involves analytical claims about their nature and the nature of the connections

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23 When first being in touch with the German, I asked them about their preferences regarding language choice and all three said that German would feel like the most natural choice for an interview between first language speakers. Since all participants in the study were proficient enough in Finnish to discuss any matter spontaneously and in depth, there was no striking discrepancy in the length or level of detail between the interviews conducted in Finnish and those conducted in German.

24 f5 for Mac; see https://www.audiotranskription.de/english.

between them. This was particularly so in the context of this study, where theoretical concepts (especially the key notions of ideology, identity, and legitimacy, as well as the nexus analytical terms of historical body, interaction order and discourse in place) guided my interpretation of the data from the very beginning and also formed part of my inventory of codes. In sum, coding the interview transcripts helped me to acquaint myself more thoroughly with the data, make discoveries based on the notions suggested by my theoretical framework, identify emerging themes and find and compare similarly coded instances across the data set.

As mentioned above, the interviews also served the purpose of exploring the possibilities for further data collection with a smaller number of participants. Eventually, four interviewees were particularly interested and agreed to participate in the next stage of data collection. Since I was curious about all kinds of everyday situations of language use, it was left to the focus participants to suggest potentially interesting contexts and to make an initial judgment about whether they (and others) would feel comfortable with my presence. The situations that I participated in as an observer thus ranged from workplace settings to informal conversations with friends and gym classes. Whenever viable, I took fieldnotes in situ or shortly after the observed events; in some situations, I was also able to audiorecord the interactions. Since many months had passed since the first round of data collection, I also conducted additional (unstructured) interviews to learn about how the focus participants' lives had developed in the meantime. Given the scope of these data, the audiorecordings and second-round interviews were transcribed only partially (following the same transcription conventions as those used for the first-round interviews). That is, stretches of data that were particularly relevant with regard to the issues that had emerged from the first-round interviews were selected for transcription and further analysis. Figure 3 below provides an overview of the participants and the data collected. A more detailed list of the data that were collected can be found in Appendix 2.

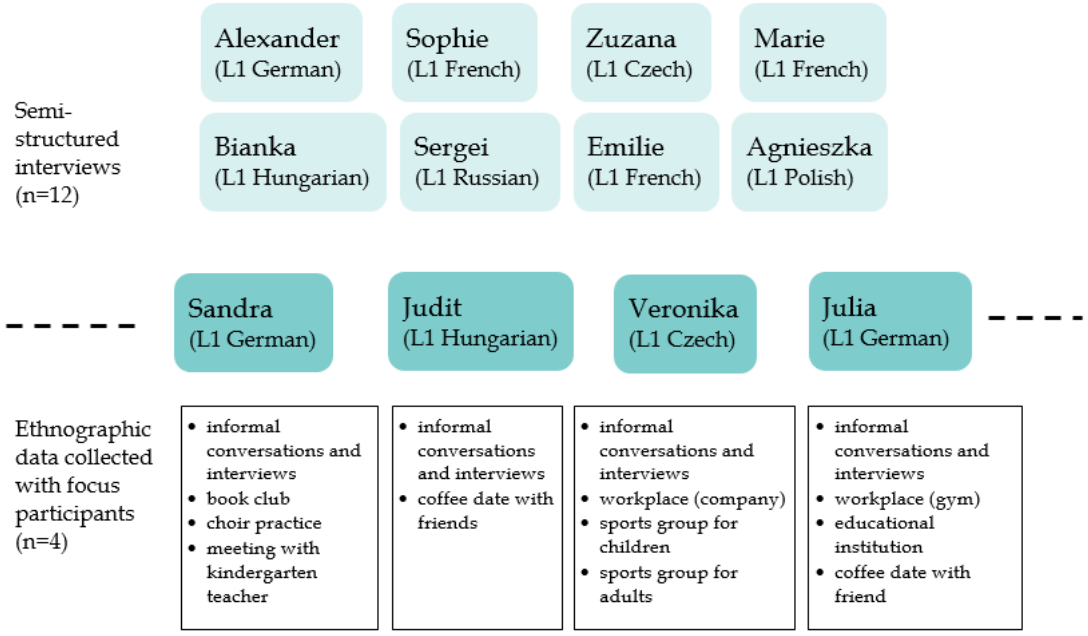

FIGURE 3 Participants and data collection (all names are pseudonyms selected by the researcher)

An important practical strategy in the process of organising and making sense of the interviews, fieldnotes, and selected instances from the recordings was memo writing. Each participant was assigned a file, in which I recorded, in the form of analytical memos (Saldaña 2013: 41-57), my ideas about observations and topics emerging from the interviews. This form of writing allowed me to reflect relatively freely and intuitively on the data, creating a space for instances of data that were striking in some way, as well as interpretations based on hunches, open questions and feelings of puzzlement. While the analysis of the first-round interview data and the analysis of the additional data collected with the four focus participants is presented separately in this dissertation (in Chapters 5-6 and 7, respectively, with one exception), the overall process of data analysis was non-linear: insights gained from the interviews informed my observational practices, just as my increased awareness of my focus participants' everyday lives after the second round of data collection helped me see the interviews in a new light.[25]

4.2.3 Ethical considerations and researcher positionality

Research ethics covers a wide range of topics, such as privacy and data protection, the study of vulnerable populations, issues of consent, the impartiality and integrity of the research, the impact of research on the environment, and many

[25] While the data collected from all participants was taken into account in the overall analysis, I have not included excerpts from the interview with one participant, Bianka, in this thesis. This is because the interview with Bianka strongly focused on multilingual practices, and the results of the analysis of her interview are reported in detail in Ruuska (2016, 2019).

more (EC 2013). The realisation of this study followed the guidelines for the responsible conduct of research published by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK 2012). These guidelines include recommendations for both the practical issues of ethical research conduct (e.g. data storage and anonymisation, consent processes) and for the more general, reflective aspects of research ethics (e.g. calculation of the risks for participants, researcher integrity, conflicts of interest).

Following the guidelines, I ensured that the interview data and recordings were stored securely (on a password-secured university network drive as well as, for the duration of the processes of transcription and analysis, on my private computer behind a password). A privacy policy was formulated and participants were informed that they could request access to the policy. All the participants in the first round of data collection were sent an information package about the aims and procedures of the study before the interviews, and were asked to sign a consent form that specified how the data would be used during the study and stored after it. The four focus participants in the second round of data collection were asked to sign a separate consent form for their participation in the ethnographic part of the study. With respect to other parties involved in the collection of observational data, different consent processes were combined: whenever data collection took place in an institutional environment (e.g. companies, educational institutions, sports clubs), consent was first sought from the management level, just as guardians' consent was secured in advance of collecting data from minors; whenever possible, my participants informed everyone participating in the situations selected for data collection beforehand about my presence, and were given more detailed information and were asked for consent (written, if feasible) in situ before the observation (or recording) started. All the participants were also informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point and without giving a reason. At the stage of data processing, a pseudonym was chosen by myself for each participant. Especially given the relatively small population of highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish, features that would facilitate direct identification (e.g. precise place of residence in Finland, particular details of work trajectories, names of individuals, programmes or institutions) were omitted in the transcripts and data excerpts for publication.

However, questions of research ethics naturally go far beyond issues covered by official guidelines, especially with regard to ethnographical data collection (De Costa 2016a: 4-5). As mentioned above, involvement in a field of practice inevitably leads to change (see Scollon & Scollon 2004: 177-178) and can, at its worst, also cause annoyance and harm. While researchers can do their best to give participants sufficient information about the aims and realisation of the study and try to make sure that consent is informed, it remains important that researchers reflect on the ethical aspects of what they are doing throughout the research process, from collecting the data to reporting on the analysis. This is particularly important if participants belong to a vulnerable social group (e.g. minors, illegal immigrants, people with mental disabilities) or if the topics raised

in the course of the data collection are of a particularly sensitive nature (e.g. illnesses, experiences of abuse) (see Düvell et al. 2010).

In the case of this study, my participants cannot be seen as particularly vulnerable: they were literate adults, whose educational background provided them with considerable social capital. However, reflecting on ethical issues remained important throughout the study, since the participants frequently raised sensitive issues. Especially with the four focus participants, interviews and informal conversations often became quite personal, and in some cases led to the decision to exclude some data from the analysis. Other challenges concerning questions of formal consent and social responsibility arose during the second round of data collection, which was designed to take place in different contexts of everyday life. This approach meant that I often had neither much advance knowledge of the places, practices, or groups of people I came to observe, nor the chance to acquaint myself with them further, since practical constraints meant that my observations were usually restricted to one or two field visits. As a result of the unpredictability of these settings, practical decisions (such as how to deal with changes of location or the presence of unexpected participants) often had to be made quickly, which was at times challenging for me as a beginning ethnographer.

On the whole, I felt that my relationship with the participants was relatively equal and symmetric. As I was unable to offer payment for participation in the study, I ensured that the locations and dates of interviews and observations could be easily accommodated by the participants. Especially with the four focus participants, I also developed a somewhat deeper and more personal relationship, as there were plenty of opportunities for informal exchange during my field visits. In addition to helping me navigate my research topic, my own experiences with becoming and being a speaker of Finnish also had an impact on how I approached my participants and how they responded to me. In one sense, I enjoyed almost perfect insider status in my research, since I myself met the criteria I had used for selecting the participants. However, as Kusow (2003) notes, insider/outsider positions are not static but are always constructed and negotiated in research practice. For instance, in the case of my study, my own experiences of passing or not passing for a native speaker of Finnish had an influence on my positionality as a researcher. Since most of the participants seemed to be instantly aware that I was a second language speaker of Finnish (one even directly identifying me as German from the way I spoke Finnish), I somewhat naively assumed that my position as a second language speaker and an insider to my research topic was self-evident (from the spelling of my first name, the topic of my research or, at the latest, on the first meeting, from my way of using or pronouncing Finnish). In retrospect, these issues would have warranted some more reflection on my part as well as a more thoughtful approach to my positioning in relation to my participants.

At any rate, my own experiences as a second language speaker of Finnish allowed me to personally relate to and sometimes even explicitly react to what my participants said, for instance towards the end of the semistructured interviews or in informal conversations with my focus participants, when I often

shared some of my own experiences to keep the conversation going and to give something back to my participants. However, it was also important to take an outsider view of my participants' experiences (which were, after all, not my own) and to be open to interpretations that challenged my own understandings. I had initially been worried that sharing my own experiences would somehow restrict my participants' opportunities to express their own views. I tried to mitigate this effect by giving participants ample conversational space and by indicating clearly that I was interested in and accepting of whatever they said. All in all, I felt that my participants were quite confident about their own interpretations and would not hesitate to disagree with me if necessary. During the field visits, the extent to which I shared a common background with my participants also had an impact on the interaction order in different situations. This was particularly true for data collection with the participants who spoke German as their first language and with whom I usually communicated in German. Here, it was interesting to observe how my participants navigated switching from German in a conversation between them and myself, to Finnish in a situation where other parties were present. My presence as another German or another foreigner in those situations was sometimes also openly referred to by the participants and used for positioning in interaction (see e.g. Chapter 7.1.).

4.3 Analytical tools

4.3.1 Thematic content analysis

Thematic analysis and qualitative content analysis (e.g. Mayring 2000) aim to find patterns or themes in qualitative data. In second language learning research, they are among the most frequently employed methods for analysing qualitative interview data, but they have also been criticised, mainly for problematically treating interviews as faithful sources of information rather than as social interactions in and of themselves (see e.g. Talmy 2010; De Fina & Perrino 2011). On the other hand, it can be argued that, in a sense, it is almost inevitable to start an analysis of interviews with *what* is discussed. Most coding tools (see Saldaña 2013) are designed to organise the content of spoken or written discourse, and initial coding often forms the basis for more detailed analyses of how accounts unfold and how their construction is embedded in the interview situation as well as the broader sociocultural context.

Pavlenko (2007: 166) notes that by identifying recurring themes and descriptions of phenomena in interview data, thematic and content analytical approaches can make important contributions to discovering new topics for second language learning research. Arguably, this is especially true if the categories of analysis are not predefined, but emerge from the process of 'themeing the data' (Saldaña 2013: 175). At the same time, Pavlenko (2007: 166-167) also draws attention to the serious limitations of research based on a thematic analysis of content.

She raises concerns about three broad aspects: (1) a lack of awareness or transparency with regard to the theoretical foundations of the analytical categories and the ways in which instances of data are matched to these categories; (2) a lack of attention to the linguistic and narrative details of participants' accounts and to how they position themselves through language; and (3) an over-reliance on frequently recurring topics and a focus on what is in these accounts (ignoring less frequent but potentially meaningful instances as well as what is absent from the data). Pavlenko (2007: 167) therefore stresses that in order to provide analytically relevant insights, an analysis of content has to go beyond rephrasing participants' statements.

With regard to the first point of criticism, she encourages analysts to adopt a strong theoretical framework to clarify the properties of and relationships between the identified themes or phenomena (Pavlenko 2007: 167). For instance, Norton's (Norton Peirce 1995) interview study of migrant language learners in Canada is a good example of how carefully theorised concepts (social identity, investment) can illuminate the content of interview data in analytically meaningful ways. In this study, too, analysing the content of the interviews in order to identify recurrent themes was the starting point for further analysis. After all, one of the goals of this study was to learn more about the actual everyday experiences of a group of second language speakers of Finnish who had not been extensively studied before. However, as noted above (4.1.2), throughout the process of coding and analysis, the description of these experiences was informed by the theoretical framework, and different theoretical concepts drawn from this framework were mobilised to lend analytical depth to the discussion of participants' accounts of real-life experiences.

With regard to her second and third points of criticism, Pavlenko (2007: 171) suggests that the analysis of participants' real-life experiences through interviews should be complemented by an analysis of the interviews as instances of discourse. A discourse analytical perspective on interview data does not view interview accounts as factual renditions of experience, but rather it is interested in how this experience is constructed discursively (Benson 2014: 161). Such a perspective does not discredit what participants say about their experience. Instead, it acknowledges that participants' accounts are not simple reflections of this experience, but situated discursive constructions and, besides, that experience itself is always (at least to some extent) mediated by language. In the following, I discuss the two analytical approaches used in this study in order to analyse more closely the issues and key instances of data identified through the thematic analysis. The first is narrative analysis, which pays close attention to the linguistic means by which accounts are constructed, as well as to participants' positionings; the second is ethnographic discourse analysis, and nexus analysis in particular, which makes possible the analysis of instances of discourse (including discourse that is significantly absent) in their broader context.

4.3.2 Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis is a broad and diverse approach. Depending on the research context, narratives can be taken to refer to discrete stretches of speech with an identifiable topic and a clear temporal structure, as accounts of experience evolving over the course of multiple interviews, or even as life stories composed from different data sources by a researcher (Riessman 2008: 5-6). Similarly, narrative analysis can be defined as either the (thematic or structural) analysis of narratives defined in a narrow sense, such as works of literature or autobiographies, or as the application of narrative perspectives to data that do not necessarily qualify as narratives in this sense, such as spontaneous conversations or semi-structured interviews (see Benson 2014: 155). While the field of narrative research has traditionally focused on "big stories" (see Bamberg 2006), i.e., large coherent narratives, researchers have in recent years become increasingly interested in "small stories" (e.g. Bamberg & Georgakopoulou 2008; or "short stories", see Barkhuizen 2016), i.e., brief narrative moments in everyday talk. Following these approaches, I take a narrative view on storytelling in qualitative interviews to analyse the interview data in this study.

Narrative approaches are concerned with how people experience the world, how they use language to make sense of experiences, and how these processes contribute to how they understand themselves and their lives (Bamberg 2006: 64). This concern with subjective experience on the one hand, and the construction of these experiences through language on the other, also means that narrative approaches are particularly suited for investigating participants' linguistic identities (see e.g. Freeman 2001; De Fina et al. 2006; Georgakopoulou 2010). As Schiffrin (1997: 42; emphasis removed) notes, narratives can be seen as providing "a sociolinguistic self-portrait: a linguistic lens through which to discover people's views of themselves (as situated within both an ongoing interaction and a larger social structure) and their experiences". What participants say about themselves (as well as about other people and the world around them) is thus regarded as inseparable from the linguistic means they employ in their narratives.

A well-developed approach for analysing identity construction in discourse is positioning analysis (see also Chapter 3.2.2). This approach was originally proposed by Davies and Harré (1990) and was developed further in narrative approaches (e.g. Bamberg 1997; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou 2008; Deppermann 2013b). Positioning analysis is interested in how interlocutors construct and negotiate their interactional positions in relation to one another, and thus produce themselves and others as social beings (Bamberg 1997: 336). In narrative positioning analysis, positioning has been theorised as taking place on three levels (see Bamberg 1997; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou 2008). Level 1 concerns the ways in which characters are positioned within the story world, level 2 concerns the narrator's positioning in their interaction with an audience, and level 3 concerns the narrator's positioning with respect to broader discourses and social structures (Deppermann 2013a: 64-65). On all three levels, the analysis focuses on how lin-

guistic and discursive means, such as "moral evaluations, epistemic stances, attributions of agency, the display of psychological states and features, entitlements to knowledge, authority, and power" (Deppermann 2013a: 67-68), are used by narrators to position themselves, their audiences, as well as the characters featuring in their stories.

The analysis of positioning in this study focuses mainly on level 1 and 3 positioning. This is because the main interest is in participants' accounts of their experiences, as well as on how they make sense of their experiences against the backdrop of broader discourses (but see e.g. Strömmer 2017b for an insightful analysis of level 2 positioning in interviews). The focus on level 1 positioning adds depth to the analysis of experiences by paying attention to the additional layers of meaning that emerge from the linguistic and discursive means used by participants to narrate these experiences (e.g. the use of personal pronouns in constructing relationships between characters). The focus on level 3 positioning, on the other hand, makes it possible to make connections between positionings on the story level and broader concepts and discourses (e.g. how the construction of 'me vs. them' relationships in the story is connected to discourses of 'foreigners vs. Finns'). While all situated language use is connected to larger sociolinguistic processes through the indexicality of language, and all identities can thus be thought to emerge from level 1 and 2 positionings, De Fina (2013: 43) argues that the concept of level 3 positioning is analytically useful for discerning strictly situational roles (e.g. as interviewee) from more portable identities (e.g. as immigrant or non-native speaker).

In short, a narrative approach to interview data complements thematic content analysis by shifting the analytical focus from the what to the how of participants' accounts. Narrative positioning analysis in particular enables a detailed analysis of how complex identities are constructed through multi-level positionings. However, even such a detailed approach cannot capture all the relevant aspects of identity construction. As Wortham (2008: 208-209) argues, situational identity constructions are always mediated by processes over multiple timescales (see also Lemke 2000; De Costa 2016b). That is, while an analysis of level 3 positioning can reveal what existing larger scale identities or social structures are drawn on in situated narratives, it does not pay attention to how these identities and structures evolve and change over time (see Block 2010: 343). Similarly, not only are identities situationally constructed, but they also evolve and change over the individual's lifespan (see Lemke 2002). In order to understand the situational effects of positionings of individuals as, for instance, immigrants or non-native speakers, we have to consider the discursive trajectories of these notions as well as their relationship to these individuals' biographical trajectories. Such a perspective is afforded by (critical) ethnographic approaches to discourse in general and nexus analysis in particular, both of which are discussed in the next section.

4.3.3 Ethnographic discourse analysis and nexus analysis

A critical and sociolinguistically informed ethnographic approach to discourse (e.g. Blommaert 2005; see also Heller et al. 2018) strives to gain a holistic picture

of its object of inquiry. A critical ethnographic perspective on discourse goes beyond looking closely at singular instances of discourse to ask questions about (immediate and broader) contexts of interpretation, about how linguistic resources are distributed in interactions and across groups of speakers, and about what happens when speakers or texts travel across scales of space and time. Such a perspective on discourse does not limit itself to looking at what is in the data, but rather aims to uncover what Blommaert (2005) calls 'invisible contexts'. Such contexts are not directly observable in interactional data but they "enable (or disable) speakers and predefine to some extent what *can* happen in […] interactions" (Blommaert 2005: 96; emphasis in original). Investigating discourse in such a holistic fashion thus also allows us to think about what is absent from our data (cf. Pavlenko 2007).

Ethnographic discourse analysis can accommodate a wide range of data types (written texts, everyday talk, oral narratives, research interviews, visual materials) and, consequently, forms of analysis (Blommaert 2005: 235). This means that it does not rely on an analysis of written discourse, but nor is it restricted to the analysis of observational or interactional data. For instance, De Fina (2013) describes what an ethnographic approach to narrative data could look like. She argues that a close analysis of discourse patterns on the one hand and, on the other, a contextualisation of the meanings negotiated in interviews through relevant ethnographic knowledge gathered elsewhere (e.g. in previous research projects, research literature, media) can result in valuable insights, especially in contexts where the opportunities for direct observation of participants are limited (De Fina 2013: 46).

Nexus analysis (Scollon & Scollon 2004, 2007; see Chapter 3.3) provides a comprehensive theoretical and methodological framework for ethnographic discourse analysis. In a nexus analytical framework, everything has a history and a future: texts, buildings, words, practices, and humans, who carry with them their previous experiences as well as their expectations for future action. The three semiotic cycles of historical body, interaction order and discourse in place are not only central theoretical constructs, but can also be used as analytical tools that help transcend the strictly local (situational, interactional) context of discourse. Scollon and Scollon (2004: 153-178) offer practical guidance for designing and realising a research project, and make concrete suggestions for questions that can be used for interrogating data. For instance, with regard to historical bodies, one might ask how habitual an observed action is for a participant, how uniquely important the participant is for the accomplishment of this action, and what emotional value is attributed to the action by the participant (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 161). Or, with regard to discourses in place, one might ask what are the ways in which a place affords social actions, what kinds of overt discourse (e.g. text or speech) are present in a situation, and what discourses are invisible because they have already become part of practice (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 163-164). While it is rarely possible or viable to fully trace a semiotic cycle on the basis of the avail-

able data (e.g. a speaker's entire language learning history), nexus analytical terminology helps the analyst go beyond strictly local and synchronic contexts of meaning-making.

In addition to providing useful concepts for data analysis, nexus analysis also allows researchers to draw on different analytical tools from other research traditions. These include, among others, tools for detailed textual analysis, sociological analysis of social interactions, ethnographic observations, visual analysis, or combinations of these (S. Scollon & De Saint-Georges 2011: 73). For instance, Hult (2010) suggests combining a textual analysis of language policy documents with ethnographic observations. Strömmer's (2017b) and Virtanen's (2016) studies are examples of how narrative analysis can be mobilised within an ethnographic, nexus analytical framework. In this study, thematic, narrative and critical approaches to discourse are employed alongside each other in the analysis of participants' accounts, and combined with reflection on ethnographic observations. The nexus analytical notions of historical body, interaction order and discourse in place are used to reflect on social action both within the story worlds of the interview accounts and on the level of observations of real-life events.

In a broad sense, all the analytical approaches discussed in this section represent a kind of discourse analysis. While I have referred to these approaches as tools, it is important to stress that none of them can be applied mechanically. Rather, most importantly, they provide ways of looking at data with particular epistemological and theoretical assumptions in mind. In the analysis, I therefore employ these tools alongside the key concepts introduced in Chapter 3.2 flexibly and selectively. For instance, Chapter 5 focuses primarily on ideologies, while Chapter 6 looks more closely at participants' positionings and Chapter 7 takes a broader ethnographic view of the data. A concern with legitimacy as well as the use of the nexus analytical notions of historical body, interaction order and discourses in place continues throughout all the empirical chapters. On a final note, analytical tools in qualitative research cannot be seen as delivering results that are separable from their reporting. Thus, while not listed here as an analytical tool in itself, qualitative research writing plays a crucial role in that it is always simultaneously descriptive and interpretative, and is crucial for determining the credibility, coherence and relatability of a study (see also section 4.1.2 in this chapter).

5 NAVIGATING NATIVELIKENESS IN ADVANCED SECOND LANGUAGE USE OF FINNISH

This chapter investigates how highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish navigate nativelike language use against the background of ideologies of nativeness. Research in the past few decades has done much to debunk the myth of the native speaker (Rajagopalan 1997; Davies 2003). It has shown that ideologies of nativeness are tightly connected to notions of monolingualism, national and ethnic affiliation, and linguistic competence that are conceptually flawed while also being a poor fit with the immense social and linguistic diversity of real-life contexts (see e.g. Rampton 1990; Davies 2003; Myhill 2003; Bonfiglio 2010). On the other hand, sounding, speaking and writing like a native speaker has long been and often still is the (unstated) goal of language learning and teaching (Cook 1999; Doerr 2009), and native varieties of a language, especially standard, non-accented, white middle-class varieties, usually enjoy greater prestige than other varieties (e.g. Lippi-Green 1997). Thus, while the notion of native speaker is indeed problematic if treated as a given category with an ontologically real referent, this study takes the stance that "native speaker effects" (Doerr 2009: 15), i.e., the ways in which ideologies of nativeness mediate real-life practices, are a legitimate and important object of sociolinguistic study. Nativelikeness in this thesis is thus not understood as an alternative description of my participants high second language competence in Finnish but, rather, as an ideological effect they have to navigate.

In this chapter I approach the effects of native speaker ideologies from three different angles. First, I look at how beliefs about who is likely to be a proficient or nativelike speaker of Finnish inform the processes of sociolinguistic categorisation experienced by my participants (5.1). Second, I focus in more detail on one particular kind of sociolinguistic (mis-)categorisation, the phenomenon of passing for a native speaker (5.2). Finally, I take a look at how my participants evaluate their linguistic repertoires and practices in relation to ideals of nativeness (5.3).

5.1 Finnish, Estonian or foreigner? Everyday categorisation of advanced second language speakers of Finnish

5.1.1 Second language use and social categorisation

Processes of categorisation are fundamental to how humans perceive and interact with their environments, including their social environments. From a phenomenological perspective, categorisation is what structures humans' experience of their environments. The perception of objects and subjects in the world is not immediate, but mediated by the categories and concepts available for it (Kim & Berard 2009: 266), and the function of categorisation is to make complex environments intelligible, manageable and somewhat predictable (Layder 1998: 67). Categorisation is a social process in that categories of perception are to a great extent shared, at least among members of the same social and cultural context, making it possible for people to achieve some mutual understanding of phenomena in the world. Categorisation is also social in that it can refer to human beings themselves. Widely used social categories relate, for instance, to gender, age, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, or ability, with the specific attributes and behaviours associated with them differing between cultural contexts. In contemporary sociological and sociolinguistic research, these categories are understood as social constructs rather than ontologically real categories, and their reiteration is thought to take place on multiple levels, including the structural, symbolic and interactional planes (Irwin 2011).

From a sociolinguistic perspective, processes of categorisation concern how individuals and groups are categorised with regard to their language biography, linguistic variety or way of talking. As work in sociophonetics has shown, sociolinguistic perception is always a two-way process. On the one hand, research has shown that listeners are able to deduce social information (e.g. information about the gender, age, or origin of a speaker) from speech fairly consistently (see Drager 2010: 475-476). On the other hand, there is abundant evidence from experimental research that non-linguistic clues (such as the speaker's outer appearance and other clues present in the listening situation) influence how speech is perceived and processed (for an overview see Drager 2010: 476-477). Sociolinguistic perception and categorisation always involve an element of uncertainty, prompting listeners to draw on their probabilistic knowledge about the co-occurrence of social and linguistic features when interpreting acoustic signals (Kleinschmidt et al. 2018: 1). Usually such interpretive processes are to a large degree unconscious and embodied (Gallese & Lakoff 2005: 456).

Speakers' embodied knowledge about social and linguistic relationships, however, cannot be seen as entirely probabilistic. This is because experiences with language use in the social world are always readily mediated by language ideologies and folklinguistic beliefs about languages and speakers. Linguistic variation is not attributed to individual speakers alone, but is typically recognised, explained or justified with reference to social groups or types of speakers

(Irvine & Gal 2000: 37). Ideological boundaries (between languages, dialects or groups of speakers), in turn, influence how linguistic differences and similarities are perceived and categorised by speakers (see Niedzielski 1999; Drager 2010: 477). As Kroskrity (2004: 508) argues, while ideas about language ultimately derive from social experience, they also structure our perception of language use. The discursive construction of sociolinguistic categories, both in the field of sociolinguistics and in everyday discourse, is therefore highly relevant to how speakers and their language use are perceived in interaction. Moreover, the categorisation of speakers is also closely tied to other processes of social categorisation, e.g. relating to ethnic background or social status (see e.g. Iikkanen 2019). In the following analysis, I look at how my participants report being categorised in everyday interactions and at how they make sense of these experiences against the backdrop of common beliefs about language.

5.1.2 'Finns just don't expect at all that there could be people who speak Finnish in such a way': non-nativeness and the expectation of audibility

When asked how they think others perceive them in everyday (first) encounters, the majority of the participants in this study said that they think people generally realise immediately, or at least very quickly, that they are not first language speakers of Finnish. However, as mentioned in Chapter 4.2, one criterion for participation in the study was that participants had some experience of passing for a native speaker. All of them had therefore experienced at least one situation in which they were categorised as a native speaker by others. For some of the participants (Alexander, Veronika, Sergei, Emilie), such situations were rare: they recall its having happened maybe once or twice and could often remember the exact occasion. Others had experienced it a few times (Sandra, Sophie, Bianka), while for others it was more frequent (Zuzana, Marie, Judit, Julia, Agnieszka). However, even those participants who passed for a native speakers rather often usually expected to be recognised as second language speakers of Finnish fairly quickly, if not immediately, when meeting new people. In the following, I take a closer look at why or on what grounds my participants thought they were categorised by others as non-native speakers.

The factors contributing to a categorisation as non-native mentioned most frequently in the interviews are features of speech, mainly accent and intonation as well as grammatical errors. Consider the following statement by Zuzana:

Excerpt 1

KR: mistä niin mistä luulet että ne toiset sitten huomaa sun puheesta

ZU: no (.) luulen et niinku melodiasta tai niinku painotuksesta ja sit siitä et mä en kuitenkaan osaa kaikkee niinku oikein lausua

KR: mh

ZU: niin mä luulen et ne on lähinnä ne kaks kaks asiaa

KR: niinku ääntäminen tavallaan

ZU: mmh joo (.) ääntäminen=

KR: joo nii

ZU: =joo sen voi varmaan sanoo et (.) totta kai välillä mä käytän jotain niinku sijamuotoi tai tolleen niinku väärin tai tai niinku et (.) niin jotain niinku tämmösii kielioppillisia juttuja mut se ei ehkä välttämättä en mä en en voi tietää mutta en usko et se ois semmonen asia joka paljastaa koska mä huomasin et suomalaisetki oikeesti niinku käyttää niitä väärin et et se ei voi olla niinku semmonen niinku niin paljastava juttu

KR: why so why do you think people realise it from your speech

ZU: well (.) I think that because of the melody or like because of the stress and then because I don't know how to like pronounce everything right

KR: mh

ZU: so I think it's mostly those two things

KR: like the pronunciation in a way

ZU: mmh yeah (.) pronunciation=

KR: yeah right

ZU: =yeah you can probably say that (.) of course sometimes I use some cases or so like wrong or or like (.) so some like these grammar things but that is maybe not necessarily I don't I I can't know but I don't think that this is really something that gives me away because I noticed that Finns like really use them wrongly so it can't be like such a like such a revealing thing

In the conversation preceding the excerpt, Zuzana says that she feels that her interlocutors usually realise fairly quickly that she is not a first language speaker of Finnish and that this is because of the way she speaks. When asked to elaborate, she explains that it is mostly prosodic features ("melody", "stress") and pronunciation ("I don't know how to like pronounce everything right") that she experiences as non-native. She also acknowledges that she sometimes uses nonstandard grammatical forms but feels that these are a much weaker indicator of nonnativeness. This is because she has noticed that native speakers ("Finns") also use these forms "wrongly". She thus implies that at least small amounts of grammatically inaccurate language use fall within the range of nativelike performance. Another participant, Julia, expresses an almost opposite view:

Excerpt 2

KR: ja (.) und wenn du so äh sagen wir mal in der Stadt unterwegs bist im Laden was einkaufst=

JL: mh

KR: =oder so wie meinst du dass Leute dich da einordnen

JL: mmh es kommt drauf an wenn ich n schlechten Finnischtag hab dann merkt mans wahrscheinlich schon (.) irgendwann hab ich Kuchen gekauft da hab ich irgendwas (.) da hab ich gesagt *mä taisin ottaa* (.) also es gibt so in dem Moment m- es gibt so Momente wo ich überhaupt gar kein Finnisch mehr kann und dann so komplett dämlich Dinge raushaue und dann aber dann lassen sies meistens also des sie ham noch nie gesagt du bist bestimmt Ausländer oder so aber ich denk mal dann merken sie schon dass ich Ausländer bin aber wenn ich jetz nicht allzu viel sagen muss denk

ich nicht dass sie das merken weil ich glaub Akzent hab ich sogut wie gar kein- gar nich ich mach halt nur Fehler

KR: *yeah (.) and when you uh let's say you're in town in the shop doing some shopping=*
JL: *mh*
KR: *=or something what do you think what people make of you there*
JL: *mmh that depends when I'm having a bad Finnish day then you probably realise [that I'm a second language speaker] (.) this one time I was buying a cake and I [said] something (.) I said* mä taisin ottaa *['I think I took'] (.) so there's in this moment –m there are moments when I don't know any Finnish at all any more and then say completely silly things and then but then they just let it well they haven't ever said you're probably a foreigner or something like that but I think they do realise that I'm foreign but when I don't need to say too much I don't think they realise because I think I don't have much of an acc- an accent at all I just make mistakes*

Unlike Zuzana, Julia feels that her pronunciation of Finnish is nativelike but that it is the "mistakes" she makes that reveal that she is not a first language speaker. She recalls an interaction in a shop where she used the past tense phrase *mä taisin ottaa* (lit. 'I think I took') instead of the present tense *mä taidan ottaa* ('I think I'll take'). The phrase itself is pragmatically appropriate for the situation and the past tense form *taisin* can be easily confused with conditional forms often used in similar phrases (e.g. *mä ottaisin* 'I would take' or *mä voisin ottaa* 'I could take'). Julia's use of the phrase can thus be thought to indicate advanced language skills (she could have used a much simpler expression such as, e.g., *mä otan* 'I'll take'), however, the use of the past tense form makes it unidiomatic. With regard to the nativelikeness of her performance, she implies that is not stable, but depends on whether she has "a bad Finnish day" as well as on how much she talks.

In their statements, both participants invoke notions of nativeness commonly constructed by language learning researchers and laypeople alike. Pronunciation is widely considered the area of most persistent L1 transfer (e.g. Major 2008) and a nativelike accent is usually seen as very difficult to achieve for late additional language learners. From a sociolinguistic perspective, it can be argued that the range of nativelike pronunciation is rather narrow with regard to Finnish, which features less overall phonological variation than, for instance, global English. At the same time, as Zusana points out, language use by first language speakers is variable and not necessarily normative. At any rate, Zuzana's and Julia's interview accounts show that their reasoning is mediated by how they experience their linguistic historical bodies: Zuzana, who seems to be fairly confident about her nativelike grammar and vocabulary, believes that it is her pronunciation that gives her away. In contrast, Julia, who considers her pronunciation to be fairly accent free, thinks it is the mistakes she makes that make other people realise she is not a first language speaker. Both emphasise that they cannot know for sure how others categorise them, since this is rarely discussed openly (e.g. Julia: "well they haven't ever said you're probably a foreigner or something like that"). As I will discuss in more detail in Section 5.2, it is this interactional uncertainty, coupled with participants' past experiences and the beliefs that they hold about their linguistic historical bodies, that informs how speaker identities are constructed and managed in different situations.

As discussed in detail in Chapter 3.2.1, language ideologies function as a link mediating the indexical relationship between linguistic forms and social groups or types of speakers (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994). Language ideologies are, however, never isolated but are always closely connected to other beliefs about language and the social world and are framed by foundational ideas of language (see Jaffe 2009b: 392). In the context of speaker categorisation, it is not only beliefs about specific indicators of non-native competence (e.g. accent, grammar mistakes) that contribute to categorisation, but also the expectation itself, supported by beliefs about early language learning, that listeners can easily and reliably identify non-native speech. While extracting basic social information from speech is indeed something that listeners are generally good at (see Drager 2010: 475-476), there seems to be a particularly strong expectation that nativeness and non-nativeness are something that listeners can simply hear. Sandra explicitly refers to this idea in her interview:

Excerpt 3

SA: ja ja das is schon also es is is ja auch klar irgendwie wenn man in so nem Kontext is wo man ja und und grade eben weil die Leute glaub ich echt weil Finnen es einfach überhaupt nich erwarten dass es Leute geben kann die so Finnisch sprechen dass sies nich im ersten Satz hören (.) also dass das nich sofort irgendwie der Akzent oder irgendn richtig übler Grammatikfehler oder so was das das halt gleich irgendwie rausbringt und wenn man sich anhört wie halt der Großteil der Leute ähm spricht und auf welchem auf welchem Niveau das bei den meisten Leuten fossiliert (.) das is halt ja einfach n Niveau wo so n bisschen ähm also zum Beispiel die Fälle benutzt werden wies halt gerade so kommt *heh*

[…]

SA: […] und also ich kann ich kann deshalb wirklich gut verstehen dass Finnen das relativ überraschend finden

KR: mmh

SA: und halt da überhaupt nich so drauf ähm drauf vorbereitet sind aber andererseits wenn man sich überlegt wie das in der eigenen Muttersprache is ähm (.) man erwartet schon dass man en relativ klaren Akzent hört (.) oder dass ähm ((räuspert sich)) oder dass man irgendwie halt das äh das raushören kann […]

*SA: yeah yeah that is I mean of course when you're in a context like this where you and especially because I think that people really because Finns just don't expect at all that there could be people who speak Finnish in such a way that you don't hear it in the first sentence (.) I mean that it's not instantly the accent or some really bad grammar mistake or something like that that instantly exposes that and if you listen to how most people uhm speak and on what level it [their competence] fossilises (.) that simply is a level where it's a bit uhm where for example people use the cases any which way *heh**

[…]

SA: […] and I can that's why I understand really well that Finns find that surprising

KR: mmh

SA: and are not at all uhm prepared for that but on the other hand if you think about how it is in your own mother tongue uhm (.) you do expect that you hear a relatively clear accent (.) or that uhm ((clears throat)) that you can somehow uh hear it […]

Like the other participants, Sandra mentions accent and ungrammaticality as indicators of non-nativeness. She claims that most learners of Finnish do indeed retain an accent or make "really bad grammar mistake[s]". Sandra is a teacher of Finnish as a second language, and can therefore draw on specialist terminology ("fossilises"; see e.g. Han & Selinker 2005) to talk about the phenomenon. She then argues that, against this backdrop, it is not surprising that Finns expect to be able to identify late learners of Finnish, implying that this is particularly true in the Finnish context ("when you're in a context like this"), where the number of very advanced or nativelike second language speakers is relatively small. However, taking the perspective of a native speaker of German, she also implies that such expectations are not confined to this context and are perhaps even universal. Importantly, in the context of speaker categorisation, it could be argued that it is precisely this expectation of audibility of nativeness or non-nativeness that might make passing for a native speaker more probable: if accent free, fluent speech is strongly associated with nativeness, highly proficient second language speakers might well be perceived as native speakers, and the few non-native features of their speech might be more likely to be interpreted as falling within the range of nativelike variation.

Three other factors brought up by the participants in the context of categorisation as native/non-native in first encounters will be briefly mentioned here. These are looks or outward appearance, and first and last names. With regard to appearance, many participants said that they did not look Finnish (mentioning e.g. their dark hair, facial features, as well as style or fashion). Some recounted situations where they were automatically addressed in English (e.g. in service encounters) and thus clearly positioned as foreigners, seemingly on the basis of their looks. Names, on the other hand, featured as a more variable factor. Some participants said that introducing themselves to others with their foreign sounding name was usually enough to spark a conversation about their migration background. Others had found that their first names passed for Finnish names, while their family name still gave away their foreign background, unless they had taken their Finnish partner's last name. Names also appeared to be a more manageable indicator of foreignness, as a number of participants had adopted a more Finnish-sounding nickname that they used instead of their full first name in casual encounters. One participant (Alexander), who said he did not usually pass for a native speaker because of his accent, had experienced being taken for a Finn in online interactions in which he used a Finnish alias.

From the perspective of sociolinguistic perception, appearance and names are important because they can function as resources for impression formation and social categorisation in interaction. Research shows that non-linguistic factors have considerable influence on how speakers are perceived and how listeners process speech (see Drager 2010: 476-477). How linguistic and non-linguistic features are connected is, in turn, a question of language ideologies. In my participants' accounts, appearance and looks appear as highly indexical of being Finnish and invoke ideologies that consolidate ethnic, cultural and linguistic Finnishness. Even if my participants did not subscribe to such notions themselves,

they saw them at least as relevant to how others perceive them; in other words, they felt that looks or names not deemed Finnish were enough to raise some initial suspicions about their linguistic backgrounds. However, categorisations along the clear divide of native/non-native and Finnish/foreign were not the only categorisations my participants encountered, as they were also often taken to be Estonian, Finland-Swedish, early bilinguals, or speakers of a Finnish dialect. I turn to these other categorisations in the next section.

5.1.3 '... you are either Estonian or something': Estonian, Finland-Swedish, or dialect speaker?

As I showed above, my participants' accounts of being categorised as certain kinds of speakers often revolved around notions of nativeness and non-nativeness. However, there were astonishingly consistent mentions of four other (overlapping) categorisations throughout the interviews. Eight out of the twelve participants said that they had experiences of being categorised by others as either first language speakers of Estonian, or Finland-Swedish first language speakers of Swedish. Some reported that they had been taken to be early bilinguals, i.e., they were often asked if one of their parents was Finnish-speaking, and yet others had been assumed to be speakers of an (unfamiliar) Finnish dialect. As examples of this, consider the following two excerpts from interviews with different participants:

Excerpt 4

SA: […] ja also ähm ich weiß natürlich nich ähm wie schnell es kommt sicher auch drauf an worüber man spricht also wenn das so Themen sind über die man sowieso immer spricht und und wo ich dann tat- tatsächlich auch quasi keine Fehler mache oder so dann ist es mir auch schon passiert dass die Leute denken ich bin ähm ich bin Schwedischmuttersprachlerin und ich ähm oder ich bin zweisprachig aufgewachsen oder so weil ich anscheinend also weil die Fehler die ich am häufigsten mache solche sind die auch für schwedischsprachige Finnen typisch sind die halt quasi zweisprachig aufgewachsen sind deren stärkere Sprache aber Schwedisch is […]

SA: […] yeah well uhm of course I don't know uhm how fast it probably also depends on what you talk about so if it's topics that you always talk about anyway and and where I ac- actually practically don't make any mistakes or something then it has happened to me that people think I'm uhm I'm a native speaker of Swedish and I uhm or I grew up bilingually or something because apparently I well because the mistakes I make most often are also the ones that are typical of Swedish speaking Finns who grew up bilingually but whose strongest language is Swedish […]

Excerpt 5

MA: […] mulla on sem- semmonen niinku pik- mmh semmonen pieni aksen- niinku et mä mä yritän aina puhuu niinku yhtä nopeasti ku a- omalla kielellä siis äidinkielellä ja se on vähän huono asia koska sit jos mä paljon hitaamminen niinku puhuisin niin ehkä ehtisin vähän miettiä ennen ääh ja siks ääh aika monet niinku sanoo et sulla on siis

mut ni- loistavaa suomea mä alon- mä aluks al- ajattelin et sä olit suomalainen mut nyt vähän niinku alan epäirö- ööh epäiröidä että oot joko virolainen tai jotain et siis ehkä virolaiset puhuu nopeammin en tiedä ja sit mun nii
KR: koska niinku tai siis suomalaiset kokee et sä puhut liian
MA: tai siis et mulla on semmonen
KR: nopeasti
MA: ehkä semmonen niinku virolainen aksentti mutta aina mulle on=
KR: okei
MA: =sanottu virolainen tai sit (k(h)os on) turkulainen mut eihän nyt toi oli ihan höpöhöpö

MA: […] I have a like a ti- mmh a tiny accen- like I I always try to like talk as fast as in my own language I mean my mother tongue and that is a bit of a bad thing because if I talked like much slower then I would maybe have the time to think a bit before uuh and that's why uuh quite a lot of people like say that you have like but fantastic Finnish I star- at the beginning I thought that you were Finnish but now I'm starting to have like dou- uuh doubts that you are either Estonian or something so maybe Estonians talk faster I don't know and then my like
KR: because like or Finnish people thing you talk too
MA: or that I have a
KR: fast
MA: maybe some kind of Estonian accent but I'm always=
KR: okay
MA: =told Estonian or then ( ) from Turku but well that was complete nonsense

From the perspective of sociolinguistic perception, these categorisations are not particularly surprising: there is a long history of Finnish-Swedish bilingualism with varying degrees of proficiency (see Chapter 2.1) and Estonian speakers are the second largest group of foreign language speakers registered in Finland (Statistics Finland 2020a). Against this background, we can assume that it makes some sense for listeners to associate highly fluent but phonetically, grammatically or pragmatically non-native use of Finnish with one of these groups. However, as already argued above, the perception of linguistic variation always involves an ideological dimension that constructs and rationalises relationships between language(s) and speakers (Irvine & Gal 2000). Thus, the categorisations faced by my participants are also insightful with regard to ideologies about Finnish (as a second language). While there is evidence from research that learning a language closely related to the learner's first language is somewhat easier than learning an entirely unrelated language (with regard to Finnish see e.g. Kaivapalu 2005; Spoelman 2013), individual disposition and opportunities for learning are certainly equally important. Moreover, it has been argued (Dahl 2008) that the structural differences between Finnish and other (European) languages are often exaggerated even in the realm of professional linguistics. Popular discourses that present Finnish as an exotic and unique language that has little in common with other languages can then support the idea that only first language speakers of its closest Finno-Ugric relatives (such as Estonian speakers) could possibly master the Finnish language later in life (cf. Ahola 2020).

The categorisation of proficient second language speakers of Finnish as Finland-Swedes or early bilinguals, on the other hand, can be seen as connected to

beliefs about how much early exposure contributes to successful language learning. Moreover, from a language ideological perspective, both Finland-Swedes and bilinguals with a Finnish-speaking parent can also claim a connection to Finland with regard to other aspects than language, as nativeness is frequently connected to nationality (see e.g. Myhill 2003) as well as the idea of inheritance (see Rampton 1990). Thus, while Finland-Swedes and bilinguals with a Finnish-speaking parent might not always fulfil the linguistic criteria for nativelike competence in Finnish, they are still considered to be Finns. Within the logic of the ideology of nativeness, adult immigrants and late learners of Finnish, on the other hand, can never truly become Finns, regardless of how advanced their proficiency is. Being categorised as Finland-Swedish or as having a Finnish-speaking parent therefore evokes mixed feelings in some participants: on the one hand, it is experienced as a compliment and a validation of their language skills but, on the other hand, it can also serve as a reminder that language skills are not always enough, as is illustrated by the following comment made by Alexander:

Excerpt 6

AL: […] ich habe ja zwei finnlandschwedische Freunde die sind aber auch also aus dem tiefsten Finn-landschweden quasi ähm die können ja g- gar nichts auf Finnisch also nein die können schon Fin-nisch sprechen aber die mmh die da geht jeder Satz irgenis irgendein Fehler und sie trauen sich ja auch nich
KR: mmh
AL: es is ganz lustig das (.) der ist jetzt nach Helsinki gezogen einer meiner Kumpels und ich bin oft der Dolmetscher für ihn
KR: mhm mhm (.) wenn ihr irgendwie unterwegs seid oder
AL: ja ja oder wenn er was zu zu erledigen hat zum Beispiel ne=
KR: okay
AL: =er war n Teppich kaufen
KR: okay
AL: und da hat er mich mitgenommen damit=
KR: ja
AL: =ich dann sprechen kann
KR: ja
AL: und dann irgendwann das war a- ahh hab ich dann mal von Kela einen Brief gekriegt dass irgend-wie *va- valitettavasti tei- teitä ei voida pitää suomessa asuvana* und da dacht ich so ey ihr also ich si- ich bin der D(h)olmetscher für den Finnlandschweden und mich kann man nich für in Finnland wohnend haltend heh

AL: […] I have two Finland-Swedish friends but they really are from the deepest Finland-Sweden so to speak uhm they don't know anything in Finnish well no they do speak Finnish but they mmh every sentence goes some- there's some mistake and they also don't dare to
KR: mmh
AL: it's quite funny (.) he moved to Helsinki now one of my friends and I'm often his interpreter
KR: mhm mhm (.) like when you're out and about or
AL: yeah yeah or when he has errands to run for example=
KR: okay
AL: =he was buying a carpet
KR: okay
AL: and took me along so=

KR: *yeah*
AL: *=I would do the talking*
KR: *yeah*
AL: *and then sometime later it was a- ahh I got a letter from Kela [the Finnish social insurance institution] something like* va- valitettavasti tei- teitä ei voida pitää suomessa asuvana *[unfortunately you cannot be considered a resident of Finland] and I just thought so I'm the int(h)erpreter for the Finland-Swede and I can't be considered a resident of Finland heh*

In his account, Alexander constructs contrasting positions for himself and his Finland-Swedish friend. He describes his friend as being new to Helsinki and a second language speaker of Finnish with low or intermediate proficiency and little confidence in using Finnish. His description of his friend as being "from the deepest Finland-Sweden" can be interpreted as referring to an authentic but somewhat peripheral Finnishness. In contrast, Alexander appears in this story as an experienced local in Helsinki and a confident expert user of Finnish who can serve as a guide for his friend. By juxtaposing this story and the story of receiving a negative decision about his residency status, Alexander also constructs two competing views of what it means to be Finnish: one based on nationality and heritage, according to which his Swedish-speaking friend from the Finnish periphery is legitimately Finnish while Alexander himself is not even granted resident status by the authorities, and another that emphasises linguistic and local expertise as more relevant to life in Finland.

Finally, being categorised as a dialect speaker of Finnish was also mentioned by several participants. In Excerpt 5, above, Marie tells me that her way of speaking is often associated with being a first language speaker of Estonian but that she has also been taken for a Finnish speaker from Turku, a categorisation that she firmly dismisses. Her reaction to this categorisation can be understood better in the light of the following excerpts from the interviews with Veronika and Agnieszka:

Excerpt 7

VE: […] nykyään jos niinku puhuttiin jos puhun jonkun ihmisen kanssa niinku suosuomeksi ja jos se kysyy kysyy että että niinku sä kuulostat t- mistä mistä olet mistä maasta oot kotoisin ja usein se on niinku yllättänyt että mä olen tsekeistä

KR: *mh*

VE: että jotenkin niinku miettii että no j- jon- oli se joku virosta joskus se oli kerran virosta sit sit se oli sit se oli ruotsista ja sit oli vielä niinku itä- itäsuomesta se oli se mä sanoin joo u- joo mä pääsin jo suomeen se on hyvää

VE: *[…] these days when I talked when I talk to somebody like in Fi- Finnish and if they ask ask like you sound o- where where are what country are you from and often they are like surprised that I'm from the Czech Republic*

KR: **mh**

VE: *so somehow like [they] think thta well s- so- was it somebody from Estonia sometimes once it was Estonia then then it was then it was from Sweden and then there was like from Eas- Eastern Finland that was that I said yes u- yes I already made it to Finland that is good*

Excerpt 8

AG: […] mutta mä oon mä oon myöskin siis kuullut muutaman kerran sellaisen kommentisiis joku just mun tut- joku tuttu kertoo että ääh kertoi jostain niinku aikaisemmasta aikaisemmin tapahtuneesta tapaamisesta jossa oli just se nimenomaan se tuttu ja vielä joku ihan vieras ihminen=
KR: mmh
AG: =mukana ja minä ja mä jotenkin sain sen ihmisen jotenkiin luulemaan että mä oon että mä oon suomalainen
KR: joo
AG: ja ja se ihminen kommentoi sitten sitä asiaa sille mun tutulle että mist- mistä mistäpäin suomesta toi on muuten kotoisin ku se=
KR: okei
AG: =se murre oli niin kiinnostava jotain sellaista että=
KR: heh heh heh heh joo
AG: =tavallaan se meni jo niinku muurt(h)een=
KR: hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah
AG: =all(h)e hah mik(h)ä on ih(h)an hauskaa

AG: […] but I have I have also heard several times heard a commen- like some like my fri- some friend tells uuh told me about some earlier some meeting that had taken place earlier where there was this friend and some complete stranger=
KR: mmh
AG: =and me and I somehow managed to make that person believe that I am that I am Finnish
KR: yeah
AG: and and that person then made a comment about that to my friend like whe- where where abouts in Finland is she from because the=
KR: okei
AG: =the dialect was so interesting something like that so=
KR: heh heh heh heh yeah
AG: =in a way it already passed for a dial(h)ect=
KR: hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah
AG: =hah wh(h)ich is r(h)eally funny

Both excerpts deal with being taken for a speaker of a Finnish dialect, an Eastern Finnish dialect and an unknown variety of Finnish respectively. As in the case of Marie's account of being categorised as a speaker from Turku, it is unlikely that these speakers are displaying actual features of those dialects in their speech, especially given that none of the participants have ever lived in the areas in question. Rather, we can assume that their interlocutors perceive their Finnish to be fluent but somewhat non-standard, and subsequently associate this non-standardness with a (probably unfamiliar) regional dialect. As with the assumptions about Finland-Swedish, Estonian or bilingual speakers of Finnish, categorisation as a dialect speaker relies on the general association of fluency with nativeness and early language learning. In this case, however, this association leads to listeners rationalising their perception of non-standardness with their own unfamiliarity with Finnish varieties rather than with the non-nativeness of my participants.

With regard to the participants' experience of these categorisations, Veronika's account is particularly insightful. Prior to the excerpt, she tells me that she struggled with pronunciation in the early stages of her language learning and that she used to have a rather strong accent. Now, however, she feels that people realise that she is not a first language speaker of Finnish but that they are usually unable to guess where she is from. Like many other participants, she also mentions being categorised as being a first language speaker of Estonian or Swedish, and finally, recalls being taken for a speaker of an Eastern Finnish dialect on at least one occasion. The way her account is structured constructs a hierarchy of varieties of Finnish: Finnish spoken with a strong and distinct accent represents the lowest level, fluent Finnish without a recognisable accent (as indicated by categorisations as a first language speaker of Estonian or Swedish) is more advanced, while non-standard Finnish passing for a native dialect ranks highest. While Veronika takes being taken for a dialect speaker as a compliment ("I already made it to Finland that is good"), Agnieszka finds it "really funny", and Marie thinks it is "complete nonsense" (see Excerpt 5). Regardless of the participants' different reactions, it can be argued that coming closer to passing for a native speaker (of standard Finnish) is seen as an achievement by all of them. This suggestion of nativeness might be precisely why at least two of them feel the need to dismiss or ridicule being taken for a dialect speaker (not to mention the challenges that dialects pose to second language speakers' linguistic ownership; see Section 6.2).

Summing up, the categorisations encountered by my participants in everyday life go beyond the native/Finnish or non-native/foreign dichotomy to include categorisations such as Finland-Swedish, Estonians, bilinguals or dialect speakers. From a language ideological perspective, these categories can be understood as representing different degrees of speakerness on a continuum from standard native to non-standard learner Finnish. These categorisations are then neither arbitrary nor necessarily based on real features of speech, but are first and foremost mediated by beliefs about languages and language learning and the sociolinguistic expectations resulting from them. An orientation towards nativeness remains present not least in the way in which participants themselves construct a hierarchical relationship between these categorisations, with categorisation as a dialect speaker being the closest to passing for a native speaker and therefore the most flattering (but also the most difficult to accept).

5.1.4 'I'm just a normal person': self-identification and the irrelevance of sociolinguistic categories

So far in this chapter I have discussed how ideologies of nativeness (and native-likeness) are reflected in the categorisations my participants encounter in everyday life as well as in how they themselves make sense of these categorisations. In the following, I turn to how participants view themselves as speakers. Sociolinguistic categorisation and self-identification are qualitatively different phenomena. Bäckman (2017) points out that identity research in the context of migration

often draws on flawed assumptions about a straightforward relationship between experienced identities and social categories (e.g. nationality or ethnicity), while in reality feelings of belonging are difficult to express and measure (Bäckman 2017: 12-14). On the other hand, as argued in Chapter 3.2.2, experienced identities can never be completely independent from what is culturally intelligible. Thus, when exploring issues concerning self-identification, it is helpful to ask what discourses and ideologies mediate (e.g. enable, frame, or restrict) expressions of identification and belonging.

With regard to explicit self-identification, my participants generally affiliate with their countries of origin and linguistic backgrounds, and support the view that one cannot become Finnish (let alone a native speaker of Finnish) later in life. The following excerpt from the interview with Sandra is a typical example of this:

Excerpt 9

SA: […] also es wird sich sicher nich- nie was dadran ändern dass ich äh mich als Deutsche wahrnehme

KR: *mhm*

SA: ich hab die finnische Staatsbürgerschaft ähm weil ich gerne hier wählen möchte (.) das is auch der einzige Grund […] also ich merk das auch wenn ich unterrichte (.) dass ich doch ähm (.) zu ganz vielen Sachen so ne gewisse Distanz einnehme (.) also dass ich irgendwie auch dadrüber sprechen kann dass eben ja Finnen machen das so oder ähm Finnen reden so oder Finnen machen so lange Pausen oder sowas und dass ich mich da nich einschließe (.) das ist einfach so das it nich meine Muttersprache das wird es nie sein egal wie gut ich die kann es is eine Sprache die ich sehr flexibel benutzen kann in der ich auch durchaus ähm mich streiten kann oder ähm oder äh über über Gefühle mit jemandem sprechen kann oder was weiß ich aber ähm es wäre für mich zum Beispiel absolut ausgeschlossen gewesen mit meinen Kindern Finnisch zu sprechen (.) und es gibt auch immer noch so Situationen wo ich das Gefühl hab ich kann mich einfach auf Deutsch besser erklären als ich das auf Finnisch kann ich k- (.) und ja also ich nehme mich selber schon auch als als Ausländerin war als gut integrierte Ausländerin als jemand der sich hier wohlfühlt der hier gerne lebt der auch ähm sehr viel weniger ähm (.) äh so Barrieren zu überwinden hat oder kulturelle Fremdheit erlebt als Leute die eben doch aus ner sehr viel ähm weiter entfernten Kultur nach Finnland kommen als das jetzt die deutsche Kultur is aber es gibt immer mal so doch so Situationen wo ich irgendwie so n bisschen ähm ja mich als fremd empfinde und auch ähm und das äh also d- und und das so wahrnehme dass das eben dadran liegt dass ich nich dass ich nich in Finnland aufgewachsen bin

SA: […] well I'm sure it will no- never change that I uh perceive myself as German

*KR: *mhm**

SA: I have Finnish citizenship uhm because I would like to vote here (.) and that's the only reason […] well I also notice that when I'm teaching (.) that I actually do uhm (.) take a certain distance from a lot of things (.) I mean that I'm also somehow able to say that well Finns do this that way or uhm Finns talk like this or Finns take long breaks [when talking] or something like that and that I don't include myself there (.) it simply isn't my mother tongue and it won't ever be no matter how well I speak it it's a language that I'm able to use very flexibly and in which I can also uhm have an argument or uhm or uh talk about feelings with somebody or what not but uhm it would have been absolutely unthinkable for me to speak Finnish with my

> *children (.) and there are still situations where I feel that I can just explain myself better in German than I do in Finnish I c- (.) and yeah so I do somewhat perceive myself as a foreigner as a well-integrated foreigner as someone who is comfortable here who enjoys living here who also uhm has to uhm (.) uh overcome many fewer barriers or experiences a lot less cultural barriers than people who have come to Finland from a much more uhm remote culture than the German culture but once in a while there are these situations where I somehow uhm feel that I'm foreign and also uhm and that uh so t- and and feel like it is because I didn't because I didn't grow up in Finland*

Sandra explicitly declares that she identifies as "German" and as (a well-integrated) "foreigner". She is very confident about her Finnish language skills and mentions several markers of her advanced proficiency (being able to use Finnish flexibly, manage conflicts, talk about emotions). However, she feels that her relationship with the Finnish language falls short of her relationship with German, which is the language she uses with her children and which ultimately also best enables her to express herself. Besides the language dimension, her self-perception as a foreigner in Finland also seems to have a cultural dimension. While she emphasises that her cultural background is not as remote from Finnish culture as that of many other foreigners, she still feels that not having grown up in Finland makes her foreign. Her perception of herself as a proficient, but not native, language user (and cultural participant) is illustrated well by her description of how she positions herself in her work as a teacher in Finnish as a second language: with respect to the language learners, who are relatively new to the Finnish context, she positions herself as an expert of Finnish culture, while still siding with them in talking about the Finns as "them".

Similar notions emerge in the interviews with the other participants. Overall, my participants do not experience living their everyday lives in Finnish as challenging or limiting. At the same time, they do not talk about their proficiency as nativelike, but rather highlight non-target-like language use (mistakes), non-standard pronunciation (accent) or the need for further linguistic development (improvement). While many participants worry about their proficiency in their first language declining (for more details see Ruuska 2016: 363-365) and thus experience a certain loss of nativeness with regard to their first language, this is usually not seen as a sign of having become close to being nativelike in Finnish. This consistent and somewhat taken-for-granted identification with their first language, culture or home country can be seen as simply reflecting ideologies of nativeness and ethnonational belonging: one cannot become a native speaker of a language later or a native of another culture later in life. At the same time, such a self-understanding is also grounded in the material reality of my participants' historical bodies. Even if their competence can be (and occasionally is) considered nativelike by others, they cannot erase their trajectories of experience as late learners of Finnish: all of them remember well what it was like to be new to Finland to know very little or no Finnish at all. Processes of self-identification are also tied to the historical body with respect to other biographical dimensions. At the time of the interviews, many of the participants were still completing their education, and most of them still had strong ties to family and friends in their

home countries. However, as is evident from the account above, even participants with strong ties to Finland (in Sandra's case, Finnish citizenship or a family in Finland) tend to self-identify as a foreigner in Finland.

The notion of foreigner (*ulkomaalainen*) contrasts not only with native or local, but also with other terms describing those who have come to Finland from elsewhere. For instance, the terms immigrant (*maahanmuuttaja*) or person with a migrant background' (*maahanmuuttajataustainen*), used in public discourse to refer to people who were born outside Finland, or whose parents were born outside Finland, are much less frequently mentioned by my participants to describe themselves (although a couple of participants use both terms interchangeably). One possible reason for this is that these terms are mainly used in the spheres of research, politics and the media but are less likely to be used as labels of (positive) self-identification. For instance, in her sociolinguistic study of multilingual adolescents in Helsinki, Lehtonen (2015) observed that her participants (of whom some were born in Finland and some had moved to Finland in childhood) preferred to refer to themselves as foreigners rather than immigrants. Participants' self-identification as foreign serves to discursively distinguish them from Finns (*suomalaiset*) but without the stigma associated with the term immigrant (e.g. in terms of socioeconomic status and language skills; see Lehtonen 2015: 93-95). Another possible reason is that while highly educated, middle-class Europeans are immigrants in Finland in a literal and legal sense, they might not be regarded as such socioculturally. J. Leinonen (2012), for instance, points out that immigrants with a high social status (such as the Americans she studied) are not necessarily perceived as immigrants at all, but rather as expats or foreigners living in Finland (J. Leinonen 2012: 262).

While my participants readily perceive themselves as foreigners, they are not always comfortable with this identity being highlighted, especially when their self-perceptions are in conflict with assumptions of and discourses about what it means to be a foreigner in Finland. This becomes evident in the following excerpt from the interview with Agnieszka:

Excerpt 10

AG: […] kun muuttaa niinku maasta toiseen se on iso juttu ja ja perustaa kodin ja ja rakentaa sitä uutta elämää ne on kaikki niinku valtavan isoja asioita niin totta kai jossain vaihees tuntuu silleen että mä halusin kertoo ihmisille kun se oli niin tärkeä osa niinku sitä min(h)uutt(h)a heh

KR: mmh

AG: että oikeasti oli pak- ker- oli pakko kertoo

KR: mmh

AG: mutta ku se ei enää ole se on jotenkin en ei ihan unohtunut mutta mutta se ne mittasuhteet on nyt vähän eril(h)ais(h)et

KR: aivan

AG: se mä oon oikeasti asunut täällä niin kauan että mä mä haluaisin myös puhua ( ) just näistä tavallisista asioista=

KR: mmh

AG: =jotka liittyy nimenomaan taalla täällä asumiseen esimerkiksi

[…]

AG: mä oon *ts mun miehellä on nyt yksi yksi kaveri joka on on on on asunut täällä varmasti parisen vuotta ja ja hän niinku jotenki kokee että koska mä oon kans just muualta tullut niin nimenomaan mun kanssa se voi voi näitä asioita käydä läpi (mut) mä en jaksa=

KR: mmh

AG: =mä en halua enää mä en jotenki halua erikoistua siihen kokem(h)uks(h)e(h)en heh

KR: m(h)mhh heh heh hah hah hah

AG: e(h)nk(h)ä h(h)al(h)ua(h) enkä halua mä en nii koe olevani maahanmuuttaja esimerkiks et tää on varmasti liittyy tähänki

KR: joo

AG: että että mä oon vain just ihan tavallinen ihminen se on on niin rasittavaa jos miettää it- ittensä niinku maahanmuuttajaksi

KR: mmh

AG: se on niinku tosi raskasta

KR: mhm

AG: siihen liittyy niin paljon kaikenlaista nii jotenkin sellaisia haasteita ja tai sellaista puhetta sellaista diskurssia mitä mä en enää jaksa

AG: […] when you move like from one country to another it's a big thing and and to make a home and and to build this new life these are all like huge things so of course at some point I felt that I wanted to tell people [about it] because it was such an important part of like m(h)y self(h) heh

KR: mmh

AG: that I really had- te- had to tell them about it

KR: mmh

AG: but it's not like that any more it's somehow I don't it's not completely forgotten but it the scale is now a bit d(h)iffer(h)ent

KR: I see

AG: it I really have lived here for so long that I I would also like to talk ( ) about these ordinary things=

KR: mmh

AG: =that relate particularly to living here here for example

[…]

*AG: I'm *ts my husband now has one one friend who has has has has lived here probably about two years and and [this friend] like somehow feels that because I've also come from elsewhere it's precisely with me that they can can talk these things [being a foreigner in Finland] through (but) I can't bear it=*

KR: mmh

AG: =I don't want any more I somehow don't want to specialise in this exp(h)eri(h)ence heh

KR: m(h)mhh heh heh hah hah hah

AG: (h)and I d(h)on't and I don't want I don't so much feel as if I'm an immigrant for example so this is for sure is linked to this too

KR: yeah

AG: that that I'm just an ordinary person it is is so exhausting if you think of yo- yourself like as an immigrant

KR: mmh

AG: it's like really hard

KR: mhm

AG: it involves all sorts of things like somehow these kinds of challenges and or this kind of talk this kind of discourse that I can't take it any more

At the beginning of the excerpt, Agnieszka says that moving to another country and building a new life are indeed important and meaningful events in anyone's life. She also recounts that after moving to Finland, she herself felt the need to talk about these "huge things" with others. While Agnieszka emphasises that this part of her life is not "completely forgotten", it is no longer of such importance to her. That is, while the experience of migration is undeniably part of her historical body, so are the years of living an ordinary, everyday life in Finland. This shows that she feels there is a conflict between assumptions of what is important to her as an immigrant ("these kinds of challenges and or this kind of talk this kind of discourse") and what she herself considers central to her life. This is illustrated by the story about her partner's friend and how being positioned as a fellow immigrant makes her feel rather uncomfortable. Agnieszka's account suggests that while she does not identify as Finnish, she has become a local in Finland, someone to whom an identity centring on "ordinary things" is more relevant than one based on her history of immigration.

The interview data discussed in this chapter so far suggest that, despite their high proficiency in Finnish, my participants ultimately often assume the position of a foreigner. Since my participants, too, generally subscribe to the idea that one cannot become Finnish later in life, the social contexts in which they are positioned as "ordinary person[s]" interested in "ordinary things" are very important to them, as the following accounts by Marie and Sophie show:

Excerpt 11

MA: […] mä olin juhannuksena tota mökillä kavereitten kanssa ( ) se meni tosi hyvin ja sitten kun me ollaan niinku niin kauan oltu nii kavereita ei ne ei ne tietenkään oikeastaan niinku huomaa enää tai siis ei kiinnitä huomiota siihen et hoho [Marielle] pitäis puhuu niinku hitaammin tai jotain […]

MA: […] at Midsummer i was uh at a cottage with friends ( ) it went really well and then because we have been friends for like so long they don't of course they don't really like notice any more or like don't pay any attention to it like hoho we should talk like slower with [Marie] or something […]

Excerpt 12

SO: […] tai sit mä tai mä huomaan miten ööm siis toiste- toisen niinku ilmeet muuttuu kun se rupee niinku pikkuhiljaa niinku tajuamaan että ahaa nii joo nii ehkä toi ei oo nii tai ei välttämättä niinku ne ei ei he niinku ääneen sano mutta mä huomaan niinku s- mä oon niin tottunu siihen että esimerkiks ai nii joo se katsoo ja ta- katsoo vielä uudestaan heh heh se on se on myös hauskaa mut mä mä mä huomaan aika mon-

((clicks tongue)) mä huomaan kaiken […]

[…]

SO: […] kun nää niinku nää niinku tilanteet on niinku tullu vastaan et pik- siis pikkuhiljaa mä oon mä oon mä oon mä oon tullut niinku tottuneeksi siihen et et tällaista voi tällainen niinku tilan- voi tapahtua ja sit mä jotenkin odotan jotain reaktiota (.) et (.) joo

KR: onko se niinku tuleeks usein sitten joku reaktio että tai tuleeks se jotenkin esille vai

SO: se se siis se riippuu varmaan kontekstista (.) et riippuu myös ( ) piiristä myös niinku tilanteesta jos on bileissä tai siis niinku pienes- pienemmässä piirissä tai tai ((clicks tongue)) sitte jossain missä niinku (.) henkilö itse ei siis ei oo tärkeim- mä nyt tuli mieleen tää tää niinku futispeli et niinku tullaan kentälle ja sitte vaihdellaan niinku pari sanaa mut ylipäätään niinku pelataan että sitte se et mä en oo suomalainen tai se se tulee niinku se käy mielessä niinku jollain tyypillä et se niinku se ei oo tärkee ja se vaan niinku se tulee ja menee et se ei oo tärkeetä […]

SO: […] or then I or I notice how uhm like the othe- other's like facial expression changes when they start to like slowly like notice that aha right maybe that person is not or not necessarily like they don't they don't like say it out loud but I notice like i- I'm so used to this that for example alright yeah they take a look and ag- take another look heh heh that's that's also funny but I I I notice a lot o- ((clicks tongue)) I notice everything […]

[…]

SO: […] because I have encountered these like these like situations I slo- like slowly I have I have I have I have become like used to them that that something like that such a situa- can occur and then I somehow expect some kind of reaction (.) so (.) yeah

KR: is it like do you often get some reaction that or does it somehow come up or

SO: it it so it probably depends on the context (.) it also depends on ( ) the circles also like the situation if you're at a party or like in a smal- smaller circle or or ((clicks tongue)) or somewhere where like (.) the person themselves is like is not the most impor- I just I thought of this this like football playing where we like step on the field and then we exchange like a few words but on the whole we like play so there the fact that I'm not Finnish or that that comes like maybe somebody thinks about it so it's like it's not important and it just like comes and goes it's not important […]

In Excerpt 11, Marie recounts a recent weekend she spent with her friends. Elsewhere in the interview, Marie explains that she thinks a lot about her language use and monitors her own speech for mistakes (see Chapter 6.1.2). Against this background, her stating that the weekend "went really well" suggests that she felt at ease spending time with her friends, also in terms of speaking Finnish. Her explanation for this is that her friends have known her for a long time and do not engage in (unnecessary) accommodation practices, such as speaking more slowly ('foreigner talk', Ferguson 1975). Many other participants also remark that they appreciate their friendships and other close relationships not least because they do not experience themselves as Other in these contexts.

A different type of situation with a similar effect is described by Sophie. At the beginning of the excerpt, she tells me that she often observes how others react to her as a speaker, even if they do not "say it out loud" (that they can hear that

she is not a first language speaker of Finnish). Her account shows that the experience of being perceived as foreign or somehow different does not always require any explicit comment to trigger it off, but can also be based on something as subtle as interlocutors' facial expressions. According to Sophie, the experience of being positioned (or being prompted to position herself) as somehow different is so frequent or salient that it has become inscribed into her historical body: when meeting new people, she tends to "expect some kind of reaction" from them. In contrast to this, she describes situations in which individual social identities are backgrounded in favour of attention to a joint social action. As an example of this she mentions playing in a football team where, even if her teammates are aware of it, her sociolinguistic identity ("the fact that I'm not Finnish") is, at least sometimes, irrelevant ("it just like comes and goes it's not important").

So far in this chapter, I have focused on sociolinguistic categorisations that my participants encounter in their everyday lives. I have shown that these categorisations seem to be connected to language ideologies in the context of Finland, and that my participants themselves invoke and reconstruct these ideologies in their accounts. In the next section, I narrow my focus down to categorisations along the native/non-native line as an ideologically salient boundary, and explore how past experiences and future possibilities of passing for a native speaker (Piller 2002) influence how highly proficient speakers navigate social encounters on an everyday basis. The starting point for this is the idea that just as listeners draw on embodied beliefs about language and speakers when processing speech, speakers, too, draw on such beliefs when engaging in what Goffman (1986 [1963]) calls 'impression management'.

5.2 Passing for a native speaker

5.2.1 Sociolinguistic perspectives on passing

Passing can generally be defined as being "taken for a member of a social category other than one's own" (Bucholtz 1995: 351). The phenomenon has been discussed with regard to a variety of social categories and to different historical and contemporary contexts in a range of academic and literary work. With regard to race and ethnicity, it is often associated with African Americans passing for White during the times of segregation (see e.g. Nella Larsen's novel *Passing*, Larsen 2000 [1929]). In contemporary contexts, passing has been discussed in terms of the more general performativity of race and ethnicity (e.g. Bucholtz 1995; Johnson 2003; Khanna & Johnson 2010). In the field of sociology of gender, passing has been a topic of inquiry in the broader context of 'doing gender' (West & Zimmerman 1987; see e.g. the famous study by Garfinkel 1967: 116-185). In recent times, passing has also gained attention in disability studies (e.g. Siebers 2004; Brune & Wilson 2013). Finally, and most relevant to this work, from a perspective on language and social categories, the term passing has most often been used to

refer to individuals passing for native speakers of a language they learnt in adulthood, and who would therefore not be categorised as native on the basis of their linguistic biography.

In sociolinguistics and applied linguistics, the phenomenon of passing for a native speaker has been a relatively marginal research topic. In second language learning research, nativelike speakers have most often been discussed with reference to the issue of ultimate attainment and the critical period hypothesis (see e.g. Birdsong & Molis 2001; Birdsong 2004; Bongaerts 2005). That is, studies have focused on the question of whether language learners can gain nativelike command of a language after childhood (e.g. Coppieters 1987; Ioup et al. 1994; Bongaerts et al. 1997). The aim of such studies has been to measure proficiency levels by comparing native speakers' and non-native speakers' performance in standardised tests and experiments. This strand of research treats native speakers and non-native speakers as a priori defined categories, and does not usually pay attention to the social and contextual aspects of passing.

More recent experimental studies have taken social aspects like conversational context or listener perception into account in their research design. For instance, Abrahamsson and Hyltenstam (2009) recruited speakers of Swedish as a second language with ages of onset from less than 1 year to 47 years who identified themselves as nativelike, and combined native speakers' assessment of their (oral) linguistic performance with an assessment of their linguistic competence through a comprehensive language test. Their study shows that while second language speakers, even those with an age of onset of only a few months, clearly differed from native speakers when subjected to rigorous language testing, most of those who had learnt Swedish before adolescence and some of those who had acquired the language in adulthood passed for native speakers in the judgment test. This suggests that the relationship between actual competence and the ability to pass for a native speaker is not straightforward, and that there are other factors that influence the perception of second language speech. Gnevsheva (2017) analyses how native speakers of New Zealand English judge the language use of different users of English (late learners of English as well as native speakers of different varieties of English) with regard to nativeness. Using recordings of naturalistic conversations she shows that speakers of English as a second language are frequently taken to be native speakers, but that judgments are affected by factors relating to the listener, speaker, variety of English spoken, familiarity of the topic and situational context among others.

In sociologically oriented sociolinguistic research, some authors have touched upon the topic (e.g. Davies 2003: 72-73; Pennycook 2012: 74-100) but systematic research on the topic is rare. A notable exception is Piller's (2002) study, which takes issue with previous approaches seeking to prove or disprove attainment of nativelike competence by late learners. She argues that such studies are often heavily biased towards phonetic and syntactic aspects of language use as well as towards speech production, and that they favour experimental methods, thus ignoring, for instance, discursive and receptive language skills as well as the

complexity of real-life social interactions (Piller 2002: 182-185). Her own qualitative analysis of interviews with highly proficient speakers of German and English as second languages shows that passing for a native is not exceptional among her interviewees, but occurs frequently in their everyday lives. In Piller's study, passing is reported to typically occur in short and routinised encounters with strangers, such as service encounters, thus appearing as a 'temporary performance' (Piller 2002: 200) in a particular social context requiring particular skills rather than as an enduring, cross-situational ability connected to a nativelike level of competence. From this perspective on passing as a performance, being a native speaker has to be seen as something that speakers do rather than as an inherent ability or quality (Piller 2002: 201).

The topic has also been addressed in contexts other than late second language learners passing for native speakers. The study by Eliaso Magnusson and Stroud (2012), already discussed in Chapter 3.1.4., focuses on early multilinguals whose linguistic backgrounds and repertoires differ significantly from those of the late (foreign and second) language learners usually discussed in accounts of passing. While these multilinguals are usually perceived to be native speakers of Swedish, they recount experiences from phone calls at work where they are framed as near-native or nativelike by customers. Another relevant study is Hult's (2014) autoethnographic exploration of 'covert bilingualism'. Drawing on his own experiences as a bilingual speaker of Swedish and English, Hult shows that positioning oneself in a socially beneficial or desirable way can also include the deliberate concealment of language skills (Hult 2014: 63), or, reframed in the terminology used here, passing as a non-native or even non-speaker of a language (also see Bucholtz 1995: 363). While this can, in a way, be considered the logical opposite of passing for a native speaker, the positioning strategies described by Hult point to the important role of information management involved in such situations in general.

Sociolinguistic discussions such as these show that passing for a native speaker is not an ability as such, because it cannot be seen as the stable and inherent capacity of a speaker, just as it is inaccurate to describe it as an act or a performance because it cannot be seen as the achievement of one speaker alone. Rather, just like other types of processes of linguistic categorisation and identification, passing involves a multitude of factors, including "context, learner variability, and diversity; the polycentric and heterogeneous idea of language; and the identities and self-representations, authenticity, and imaginations of speakers encountering, appropriating, and performing new linguistic forms" (Elias Magnusson & Stroud 2012: 342). In this work, I therefore consider the issue of passing for a native as one of speakers navigating sociolinguistic categorisation against the background of their interlocutors' ideologically mediated expectations. The following analysis of experiences of passing for a native speaker in the context of Finland and Finnish as a second language conceptualises categorisation processes as taking place at the intersection of identity, ideology and interaction (see Eliaso Magnusson & Stroud 2012: 335). In order to address this complexity it draws on the nexus analytical concepts of historical body, discourses in place and

interaction order. The notion of historical body goes beyond a simplistic view of native/non-native speaker status and proficiency to capture individuals' linguistic biographies, complex identities and the embodied repertoires resulting from their experiences; the notion of discourses in place helps make sense of the role of ideologies of nativeness and other linguistic ideologies in action; and the notion of interaction order allows us to turn to questions of interactional dynamics and identity management (Goffman 1982 [1967], 1986 [1963]).

5.2.2 'I don't try to hide it': avoiding fraud and interactional insecurity

Passing, in the sense delineated above, relies on the existence of distinct social categories (Motha 2014: 94). Thus, the social categories involved in passing phenomena are typically arranged in a binary opposition, where two clearly delineated identifiers are seen as covering all individuals while, at the same time, being constructed as mutually exclusive (e.g. Black/White, man/woman, native/non-native). With regard to language, the phenomenon of passing for a native speaker requires that the categories of native and non-native are constructed as separate and that individuals can be clearly assigned to one of those categories. Shuck (2006: 260) describes this binary as "an Us-versus-Them division of the linguistic world in which native and non-native speakers of a language are thought to be mutually exclusive, uncontested, identifiable groups". This ideology contains two central claims: first, that one is, in the metaphorical sense implied by the notion of nativeness, indeed born with a language (and typically only one language) and that individuals' native language can therefore never change (Cook 1999: 186); and, second, that this native speaker status entails a distinct level of proficiency and linguistic intuition unattainable to non-native speakers (Rampton 1990). Because the ideology of nativeness precludes the possibility of actually becoming a native speaker, even highly proficient second language speakers can at most pass for native speakers.

Drawing on such dichotomous notions, one type of popular discourse about passing centres on the idea that it is a kind of 'fraud, 'deceit' (Piller 2002: 198-200) or 'theft' (Motha 2014: 94), implying that an identity is adopted illegitimately. An understanding of passing as fraud has been particularly present in historical or fictional depictions of racial passing (see e.g. Larsen 2000 [1929]), in which severe forms of social punishment are incurred on people when they are 'found out'. While none of my participants report having directly experienced negative reactions to having passed for a native speaker, they nevertheless take the possibility of such reactions into account in their practices. Consider, for instance, the following account from the interview with Sandra:

Excerpt 13

SA: […] dass jemand irgendwie äh merkt an an irgend- an meinem Akzent oder so merkt dass ich Deutsche bin das kommt auch nich vor die Leute können mich normalerweise nich einordnen also die müssen mich fragen

KR: mhm

SA: ähm es is aber wirklich so dass es oft doch ne ziemliche Weile dauert bis sie mich irgendwie fragen oder ich ich bring das auch ich ich sag das oft dann auch doch selber

KR: okay

SA: also weil ich ähm (.) weil ich auch nich möchte dass es irgendwie sowas ist ich denke weißte wenn wenn ich mich irgendwie ewig mit jemandem unterhalte und es auch jemand is den ich öfter mal treffe oder so und ich ähm (.) ich sag überhaupt nich wo ich her bin dann is das dann dann kann das auch sowas sein wo die Leute dann irgendwann denken hei die hat ja irgendwie mich die ganze Zeit an der Nase rumgeführt oder so

SA: […] it also doesn't happen that somebody somehow uh can tell from from some- tell from my accent or so that I'm German usually people don't know what box to put me in so they have to ask

KR: mhm

SA: uhm but it actually does often take a really long time before they ask me somehow or I I also bring it I I often say it myself in the end

KR: okay

SA: because I uhm (.) because I also don't want it to be like I think you know when when I somehow talk to somebody for ages and it's also a person who I run into often or so and I uhm (.) I don't tell them at all where I'm from then it is then then it can also be a thing where at some point people think hey she has somehow fooled me the whole time or so

Sandra is one of those participants who are often taken to be Finland-Swedish or an early bilingual, as she tells me elsewhere in the interview. She herself feels that her pronunciation is in some way non-native but, as she tells me in the excerpt above, she is certain that people cannot tell where exactly she is from. However, her linguistic background is something that she feels needs to be revealed, either by interlocutors asking directly or, more often, by her offering the information voluntarily. Her main motivation for this is avoiding deceiving her interlocutors: she does not want to "fool" others into categorising her as something she is not, thus also invoking essentialist notions of sociolinguistic authenticity (see e.g. Bucholtz 2003; Coupland 2003). Piller (2002: 200) found that her study participants most frequently passed for native speakers in short, routinised interactions, especially service encounters, and that they evaluated passing in such situations positively as a test of their linguistic skills. She suspects, however, that in other situations, notions of passing as deceit might bear on second language speakers' practices (Piller 2002: 199). Sandra's account is a good example of how (highly proficient) second language speakers' identity work can be mediated by such notions. Sandra also specifies that this practice is particularly relevant when meeting new people whom she expects to meet again in the future, indicating that her identity work is not only oriented towards the present interaction but also anticipatory of future encounters. Goffman (1982 [1967]: 7-8) argues that in encounters that are unlikely to be repeated in the future, participants can take more risks with regard to how they present themselves than in regular interactions, where more careful face-work is warranted.

Another participant, Zuzana, very often meets new people, as she works shifts in a large working community. She describes her experiences of passing for a native speaker in the following way:

Excerpt 14

ZU: […] niin ku mä sanoin et mä oletan aina et ihmiset tietää
KR: mh joo joo
ZU: tai ainakin epäilee niin mä puhun oikeesti ihan sillai tavallaan niinku rehellisesti et mä en niinku mitenkään yritä niinku peitellä sitä et et olisin niinku ulkomaalainen (.) paitsi tietyissä tapauksissa tiettyjen ihmisten kanssa
KR: mhm
ZU: jotka jostain syystä tai joista mä niinku epäilen että ne ei vieläkään niinku älynny sitä mulla on=
KR: okei joo
ZU: =muutama semmonen työkaveri jotka öö (.) et mä oon vaikka niinku paljonkin niitten kanssa niinku jutellu ja olen niinku sanonu jotain omasta mielestä niinku ihan tosi paljastavaa
KR: mmh
ZU: johon olettaisin tai odottaisin et toinen niinku tarttuu
KR: mmh
ZU: mut sit toinen ei olekaan tarttunu siihen ja (.) sit saattaa kysyy jotain jotain ihan niinku älytöntä (.) mikä niinku mulle tavallaan antaa just vihjeen et tää ihminen ei tajuu yhtään niinku esimerkiks tää yks henkilö joka on semmonen jo- jo- jonka kanssa mä oon tosi paljon jutellut kaiken maailman asioista siellä töissä ku oltiin niinku monta tuntia siellä yhessä niin jutellaan niinku kaikesta niin tota sit se yhtäkkiä kysyy siis me ollaan tunnettu monta kuukautta ja sit se vain yhtäkkiä kysyy et (.) et tota (.) öö jos mä sanon et mä oon menossa prahaan niin sit se kysyy et ooksä monta kertaa käyny siellä
KR: mmh
ZU: tai sit se kysyy et et ooksä sä miten kauan elänyt siellä tai asunut siellä prahassa tai jotain mikä mun on niinku et miten sä voit tolla tavalla kysyy
KR: mmh
ZU: et olenko mä monta kertaa käyny mä oon siellä syntyny
KR: joo
ZU: kyllähän sä sen tiedät
KR: nii
ZU: ajattelen
KR: joo
ZU: mut en välttämättä niinku sano koska mulle just niinku valkenee sillä hetkellä et eihän tää tajuu vieläkään et mä oon niinku tsekki oikeesti
KR: nii nii
ZU: nii sit mä vain niinku tavallaan pirutan niin niinku
KR: *mheh heh heh*
ZU: niinku odotan et miten=
KR: joo

ZU: =kauan niinku siinä menee ennen niinku toinen niinku kysyy=

KR: nii=nii=nii

ZU: =tai sanoo et niin hetkinen mitä sä oikeastaan oot

KR: mmh

ZU: et se on ihan vain siks koska mun mielestä se on sen ihmisen oma vika et se ei oo vieläkään niinku tajunnu

KR: okei

ZU: koska ei ole niinku poiminut tavallaan niinku vihjeitä joita mä oon ihan ihan tosi niinku avoimesti tarjonnu

ZU: […] like I said I always expect that people know

KR: mh yeah yeah

ZU: or at least suspect it so I really talk completely somehow like honestly I don't like try to hide it in any way that that I am like a foreigner (.) except in certain situations with certain people

KR: mhm

ZU: who for some reason or about whom I like suspect that they still haven't realised it I have=

KR: okay yeah

ZU: =a few colleagues who uuh (.) I have for example talked to them like quite a lot and I have like said something that I think is like really very revealing

KR: mmh

ZU: that I would have assumed or expected the other person to seize on

KR: mmh

ZU: but then they didn't seize on it and (.) then they might ask something something like completely senseless (.) which like in a way gives me a hint that this person doesn't get it at all like for example this one person who- who- with whom I have talked a lot about all kinds of things at work when we spent like many hours together we talk about like everything so then they ask all of a sudden like we have known each other for many months and then they just ask all of a sudden (.) er (.) uuh if I say that I'm going to Prague they ask so have you been there many times

KR: mmh

ZU: or then they ask like like how long have you lived there or stayed there in Prague or something where I like [think] how can you ask this like that

KR: mmh

ZU: like how many times have I been there I was born there

KR: yeah

ZU: you must know that

KR: yeah

ZU: I think

KR: yeah

ZU: but don't necessarily like say it because it like dawns on me in that moment that this person actually still doesn't get that I'm like Czech really

KR: yeah yeah

ZU: so then I just like play around so like

*KR: *mheh heh heh**

ZU: like I wait how=

KR: yeah

ZU: *=long it like takes until the other person like asks=*

KR: *yeah=yeah=yeah*

ZU: *=or says wait a moment where are you actually from*

KR: *mmh*

ZU: *so it's just because in my opinion it's that person's own fault that they still haven't like realised*

KR: *okay*

ZU: *because they haven't like picked up on the like clues that I have offered them like really very openly*

Zuzana, too, associates (accidental) passing for a native speaker with deception: she emphasises that she never tries to "hide" being a second language speaker and that she usually talks completely "honestly" about her background. Like Sandra, she thus implicitly invokes notions of true and authentic identities, and frames openness about this identity as a question of moral integrity. For my participants, this seems to translate into a responsibility to avoid passing. Since in most real-life interactions my participants cannot know whether they actually pass for a native speaker or not, it is of course quite possible that it does not take place at all, and that interlocutors do not ask them questions about their origin because they consider it irrelevant or simply want to be polite. However, since Sandra and Zuzana know that passing for a native speaker is a real possibility for them, the associated threat of being considered a fraud is serious enough to make them consciously monitor first encounters. In order to avoid passing, they either explicitly come forward with their linguistic background (Sandra) or give more subtle clues, such as mentioning their home country casually in conversation (Zuzana). The notion that there is a moral obligation to be truthful about one's identity and that the responsibility for identity work lies with the speaker is also reflected in Zuzana's story about her colleague. Her reasoning is that if she has tried her best to be open about her linguistic background ("the clues that I have offered them like really very openly") but still passes for a native speaker in her interlocutor's perception, the responsibility for correct categorisation shifts to the other person ("it's that person's own fault that they still haven't like realised"). Only in this case does she allow herself to "play around" and test how long she might pass for a native speaker.

The following excerpt from the interview with Judit shows that avoiding being taken for a native speaker does not have to be motivated by such notions of fraud but can also concern the interaction itself:

Excerpt 15

JD: […] on ehkä töissä töissä kyllä e- eniten tuntuu että ku siellä on paljon niitä tuntemattomia uusia ihmisiä ku harjoittelussa törmää niin moneen ihmiseen

KR: nii

JD: että että siellä on aina niitä tilanteita että (.) että tota joskus on semmosta että (.) että me vain jutellaan siellä ja kaikki puhuu ja ja mutta nyt ku ihanaa et tuo on hyvä kysymys kun mä nyt huomaan että jos mietin tätä että minä aina johdankin sitä juttelua sillä tavalla että se tulis tulis se asia selviksi (.) että mä alan puhumaan jostakin

jostakin unkariin liittyvästä asiasta tai (.) että että jostakin syystä et mä mä kyllä sen haluan kuitenkin (.) en mä tiiä miksi

KR: *joo*

JD: miksi ehkä se on (.) tuntuu turvallisemmalta kun mä ite provosoin s(h)en tilanteen että nyt tuli se asia selville ku yleensä ehkä se se on just että kun on tämmöisiä epävarmoja tilanteita kun jutellaan ja sit mä näen sen ihmisen naamasta että hän hän jotenkin nyt jotenkin aistii jotakin että tässä ei oo kaikki ihan ei täsmää että no mikä on että tuo puhuu vähän jännästi mutta mutta onko se ja sit kun mä yritän auttaa sitä tilannetta että kerron että mikä se on se se t(h)ilanne(h) […]

JD: […] maybe at work work it is I do feel the m- most that because there are a lot of these new people that I don't know because in the internship you meet so many people

KR: yeah

JD: so so there's always these situations that (.) that uh sometimes it's like (.) like we just talk there and everybody talks and and but now that wonderful this is a good question because now I realise when I think about it that I do always lead the conversation in a way that this thing would would be revealed (.) so I start talking about something something to do with Hungary or (.) so so for some reason I I do somehow want that (.) I don't know why

*KR: *yeah**

JD: why that maybe is (.) it feels safer when I provoke th(h)at situation that now this thing has been revealed because generally maybe it it's exactly because there are these uncertain situations when I talk to someone and then I see it in that person's face that now they they somehow sense something that there isn't everything doesn't really match up like what's up like that person talks a bit funny but but is she and then when I try to help the situation I say what it is this this s(h)ituation(h) […]

Like the participants discussed above, Judit says that she often consciously manages her conversations with new acquaintances in a way that reveals her linguistic background (e.g. by mentioning Hungary). She seems to closely monitor her interactions with others, trying to gauge from their behaviour how they might perceive her. Unlike Sandra and Zuzana, she does not explicitly refer to the idea of avoiding deceiving her interlocutors. Rather, it seems that what she wants to avoid is uncertainty and confusion about her identity when interacting with others, while also making herself feel "safe" by taking control of the situation. Goffman (1982 [1967]: 7) argues that participants in social situations can be considered to be 'out of face' if they fail to present themselves in a way that is consistent with expectations. Since, according to Goffman, face is not an attribute of a person but is constructed in the interactional flow, inconsistencies in the social identities of participants are usually somehow visible in the interaction itself (Goffman 1982 [1967]: 7-8). Thus, what Judit is reacting to in her story is the facial expressions of her interlocutors ("then I see it in that person's face"), which indicate confusion about her as a speaker. Clearing up this confusion can then be understood as a means of protecting her own and her interlocutor's face.

In Goffman's thinking (e.g. Goffman 1983), the interaction order is a deeply moral order (Rawls 1987: 137; Malone 1997: 4; Harré and van Langehove 1999: 6). This moral dimension is a function of the mutuality of interactions, as participants try to fulfil the obligations their interactional contract involves and protect

their own and their interlocutors' faces (Malone 1997: 4-5). From this perspective, openness and clarity about one's identity are morally imperative, and also highlight the importance of accurate social categorisation. However, it can be argued that what exactly is considered contract-breaching or face-threatening depends to some degree on the social and cultural context. Language ideologies link language and the social world in a way that is not purely probabilistic but also involves moral notions (Irvine 1989: 255; Woolard 1998: 3). My analysis suggests that the phenomenon of passing for a native speaker is experienced as a moral issue in at least two interconnected ways. First, ideologies of nativeness presuppose that one cannot truly become a native speaker later in life, making instances of passing as such appear as fraud. Second, since the interaction order requires participants to present their interactional selves in an open, honest, and consistent fashion, they are responsible for avoiding inconclusive readings of their social identities.

5.2.3 'Now it's a fact and I'm allowed to speak badly': navigating passing and sociolinguistic evaluation

As I discussed in the introduction to this chapter, sociolinguistic categorisation plays a crucial role in how language use is evaluated. Experimental research in sociophonetics (e.g. Hanulíková et al. 2012; Lev-Ari et al. 2018) has shown that listeners' initial categorisation of the speaker as native or non-native (e.g. on the basis of accent) has a considerable effect on how their speech is processed by listeners because it raises expectations regarding the kind of language native/non-native speakers are likely to use. Hanulíková et al. (2012) conducted a study where L1 speakers of Dutch listened to a set of sentences which contained both correct and incorrect gender agreement, and were read by an L1 speaker of Dutch and an L1 speaker of Turkish/L2 learner of Dutch. They were able to show that listeners processed sentences with a gender agreement violation differently according to who the speaker was: when such sentences were spoken with a native accent, there was a strong reaction to incorrect gender agreement, but this was not the case when the same sentences were spoken with a foreign (in this case, Turkish) accent. The authors argue that this effect can be explained by listeners' presumption that accented speech usually also contains grammatical errors (Hanulíková et al. 2012: 879). Their study therefore suggests that the initial categorisation of speakers as native/non-native (or of speech as accent-free/accented) raises expectations with regard to the kind of language they are likely to use and consequently influences listeners' speech processing.

While linguistic processing is largely unconscious, the general idea that sociolinguistic categorisation raises expectations with regard to linguistic production is strongly reflected in what many of my participants described in their interviews. The following excerpts are from the interviews with Marie and Judit, two of the participants who experience passing for a native speaker on a regular basis:

Excerpt 16

MA: […] no sit sillo ku muut tietää et mä oon ranskasta nii sit on helpompaa kuitenkin olla sit kun tietää että no sulla ei oo mitään menetettävää nyt ne tietää et sä oot niinku vieraskielinen ja sä kuitenkin puhut niinku paljon parem- paljon paremmin ku ööh toinen vaik niinku ranskaa tai siis niinku (jotain) vastaavast niinku niinku ranskaks (.) n- nyt tavallaan se sun identiteetti tai siis kansalaisuus ööh pyytää anteeks sun puol(h)est(h)a ett(h)ä nii kaik- niin kaikista virheistä et mitä sä (.) et ku se kun ne odotukset heti li- laskee silloin kun sanotaan et sä oot niinku vieraskielinen sitte öh okei ranska(laisille) v(h)arsinkin(h) jotka eivät osaa vieraita kielii

MA: […] well and then when the others know that I'm from France I feel better somehow when you know that well you have nothing to lose now they know that you are like a foreign language speaker and you still speak like so much be- much better than uuh the other fo- like French or like (something) similar like like in French (.) n- now in a way your identity or your nationality uuh apologises on y(h)our b(h)ehalf like for al- all the mistakes that you (.) because because the expectations are immediately li- lower when it is said that you are like a foreign language speaker then uh okay for French (people) in p(h)art(h)icular who don't know foreign languages

Excerpt 17

JD: no joo että siinä koulussa kun joskus on (tämmönen) tosi iso porukka

KR: mmh

JD: jotka eivät ole (erityisesti) ehkä mun mun (.) ku toki meidän luokassa kyllä kaikki tietää mutta kun me ol- oltiin siis sataviiskymmentä ihmistä samassa ja kun on tehty uudet ryhmät (.) no siellä oli aina semmosia että no nyt mun pitää mennä tonne puhumaan ja nuo ihmiset eivät tiiä että mä en oo ja (.) mutta alan puhumaan että kaikille tuli selville (jotka et) se se en mä tiiä että se (.) oli mun mielestä semmonen en en tykännyt ollenkaan (.) vaikka siinä oli vielä muita ulkomaalaisia ja jotkut puhuivat paljon huonomminkin (.) en mä tiiä minkä takia minusta se oli vähän semmonen et mä en halua että huom- (mut se) et ne muut huomaisi että m- et mä en oo ja mun kieli on erilainen (.) että oli oli vähän semmonen olo

KR: mmh

JD: nyt nytkin minun mielestä vaan sen takia ei haittaa kun mä tiedän et (nyt niinku) kaikki tietää että mä oon ulkomaalainen

KR: joo et se

JD: että se ois edelleenkin edelleenkin ois ongelma jos mun pitäis nyt mennä johonkin yleisön eteen puhumaan sillä tavalla jos ne eivät tietää ja sitte mä oon ulkomaalainen

[…]

KR: nii (.) mut nyt kun ää kaikki tietää ja ne on vähän tutuimpia ihmisiä nii s- nyt se ei oo

JD: nyt ei oo enää

KR: ei oo enää ongelmaa

JD: ei

KR: onks se just se että niinku ne tu- sä tunnet niitä ihmisiä paremmin vai että niinku se on tavallaan (.) niinku se tieto on jo paljastunut

JD: se tieto se tieto=

KR: joo

JD: =että että se se on mä oon nyt ei ei tarvi pelätä kun tuntuu et nyt tuli se on fakta ja mulla on lupa lupa puhua puhua huon(h)osti ja=

KR: joo

JD: =vaan tehä kielivirheitä ja on lupa lupa kun ne tietää minkä takia se on

JD: well yeah at school when sometimes there's a lot of people

KR: mmh

JD: who are maybe not (particularly) my my (.) of course in our class everybody knows [that I'm a second language speaker] but when there w- were a hundred and fifty people at the same time and when we formed new groups (.) then there were always these well now I have to go there and talk and those people don't know that I am and (.) but then I start talking so it would become clear to everyone (who) that that I don't know that (.) it was a bit like that I think and I didn't like it at all (.) even if there were other foreigners who spoke a lot worse (.) I don't know why for me it was a bit like I didn't want them to no- (but it) want them to notice that I- that I'm not [Finnish] and that my language is different (.) it felt felt a bit like that

KR: mmh

JD: now also now I think it doesn't bother me only because I know that (now like) everybody knows I'm a foreigner

KR: yeah and that

JD: it would still would still be a problem if I now had to go and talk in front of some audience if they didn't know that I'm a foreigner

[…]

KR: yeah (.) but now that uuh everybody knows and they are a bit more familiar it- now it's not

JD: now it's not any more

KR: it's not a problem any more

JD: no

KR: is it that they kn- you know these these people better or that it's like (.) like the information has already been revealed

JD: the information the information=

KR: yeah

JD: =that that it it is I am now I don't don't need to be afraid because I feel like now it has it's a fact and I'm allowed allowed to speak speak b(h)adly and=

KR: yeah

JD: =just make mistakes and I'm allowed allowed to because they know why that is

In Excerpt 16, Marie says that she feels more at ease in conversations if her interlocutors know that she is a second language speaker of Finnish. According to her, this is because then she has "nothing to lose". She feels that her interlocutors' expectations of what her linguistic production should be like will be lower if they know her linguistic background, and mistakes will be rated less harshly against the backdrop of her speaker status ("your identity or your nationality uuh apologises on y(h)our b(h)ehalf like for al- all the mistakes"). Marie herself gives some clues as to what it is that she thinks she could potentially have to "lose". As in the examples discussed in Section 5.2.2, she constructs the possibility of passing for a native speaker as threatening. Here, however, passing is not treated as a

threat to the speaker's moral integrity based on an imperative not to hide their supposedly true linguistic identity, but rather as a threat to the positive evaluation of their linguistic skills. In other words, Marie feels that her interlocutors' awareness of her linguistic background frames her proficiency in Finnish as an achievement and frames her as a particularly successful learner of Finnish. Marie makes this reasoning explicit ("they know that you are like a foreigner language speaker and you still speak like so much be- much better") and evaluates it as particularly relevant against the backdrop of stereotypes about French people being bad at learning foreign languages ("for French (people) in p(h)art(h)icular who don't know foreign languages").

Judit's account of interactions with her fellow students points to a similar experience. She contrasts two different situations: the beginning of her studies, when new groups were formed and the other students did not know about her background, and the current situation, where at least everybody in her class knows that she is a second language speaker of Finnish. With regard to the first situation, she describes feeling uncomfortable with falling short of speaking nativelike Finnish and with her language being "different". In contrast, now that practically all her fellow students are aware of her linguistic background, she feels that she is allowed to "speak badly" and "make mistakes", and consequently feels more at ease. Judit's account of her experience draws to some extent on the native/non-native dichotomy, and reconstructs it: relaxed participation is possible either as a nativelike speaker whose way of speaking fits in with everyone else, or as a second language speaker who speaks differently for a reason that everyone knows. Thus, we can assume that her insecurity and unease with regard to the first type of situation stems from the fear of inaccurate sociolinguistic categorisation, and is not necessarily related to her actually "speaking badly", since she also emphasises that there were much less proficient second language speakers present.

Both accounts strikingly foreground the idea of obtaining permission or forgiveness for non-nativelike language use. In my participants' stories, this permission is not actively granted by interlocutors, but rather has to be considered an effect of accurate sociolinguistic categorisation. In contrast to notions of passing as the ultimate indicator of achievement (Piller 2002: 181), both accounts also suggest that, at least under some circumstances, *not* passing for a native speaker is precisely what makes it possible for my participants to experience and present themselves as particularly successful learners of Finnish. The following excerpt from the interview with Julia, another participant who frequently passes for a native speaker, points in a similar direction while also introducing yet another aspect of this issue:

Excerpt 18

JL: aber wa- es is halt weil weils mir auch relativ oft schon passiert is sozusagen dass ich irgendn Fehler gemacht hab auf Finnisch und dann sozusagen hat der Mensch mit mir kaum noch danach Kontakt gehabt weil er einfach dachte dass ich sozusagen dass

was ich gemeint hab was ich gesagt hab (.) und *hh und deswegen probier ich das zu vermeiden dass solche solche Sachen wieder passieren

KR: ja

JL: weil ich einfach möchte dass es natürlich is es sozusagen wenn man mich kennenlernen möchte auf Finnisch dauert das ne Weile genau um rauszufinden wo sozusagen die kleinen Nuancen sind wo ich Fehler mache und *hh wie ich mich ausdrücke und was ich tatsächlich damit meine […]

[…]

JL: und deswegen sag i- sag ichs einfach gerne auch gleich von Anfang an dass dass ich dass ich aus Deutschland bin=

KR: mmh

JL: =und dass ich deswegen lustig spreche

KR: ja sagst dus einfach also du bringst es dann einfach=

JL: joa (naja)

KR: =ein so ohne oder wartest du auf so ne

JL: nääh ich fall mit der Tür ins Haus heh heh heh

KR: Gelegenheit du sagst dann einfach ok(h)ay hah hah

JL: ich bin [Julia] ich bin aus Deutschland

*JL: but wha- it's just that because because it has happened to me relatively often that I made some mistake in Finnish and then the person [I was talking to] was barely in touch with me after that because they just thought that I meant what I said (.) and *hh and that's why I try to prevent such such things from happening again*

KR: yeah

*JL: because I just want it to be of course it is in a way when people want to get to know me in Finnish it's going to take a while for them to figure out where the small nuances are where I make mistakes and *hh how I express myself and what I really mean by that […]*

[…]

JL: and that's why I sa- I simply like to say it straight from the beginning on that that I'm from Germany=

KR: mmh

JL: =and that I speak in a funny way because of that

KR: so do you just say it I mean do you just bring it=

JL: (well) yeah

KR: =up without any or do you wait for an

JL: nah I just get straight to the point heh heh heh

KR: opportunity you just say it ok(h)ay hah hah

JL: I'm [Julia] I'm from Germany

Julia, too, starts her account by referring to situations in which she has made a "mistake" in Finnish. Unlike the other participants discussed in this chapter, however, her greatest concern about passing for a native speaker does not seem to be that her level of proficiency is not evaluated positively. Rather, she is afraid that her interlocutors could misunderstand her intentions due to inaccurately categorising her as a native speaker of Finnish. This is because Julia's understanding of language goes beyond a functional one: she is aware that the "small nuances"

and her way of expressing herself all contribute to how interlocutors interpret her speech. This is in line with an understanding of language use as inherently indexical (e.g. Silverstein 2003, 2009) and relying on certain linguistic and pragmatic clues (see Gumperz 1982) that help listeners contextualise what they hear and arrive at a pragmatically accurate interpretation. Julia's account suggests that the perception of these clues and the subsequent interpretation of intended meaning also depends on how a speaker is categorised in the first place.

Such a view is also supported by research. A sociophonetic study conducted by Lev-Ari et al. (2018) showed that native listeners' processing of speech (including their own) was less attentive to detail after exposure to a sample of non-native speech containing non-target-like constructions. They argue that the expectations listeners form on the basis of sociolinguistic categorisation influence what kind of information they pay attention to and attribute significance to (Lev-Ari et al. 2018: 13). Consequently, sociolinguistic categorisation might affect people's evaluation not only of how or how well people speak, but also of what they say and what information listeners attend to. In light of this, Julia's fear of being misunderstood in her intentions and her personality is understandable: if categorised as a native speaker, she is expected to use language in a very nuanced and precise way, and when failing to do so, is in danger of coming across as a strange or rude person; if categorised as a non-native speaker, on the other hand, listeners might adjust their expectations and give less weight to particular discursive features. Her fear of the negative consequences ("and then the person [I was talking to] was barely in touch with me after that") might at first seem exaggerated, but it clearly resonates with other participants' fear of other people considering them a fraud (see Section 5.2.2). Julia's strategy is therefore to make her linguistic background clear to interlocutors as directly as possible ("I just get straight to the point […] I'm [Julia] I'm from Germany").

The interview excerpts discussed here show that my participants feel that being categorised as a non-native speaker can be beneficial to how they are perceived as speakers and as people. Marie's and Judit's accounts illustrate that, for them, being open about their linguistic backgrounds means making sure that their Finnish skills are evaluated favourably, that they can appear as successful second language speakers and therefore also be more relaxed in interactions with others. Julia's account suggests, further, that being (accurately) categorised as a second language speaker also contributes to her being perceived more favourably as a person (lessening her chances of appearing strange or rude). Her fear of being taken seriously when unintentionally saying something "silly" is reflected in many other parts of the interview as well.

5.2.4 'Are you one hundred percent French?': deconstructions and reconstructions of nativeness

For some scholars, the very possibility of a second language speaker passing for a native speaker challenges and deconstructs the native/non-native binary (see e.g. Piller 2002: 201). Others, on the other hand, have pointed out that talking about such instances in these terms might have the opposite effect. For instance,

Pennycook (2012: 76) claims that since the notion of passing implies the transgression of a boundary, it might ultimately reinforce the native/non-native dichotomy. He therefore suggests that, when looking at instances of real language use, scholars give up the notion of passing for a native speaker and instead talk about instances of 'performing like a local' (Pennycook 2012: 89). However, I argue that insofar as participants themselves treat the native/non-native distinction as relevant to their interactions, the practices around instances of passing as well as sociolinguistic categorisation more broadly, can provide insights into the effects (see Doerr 2009) and consequences of the native speaker ideology. As discussed earlier in this chapter, categorisation as native/non-native is not the only type of categorisation my participants encounter in everyday life, as they are also often taken to be Finland-Swedish, Estonian, or early bilinguals. These categories seem to be associated with high proficiency in Finnish and are thus located somewhere between Finnish/native and foreign/non-native speakers. However, because these categorisations also draw on beliefs about early language learning, structurally similar languages, and ethnonational belonging, they can still be seen as orienting to notions of nativeness.

When thinking about the potentially destabilising effects of passing for a native speaker, it is important to acknowledge that instances of successful passing will not actually have any consequences at all if they remain undetected. For instance, in goal-oriented and relatively impersonal interactions, such as brief service encounters, in which many of my participants believe they pass for native speakers, sociolinguistic categorisation is usually treated as irrelevant (see e.g. Excerpt 2 in Section 5.1.2). However, as I have shown earlier, my participants tend to avoid passing for a native speaker in more personal and potentially consequential encounters. Thus, in order to find out whether highly proficient or nativelike second language speakers can be seen as disrupting the native speaker ideology, it is necessary to look at instances where my participants' linguistic background is revealed and discussed in some way – even if such situations are not always preceded by instances of passing in a narrow sense.

The following excerpt from the interview with Alexander illustrates what my participants typically experience when their linguistic background becomes the topic of conversation:

Excerpt 19

KR: […] und was sagen die leute dann so wenn du wenn du ach so ja ja

AL: na oh wo hast du denn so gut oder wie lange hast du denn schon in Finnland gewohnt und so und dann

KR: okay ja

AL: dann sag ich beziehungsweise es is meist so wenn ich sage sechs Jahre dass sie dann sagen wie was so wenig und du kannst schon so gut Finnisch und dann sag ich aber ja ich bin aber Linguist und ich hab das ganz intensiv und dann is okay

KR: okay findest du das diese Reaktionen irgendwie seltsam erwartest du die schon oder also

AL: eigentlich erwart ich s(h)ie schon heh

KR: *[…] and what do people say when you oh right yeah yeah*

AL: *well wow where did you [learn Finnish] that well or how long have you lived in Finland and so on and then*

KR: *okay yeah*

AL: *yeah then I say or actually mostly it's like when I say six years they say what that little and you already speak Finnish this well and then I say well yeah but I'm a linguist and I have [studied Finnish] quite intensively and then it's okay*

KR: *okay do you find these reactions somehow strange or do you expect them alreday or well*

AL: *I kind of expect th(h)em already heh*

Alexander reports that people are usually surprised when they find out that he is a late learner of Finnish: they ask where or how he learned Finnish, how it is possible that he has reached such a high level of proficiency, and how long he has lived in Finland. This pattern of dialogue (praise for language skills, enquiries about the duration of residence in Finland, circumstances of language learning) is reproduced in the interviews by almost all the participants when they are asked how their interlocutors react to their linguistic background. Alexander himself indicates that this is a very common experience for him, one that he has learned to almost expect whenever he meets new people ("I kind of expect th(h)em already"). The prevalence of such conversations can be seen as another indication that, from a language ideological perspective, highly proficient adult second language speakers of Finnish are indeed unexpected (cf. Pennycook 2012: 100) in the Finnish context, even after having lived in Finland for many years ("when I say six years they say what that little and you already speak Finnish this well").

The praise my participants receive for their Finnish skills (and which is experienced as rather exaggerated by many of them) can be seen as ideologically ambiguous. On the one hand, it acknowledges that late learners can indeed achieve high proficiency; on the other, since native speakers are never complimented on their language skills, such praise also effectively frames second language speakers as learners and Others (also see Lo & Kim 2011: 452). Alexander's response to others praising his language is interesting as well. He seems to feel the need to somehow explain his achievement ("I'm a linguist and I have [studied Finnish] quite intensively and then it's okay"), thereby going along with the idea that high proficiency in Finnish can only be achieved under somewhat extraordinary circumstances. Such a response is also reported by three other participants (Sandra, Sergei, and Emilie), who tell me that they usually explain having learnt Finnish well with having done previous studies or with having a Finnish partner.

A somewhat different type of conversation is described by Marie:

Excerpt 20

MA: ööh mut sit ööh yleensä se menee toisinpäin sitte että ku jos mut esitellään eli et mä oon niinku ranskalainen sit ni- ne vähä ööh (.) hämmentyy niinku siit kiele- ääh

kielitaidosta et no ((clicks tongue)) ootsä muka nyt niinku ainaki sataprosentisti ranskalainen että ei eikö sulla oo ainakaan niinku jotain sukuu suomee

KR: mmh

MA: äähm (.) sitä oli joo niinku viime viiko- tai siis viime viikonloppuna ööh pari päivää sitten me oltiin mökillä ja sit taas joku tiesi et mä oon ranskalainen mut sit jossain vaiheessa että no mut siis yks sun vanhemmista on kuitenkin suoran- suomalainen tai jotain heh ei ole siis heh [ranskalaiselta alueelta] olen heh kotoisin ja mun vanhemmat eivät todellakaan mitään niinku äähm suom(h)ea osaa tai et mitään suomen kanssa tekemisissä ((clicks tongue))

MA: uuh but then uuh in general it's the other way around that when if I get introduced so that I'm like French then te- they uuh (.) get a bit confused like by [my] langua- uuh language skills like well ((clicks tongue)) are you supposedly like at least a hundred percent French don't don't you have at least like some Finnish family

KR: mmh

MA: uuhm (.) it was yeah like last wee- or actually last weekend uuh a couple of days ago I was staying at a summer cottage [with friends] and then again somebody knew that I'm French but then at some point [they said] well but like one of your parents is actually Fini- Finnish or something heh no they're not I'm heh from [part of France] and my parents really don't know like uuhm any Finn(h)ish or have anything to do with Finland ((clicks tongue))

Marie is among the participants who pass for a native speaker fairly frequently. However, she also makes it clear that she usually feels more comfortable with people knowing that she is a second language speaker of Finnish (see excerpt 16 in Section 5.2.3). In this part of the interview, she says that people are often "confused" by her language skills if they know she is not a first language speaker of Finnish, and then describes a recent encounter in which somebody could not credit her linguistic background. While this example cannot be considered an instance of passing for a native speaker as such, since Marie's background was already known to her interlocutor, there is an open negotiation of speaker categorisation here: Marie's interlocutor seems to believe that she must be an early bilingual or have at least some kind of family ties in Finland, but Marie confirms that she is "one hundred percent French" and that her family has no connection to Finland. From a language ideological perspective, this reported conversation is highly ambiguous. Unlike Alexander in the excerpt discussed above, Marie does not deliver an explanation as to why she has reached such high proficiency in Finnish. By stressing that she is indeed a French late learner of Finnish, Marie challenges the idea that nativelike Finnish cannot be attained later in life. On the other hand, her response constructs a strong dichotomy between Finnish/French and native/non-native, consistent with the idea that one's linguistic identity and affiliation are fixed and immutable.

The following excerpts from Julia and Sandra describe some first encounters in a similar way, but they also point to another aspect:

Excerpt 21

KR: […] wie reagieren die Leute dann meistens drauf wenn du dann sagst hallo ich bin aus Deutschland und sozu- und so weiter

JL: mmh dann sagen sie meistens dass ich gut Finnisch rede

KR: mmh

JL: das is so meistens der Dialog vonwegen so und wie lang bist du schon in Finnland sechs Jahre och da sprichst du aber gut Finnisch (.) danke

KR: heh heh heh heh heh

JL: dann können wir anfangen zu reden

KR: […] and how do people usually react when you say hi I'm from Germany and som- and so on

JL: mmh then they usually say that I speak Finnish well

KR: mmh

JL: that is usually the dialogue like so how long have you been in Finland six years wow you speak Finnish really well (.) thanks

KR: heh heh heh heh heh

JL: then we can start talking

Excerpt 22

SA: […] aber andererseits weißte d- is man muss halt also ich denke man muss eigentlich quasi mit jedem den man kennenlernt muss man irgendwann durch das durch wenn man wenn das irgendwie wenn dadraus irgendwie was wird dass man die Leute öfter sieht man muss irgendwann durch das durch durch dieses eine Ausländer du bist n Ausländer und ich nich Gespräch weißte so (.) und dann äh (.) dann is man dadrüber durch und dann is man eigentlich nich mehr der Ausländer also das is bei mir oft ganz komisch dass ich=

KR: *ja*

SA: =wirklich bei den meisten Leuten so s Gefühl habe also auch bei so Eltern die ich so kennenlerne und so (.) das erste Gespräch is so eben ja und wie lang bist du hier schon und dedededede und dann und ab dann ist aber so (.) is überhaupt nich mehr die is jetzt hier die Ausländerin oder so sondern dann biste irgendwie überall einfach nur so dabei genauso wie die andern auch und bist in der selben Situation und so […]

SA: […] but on the other hand you know i- is you just have to well I think in a way you just have to with every person you meet you have to go through this at some point if you if it's anyhow if it goes anywhere that you see these people more often you have to go through this at some point through through this one foreigner you're a foreigner and I'm not conversation you know (.) and then uh (.) then you're through and then you're actually not the foreigner any more this is often really strange with me that I=

*KR: *yeah**

SA: =really feel that most people also the parents that I meet and so on (.) the first conversation is like so how long have you been here and dedededede and then and from then on it's like (.) it's not at all any more like she's the foreigner here or something but then everywhere you're just there just like everyone else and you're in the same situation […]

The excerpt from the interview with Julia shows once more the typical reaction my participants experience when other people learn about their linguistic background: praise for her linguistic skills, followed by questions about how long she has lived in Finland. However, Julia presents this exchange as short and schematic, and implies that after it is over, the conversation can move on to other topics. This is expressed even more clearly in Sandra's account. In the part of the interview leading up to the excerpt, Sandra tells me that she feels rather torn between feeling obliged to be open about her linguistic background and being tired of talking about why she lives in Finland and how she learned Finnish. Here, she then describes the conversation about her background as quite annoying and repetitive ("so how long have you been here and dedededede") but inevitable ("you have to go through this at some point"): any confusion about her identity has to be cleared up in order for her to become an unmarked participant ("then you're actually not the foreigner any more"). This is in line with a poststructural understanding of identity (see Chapter 4.2.2), which posits that individuals can only speak and act from an intelligible subject position, and that which identities are culturally intelligible in a given context is largely determined by ideologies (Bucholtz & Hall 2004: 380). Thus, Julia's and Sandra's accounts again point to ambiguous practices with regard to de- and reconstructions of nativeness: their sociolinguistic identities can be treated as irrelevant, but only after they have been openly established.

The examples discussed in this section suggest that the question whether highly proficient or nativelike speakers challenge or reconfirm the native/non-native binary with their practices is difficult to answer. While my participants' linguistic performance certainly seems to challenge widespread ideas about the impossibility of reaching high proficiency in Finnish later in life, the interactions they report often involve discourses that reconfirm such notions of difficulty or reconstruct boundaries between native/Finnish and non-native/foreign speakers. As I have argued, such conversations can even be experienced as a condition for participation. On the basis of the interview data, I suggest that nativelike second language use and the practices around sociolinguistic (mis-)categorisation challenge the native/non-native binary only in the abstract, as the reported interactions rely on highlighting the exceptional nature of my participants and the establishment of ideologically intelligible identities.

5.3 Nativelikeness as a normative orientation

5.3.1 '…that's when I realised okay it works': nativelike or good enough Finnish?

So far in this chapter, I have approached ideologies of nativeness from the perspective of sociolinguistic categorisation. I have shown that nativelike competence in Finnish is closely associated with Finnishness and that, because of this,

the possibility of passing for a native speaker is experienced both as a compliment and a threat by my participants. In the following two sections, I move away from issues of categorisation and ask how far my participants believe that nativelike competence is an ideal that second language speakers have to strive to reach. I first analyse how my participants discuss ideas of good or nativelike Finnish as well as what kinds of Finnish skills they consider enough in different contexts (5.3.1), before discussing norms of nativelikeness through the lens of lingua franca interactions (5.3.2).

While an orientation to native norms is more or less taken for granted in what many of my participants say (see Section 5.1. for comments on their foreign accent and their grammar mistakes), some also discuss their relationship to nativelike language use in more detail. In the following excerpt Marie describes the process of writing a fairly long academic text in Finnish:

Excerpt 23:

MA: [...] ja sillo oli jotenki niin kauheeta niin turhauttavaa se että voi ei nyt mä en osaa muodostaa niinku sitä asiaa nyt suomeks kunnolla ku sit tietää että voi kirjoittaa jotain niinku sinnepäin mut sit (.) jos itse nyt tää on vähän se niinku ää (.) ehkä se vieras tai kielisen puhujan niinku paradoksi että jos sit se pystyy niinku arvioida että tää on niin hyvää kieltä mä rakastan tai siis m- toi kirjoittaa niin hyvin ei hieno siis loistava lukee mut siis itse niinku ää kirjottaa ja mä en tiiä et miten mitä aivoissa tapahtuu mutta ää siis jos ei oo niinku äidinkieli ei pysty sitä niinku sitä samaa kaunista kieltä tuottaa niin sit (.) no kirjoittaa jotain sit tietää et se ei oo niinku ihan oikein et siit siis et siit vois tulla niinku vä- välillä parempi ää (.) ja silti ei pysty ei pysty ei vaan pysty (.) siis

KR: mmh

MA: hienosti kirjoittamaan (.) ehkä joskus niinku jotain lause niinku on iha tai siis et ehkä joskus niinku yks kappale on ihan ookoo mut sit niinku yks pieni kohta jää vähän silleen niinku (.) onks tää mite- mitenkään järkevää se mitä mä sanon

[…]

MA: […] niin [sen kaverin] kanssa sit käytiin niinku teksti läpi ja se ää se oli kyl hyvin tai siis (.) m: siis m: mä en ois varmaan pystynyt kirjoittaan niinku (.) miten mä voisin san- sanoo (.) mulle ää (.) mmh *miten se menee en mä tiiä* öö niinku sellaiseen mä en ois varmaan pystyny kirjoittamaan sellaista tekstiä joka (.) josta mä oon tyy- tai siis johon mä oon=

KR: mhm

MA: =ehkä niinku tyytyväinen mut siis et mut nii ja sit me istuttiin niinku yhdes tai sit mä selitin sille et mä haluun sanoo sen sen sen näin näin näin ja miten se nyt sanottais=

KR: m=heh heh

MA: =suomeks miten se menee oikeasti ja sit se vaan niinku yritti sanoo jotain [...]

MA: […] and then it was somehow so terrible so frustrating that oh no now I can't express like this thing in Finnish properly because I know that I can write something like more or less in that direction but then (.) if I myself now this is a bit like the uh (.) maybe the foreign or language speaker's like paradox that then if you are able like to judge that this is such good language I love it or like they write so well great like brilliant to read but then like uh you write yourself and I don't know what what happens in the brain but uh like if it's not your mother tongue

you can't produce this like this same beautiful language so then (.) well you write something then you know that it is not like completely right that it like that it could like so- sometimes be better uh (.) and yet you can't you can't you just can't (.) like

KR: *mmh*

MA: *write beautifully (.) maybe sometimes like some sentence like is totally or like maybe sometimes like one paragraph is totally okay but then like one tiny spot is a bit like (.) does this make an- any sense what I'm saying*

[…]

MA: *[…] so [this friend] went through the text with me and that uh that was really good or like (.) like I wouldn't have been able to write like that for sure like (.) how could I sa- say (.) I uh (.) mmh *how do you say I don't know* uh like something I for sure wouldn't have been able to write a text that (.) that I am sat- or like with which I am=*

KR: *mhm*

MA: *=maybe like satisfied but like yeah so and then we sat together or I explained to her that I want to say this this this like that that that and <u>how</u> would you say this=*

KR: *mheh heh*

MA: *=in Finnish how does it really go and then she just like tried to say something [...]*

In the first part of the excerpt, Marie describes her difficulties writing the text. As an already highly proficient speaker of Finnish, rather than struggling with writing in Finnish at all, Marie describes struggling with phrasing things "properly" in Finnish. Her concern seems to be with writing good Finnish, not only in terms of writing correctly but also in terms of producing "beautiful language" and of being able to transform complex thoughts into clear, understandable writing ("does this make an- any sense what I'm saying"). As becomes apparent from the interview context surrounding the excerpt above, Marie considers herself a good writer in her first language. However, as research has shown, this does not automatically translate into writing well in a second language. Drawing on specialised first language writing skills, such as academic writing skills, can have both positive and negative transfer effects for second language writers (Tardy 2006: 96) and academic literacy in a second language is considered something that requires its own socialisation process (e.g. Duff & Anderson 2015).

All the way through her account, Marie contrasts the kind of language she considers proper and beautiful with the kind of language she is able to produce. With regard to how she would like to write, her standards seem to be very high. She admits that sometimes "a whole paragraph can be alright" but then there will be "one small bit" that is not quite clear enough. Thus, for her, writing what she considers good Finnish seems to mean not just getting most things right but getting everything right. She stresses how she keeps falling short of this ideal, and frames this as an issue of "what happens in the brain" when she is writing. From a language ideological point of view, Marie's idea of what good writing in Finnish should look like (error-free, clear and elegant language) is reminiscent of an idealised view of native competence and the supposed infallible intuition of the 'native speaker' (e.g. Rampton 1990). Her frustration with her own production, on the other hand, is directed towards her historical body (including her actual

body, see her comment about "what happens in the brain"), which is able to produce "something like more or less in that direction", but falls short of her aspirations to write clearly and beautifully. Marie herself calls this the "paradox" of the (proficient) second language speaker: she is aware of what good writing in Finnish looks like but feels that she is unable to write like this herself – indeed a typical challenge for second language academic writers (see e.g. Sengupta 1999). Note that this experience also seems to involve strong (negative) emotions. The experience of being unable to express her thoughts in a way that she herself could be satisfied with is described by Marie as "so terrible" and "so frustrating", and this frustration is also captured by the repetition ("and yet you can't you can't you just can't"). These emotions, crucially, are mediated by identities and language ideologies: the frustration Marie feels at not being able to write nativelike academic Finnish with ease is connected to her identity as a good writer and her previous experiences as an academic writer in her first language as well as to the high standards of language use she adheres to.

In the second part of the excerpt, Marie moves on to telling me about how she managed this challenge. She says that meeting up with a friend who is a first language speaker of Finnish and also has some knowledge of the topic of the writing project was a great help. The strategies she mentions are going through the text together with her friend as well as telling her friend what she wanted to say and how she wanted to say it so that her friend could tell her how to express it in 'real' Finnish ("how does it really go"). From a usage-based, social perspective on language learning, such practices can be seen as *scaffolding* (e.g. van Lier 2004: 147-152), i.e., the verbal support provided to learners by more knowledgeable language users in interaction, from which even advanced second language writers can benefit (see Weissberg 2006). Marie does not draw attention to the fact that her friend is Finnish, but it is merely implied, e.g. in her friend's Finnish name. This suggests that, at least for Marie's purpose here, being a native speaker is a taken-for-granted characteristic of a language expert. However, elsewhere she stresses that her friend's background in the same field of study is an additional criterion, as asking for feedback from her room-mates has often been fruitless.[26]

A somewhat different view on what is good enough Finnish is expressed by Alexander:

Excerpt 24:

KR: ja (.) ähm (.) und also weil du meintest früher war dir das wichtiger und heute aber nich mehr so

AL: ne da bin ich also da bin ich mehr erwachsen geworden mir ist das=

KR: okay

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26 *…se on tärkee koska kämppikset mä aina välillä kysyin että miten tää siis kuulostaa tämä vai tämä niinku paremmalta ja sit ne oli et no mistä nyt puhutaan… '*…that's important because my room-mates once in a while I asked how like does this or this sound like better and then they were like what are we talking about'.

AL: =eigentlich mittlerweile ich hab schon gesagt ja mir is das wichtig nich so viele Grammatikfehler zu machen=

KR: mhm

AL: =aber eigentlich seh ich das mittlerweise schon lockerer als damals

KR: okay wa- ja

AL: als kleiner Student dass ich hier bloß immer perfekt mache ne wobei ich mittlerweile auch gemerkt hab wieviel Fehler die Finnen selber machen

KR: mhm

AL: oah da geht mir manchmal so der Hut hoch

KR: heh heh heh heh

AL: bei diesen *yhdyssanavirheitä*

KR: heh j(h)a heh heh (.) also was was würdest du sagen is der Hauptunterschied zwischen damals und vielleicht heute (.) wo dir das nich mehr so wichtig is oder was hat sich da verändert

AL: ja warum warum seh ich das jetzt lockerer (.) hm (.) vielleicht weil ich jetzt schon ganz zufrieden bin mit meinem Level im Finnischen und vorher noch nich und immer besser besser na gut mich nervts immer noch d(h)as (h)ich immer noch so viele Fehler mache

KR: mhm

AL: aber eigentlich bin ich jetzt ganz fein damit ich kann alles sagen was ich will auch auch jetzt lustige Gott neulich hatt ich ne Feuerprobe [...] (.) sollt ich äh für ne [Veranstaltung] Eröffnungsrede halten und quasi so in dem Mom- die sollte so acht Minuten dauern und in dem Moment in dem ich das Mikro in die Hand drücke sagt man mir du hast aber nur zwei Minuten

KR: okay

AL: und dann musst ich jetzt ganz schnell eben kucken dass das was ich jetzt das mir das Wichtigste rauspicke […]

[...]

AL: [...] und da hab ich richtig geschwitzt

KR: mmh

AL: diese diese kurze Zeit diese Sekunden warens ja eigentlich nur bevor ich dann wirklich auf die Bühne gehen musste und dann liefs aber gut

KR: mhm

AL: und okay einmal hat ich n kurzen Hänger aber ja *who cares* äh und ja sowas gibt total viel Selbstvertrauen da hab ich dann mal gemerkt ach es klappt ja eigentlich brauch ich mich da gar nich mehr so verrückt zu machen

KR: okay

AL: mit blöden Fehlern

KR: and (.) uhm (.) and well because you said that you used to care more about that but not any more

AL: yeah in that respect I'm I've grown up by now=

KR: okay

AL: =I don't really I already said that I care about not making too many grammar mistakes=

KR: mhm

AL: *=but actually I'm less strict with myself these days than I was then*

KR: *okay wha- yeah*

AL: *being a little student that I would always [say things] perfectly right although at this point I've also realised how many mistakes Finns themselves make*

KR: *mhm*

AL: *woah that makes me wild sometimes*

KR: *heh heh heh heh*

AL: *with those* yhdyssanavirheitä *[mistakes with compound words]*

KR: *heh y(h)eah heh heh (.) so what would you say is the main difference between back then and maybe today (.) when you no longer care so much or what has changed*

AL: *right why why do I care less about it now (.) hm (.) maybe because now I'm already quite satisfied with my level of Finnish and before I wasn't and always better better well okay I'm still annoyed th(h)at (h)I still make so many mistakes*

KR: *mhm*

AL: *but really I'm quite fine with it now I can say everything I want also also now funny God some time ago I had an ordeal by fire […] (.) I was supposed to uh give an opening speech for an [event] and more or less in that mom- it was supposed to be eight minutes long and in the very moment when I take the microphone into my hand they tell me but you just have two minutes*

KR: *okay*

AL: *and then I had to see very quickly that what are the most important things that I pick out from there [...]*
[...]

AL: *[...] and there I was really sweating*

KR: *mmh*

AL: *that that short moment those seconds it really only was until I actually had to go on stage but then it went well*

KR: *mhm*

AL: *and okay once I stumbled but well* who cares *uh and yeah things like that give you a lot of confidence that's when I realised okay it works and I don't really need to be nervous any more*

KR: *okay*

AL: *about stupid mistakes*

In the excerpt, I return to a topic Alexander had mentioned earlier in the interview – that he does not mind making mistakes in Finnish as much as he did just a few years back – and ask him about this directly. He explains that not making mistakes and speaking "always perfectly" was more important when he was still a student (in Finland), whereas now his attitude is more relaxed. In the course of the excerpt, he gives two reasons for this change. First, he has noticed "how many mistakes Finns themselves make", thus calling into question the ideology of the idealised native speaker. As an example of such mistakes he cites the incorrect spelling of compound nouns, which are also frequently discussed by users of Finnish as a first language (see e.g. YLE News 2017). From a sociolinguistic perspective, such spellings should be first and foremost seen as indicators of a 'conceptual orality' (e.g. Androutsopoulos 2011: 149), and their increased visibility as a consequence of the democratisation of public writing in the digital age. However, online discourses about the incorrect spelling of

compound words often take a derogatory line towards those who fail to adhere to orthographic conventions, making them out to be uneducated and unable to write proper Finnish. In Alexander's case, however, pointing out spelling errors made by native speakers also gives him the experience of empowerment: drawing on his historical body as an avid language learner and a highly educated writer who spots spelling mistakes with ease represents a rare opportunity for him to elevate himself above (some) natives and to question the idea of the infallible native speaker.

The second reason for Alexander's change in attitude towards making mistakes in Finnish is that, on the whole, he is "quite satisfied" and "quite fine" with his level of Finnish. Given that Alexander strongly identifies as a grammar enthusiast, it is not surprising that he is still monitoring his own speech for mistakes and can get annoyed by them. However, being now generally satisfied with his language skills, he can take a more relaxed attitude towards mistakes. This relaxed attitude contrasts with his description of himself as a "little student" who wants to get everything right. Earlier in the interview, Alexander tells me that during his first years in Finland he was struggling with feelings of not being good enough to study in a Finnish language university programme, but that he got over this as his language skills developed. For him, avoiding making mistakes and approximating native norms thus seems to have been important means of building legitimacy as a speaker of Finnish and, conversely, because he now perceives himself as a legitimate speaker of Finnish, the need to display flawless competence has decreased. Moreover, Alexander invokes a different, communicative view on competence: instead of speaking perfectly, what matters is that he can say everything he wants to say.

In the final part of the excerpt, Alexander tells me about a recent situation he describes as an "ordeal by fire". At an event related to his work, he was supposed to give a speech lasting eight minutes, only to be told at the last minute that he only has two minutes (in addition to the audience being different from what he expected; not in the excerpt). He has to quickly adapt his (probably well rehearsed) speech to match the new time frame, and is therefore forced to use Finnish rather spontaneously in front of an audience. Although this situation makes him quite nervous, Alexander feels that the speech goes well in the end and that he really does not "need to be nervous any more […] about stupid mistakes". In a sense, Alexander's story is about a situation of language use very different from the one Marie describes in Excerpt 23: instead of having the chance to work on and review language use in private before making it public, Alexander has to put himself in the most visible spot possible, a stage, with very little preparation. Unlike Marie, who strongly orients to achieving writing like a native speaker, Alexander again puts forward a communicative view of language: his benchmark for success it that at the end he realised "it works" and small linguistic difficulties did not turn his speech into a failure. His "ordeal by fire" can be seen as a key event with regard to his identity as a proficient speaker of Finnish and as involving strong emotions: nervousness, fear of failure and, later, relief and a new-found confidence. According to Busch (2017: 352), it is precisely

through such emotionally charged moments that changes in speakers' embodied experience take place.

In sum, the two accounts discussed in this section feature different strategies for achieving legitimacy as a user of Finnish. Marie relies on the support of a native speaker and the strategy of 'blackboxing' (cf. Latour 1999: 183), i.e., making her text as nativelike as possible, thus concealing the traces of her writing and learning process. Alexander, on the other hand, makes it clear that he is quite satisfied with his language skills, telling his story as an example of an experience that confirmed the legitimacy he has already achieved as a Finnish speaker. These strategies might also have different consequences for the participants' historical bodies: while the practices described by Marie might help her further develop her already advanced Finnish writing skills and make them more nativelike, Alexander explicitly states that the experience of successfully delivering his speech made him more confident with the language skills he already has when encountering other situations in the future. Naturally, different situations pose different demands on language users: an academic text that is graded is different from a speech at an event, and different speakers also have different expectations with regard to their language use. The analysis shows that situational circumstances, participants' historical bodies as well as their views on language all factor in to how they attempt to gain or maintain legitimacy with regard to what they consider good enough Finnish.

What is seen as good Finnish and whether participants feel comfortable and confident about their language use is, however, not exclusively a question of individual assessment, but is also defined by other discourses and language policies. For instance, while Marie certainly tries to approximate to her own idea of good writing, standards for academic texts are basically set by teachers or university guidelines. One context in which an orientation to preset norms is frequently forgone in favour of an orientation to communicative goals and the situational negotiation of norms is lingua franca language use, i.e., communication in a language that is not the first language of any participant involved (Seidlhofer 2011: 7). In the following, I take a look at participants' accounts of such language use.

5.3.2 '…we can marvel at things together': native norms and lingua franca Finnish

Lingua franca research is generally concerned with the nature of communication between non-native speakers. Given the status of English as a widely taught foreign language as well as an international language of communication, most of such research has dealt with English as a lingua franca (ELF; e.g. Seidlhofer 2011). ELF scholars hold that ELF should be considered a manifestation of English in its own right, and that ELF use and users should not be approached from the perspective of native norms (House 2003: 557). Thus, in contrast to much language learning research, deviations from native norms are not understood as errors from an ELF perspective, just as ELF users are not considered learners aspiring to become members of a community of native speakers (House 2003: 558). ELF

communication is generally characterised by a high degree of negotiability as well as great variability with regard to participants' linguistic backgrounds and competences (House 2003: 557). However, as Hynninen (2013) shows in her study of ELF in an academic setting, the construction of norms in ELF interactions is a complex process, in which ELF users show agency in constructing their own norms, while also orienting towards and partly reproducing native norms of language use (Hynninen 2013: 242).

In the context of Finland and Finnish as a second language, too, English is an important lingua franca, since for many adult immigrants English represents an important resource and is usually the first (and sometimes remains the primary) language they use in interaction with locals (see e.g. Iikkanen 2017). However, Finnish is naturally also used as a lingua franca between migrants of different backgrounds (Latomaa et al. 2013: 171). While until now there has been very little research-based knowledge about the use of Finnish as a lingua franca, attitudes towards this kind of language use might be mixed. In their interview study of stakeholders' and migrant learners' own assessment of their Finnish language skills, Tarnanen and Pöyhönen (2011) found that officials evaluated the use of Finnish as a lingua franca rather negatively: it was seen as slowing down migrants' language learning and keeping their proficiency levels low (Tarnanen & Pöyhönen 2011: 147-148).

In this interview study, I was interested in my participants' experiences of using Finnish as a lingua franca from the viewpoint of ideologies of nativeness as well as situational identities. In the interviews, I asked my participants whether their experience of interactions with native speakers tends to be similar to or different from their experience of interactions with other second language speakers of Finnish. This is how one participant, Julia, responded:

Excerpt 25

JL: es kommt drauf=
KR: mmh mmh
JL: =an wa- wer mit wem man redet also wenns jemand is der noch nich so gut finnisch reden=
KR: mmh
JL: =kann dann muss man oftmals überlegen also ob er gewisse worte kennt oder nich
KR: mmh
JL: aber man kann nich einfach alle worte raushauen die man selbst kennt
KR: mmh (.)
JL: aber (.) aber aber wenns jetzt jemand ist der sozusagen auf ungefähr genausoviel finnisch kann wie ich dann is es meiner meinung nach entspannender weil man dann einfach nicht so viel nachdenken muss über über grammatik oder so
KR: ja
JL: und au nicht von wegen wenn man jetzt n dummen fehler macht dann dann kriegt das der andere wahrscheinlich noch nicht mal mit
KR: mmh

JL: weil ers genauso wenig mitbekommt wie man selbst insofern
KR: ja mmh
JL: freuen wir uns in unsern fehlern und merken nüscht und
KR: j(h)a ja
JL: sind fröhlich in unsrer unwissenheit

JL: it depends=
KR: mmh mmh
JL: =on wha- who whom you are talking to so if it's someone who doesn't speak Finnish that well yet=
KR: mmh
JL: =then you often have to think about whether he knows certain words or not
KR: mmh
JL: but you can't just use all the words you know yourself
KR: mmh (.)
JL: but (.) but but if it's someone who speaks more or less as much Finnish as I do then I think it's more relaxed because then you just don't have to think as much about about the grammar or something
KR: yeah
JL: and also not like if you make a silly mistake then then the other probably won't even notice
KR: mmh
JL: because he won't notice just like you don't and that's why
KR: yeah mmh
JL: we revel in our mistakes and don't notice anything and
KR: y(h)eah yeah
JL: are blissful in our ignorance

In her response, Julia differentiates between less and more advanced speakers of Finnish as a second language. She finds that if her interlocutor's proficiency level is much lower than hers, it may be difficult for her to communicate with this person, as she has to actively think about what expressions she can use, and she cannot simply use the language that comes naturally to her. Such a distinction was also made by two other participants (Zuzana, Judit). Judit in particular stresses that speaking to second language speakers who have low proficiency in Finnish is often difficult for her, since she feels that she can have trouble understanding them. Thus, whether it is regulation of their linguistic production or challenges concerning receptive skills, both Julia and Judit position themselves as somehow in contrast to these less advanced speakers: what seems to be salient to them is the different proficiency levels, rather than the common background as second language speakers.

Talking to other proficient second language speakers of Finnish, however, is experienced differently by a number of participants, who declare that they feel more at ease with second language speakers with a proficiency level similar to their own than they do in communication with native speakers. In the excerpt above, Julia describes such interactions as "more relaxed" and explains this with

not having to "think as much about the grammar". She thereby implies that the mere absence of native speakers in lingua franca communication means that the orientation to native norms is weaker. The reason for this seems to be that second language speakers perhaps pay less attention to mistakes or, more importantly, mostly do not "even notice" mistakes. In contrast to her statement about less proficient second language users, Julia here constructs an equal position for lingua franca users ("he won't notice just like you don't") and implies that a shared "ignorance" with respect to non-target-like language use is a source of comfort.

Another participant, Agnieszka, shares this view and highlights some further aspects of lingua franca communication:

Excerpt 26

AG: […] on se varmaan helpompi k- nii joo nii jos mä mie- mä mietin siis ihan sitä että että että me monesti tuetaan toista jos jos käytetään suomea=

KR: mmh

AG: =niinku toisena kielenä

KR: okei

AG: ja siinä mielessä ja ja voi olla et totta kai se meidän tasoki on tavallaan niinku matalampi et ei ääh ei ehkä tarvi yrittää niin paljon kun mä tiedän että se toinen kuitenkin ymmärtää sen tai voi olla että meillä on jotain tollaisia nimenomaan hassuja sanontoja tai sanoja että me tiedämme ne on jotain keksittyjä sanoja

KR: mmh

AG: suomalaisia sanoja ja me käytetään niitä koska ne just niinku kuuluu siihen meidän hah hah hah hah

KR: heh heh heh heh

AG: s(h)u(h)teen tai=

KR: m(h)hm

AG: =suht(h)eeseen joo että käytetään niitä ja ja nau- nauretaan niille ja se on just ihan ookoo eli voi olla että sellaista en tekis just tollaisen natiivin kanssa

KR: mhm

AG: eli se on siinä mielessä ehkä erilaista […]

[…]

AG: […] en mä tiiä jotenkin just just kun huomaa että toinenkin on tavallaan niinku oppijan asemas=

KR: mmh

AG: =tai käyttää sitä kieltä toisena kielenä niin niin meillä on jotain yhteistä me voidaan yhdes ihmetellä joitain asioita ja sitten että ehkä ne on vähän armollisempia voi olla että ne ei edes huomaa että mä sanoin just jotain väärin tai ja ja sitte kun kun kun taas keskustelen sellaisen tyypin kanssa joka joka puhuu sitä suomea niinku ensimmäisenä kielenä niin voi olla että aina välillä just tulee se ajatus että *ts seuraako se koko ajan mun

KR: mmh

AG: heh heh heh k(h)ieliopp(h)ia t(h)ai j(h)ot(h)ain ( )

KR: joo (.) joo mmh

AG: jotain sellaista varmaan joo

KR: mmh

AG: jos ne tietyt kun mulla on just oikeesti just muutama semmonen aika läheinen kaveri joka on joka on kans tullu muualta ja asunut täällä vuosia niin niin niitten kanssa se on just musta aika e- eri- erikoinen se tai e- aika erikoista se mitä me tehdään kielellä

AG: […] it's probably easier b- yeah well yeah if I thi- well I think that that that we often support each other when when we use Finnish=

KR: mmh

AG: =like as a second language

KR: okay

AG: and in that sense and and maybe of course also our level is in a way like lower so I don't uuh I don't maybe have to try as hard because I know that the other person will understand anyway or maybe we have some funny sayings or words and we know that they are made-up words

KR: mmh

AG: Finnish words and we use them because they like belong to our hah hah hah hah

KR: heh heh heh heh

AG: r(h)el(h)ationsh(h)ip's or=

KR: m(h)hm

AG: =relationsh(h)ip yeah so we use those and and lau- laugh at them and it's just fine so maybe I wouldn't do anything like that with a native [speaker]

KR: mhm

AG: so in that way it's maybe different […]

[…]

AG: […] I don't know somehow precisely precisely when you realise that the other person is somehow like in the position of a learner=

KR: mmh

*AG: =or uses the language as a second language then then we have something in common we can marvel at things together and then they are a bit more merciful maybe they don't even realise that I just said something wrong or and and then when when when I talk again to a person who who speaks Finnish like as a first language then it is possible that once in a while I get the thought that *ts are they all the time watching my*

KR: mmh

AG: heh heh heh gr(h)amm(h)ar (h)or s(h)ometh(h)ing ( )

KR: yeah (.) yeah mmh

AG: probably something like that yeah

KR: mmh

AG: if these specific because I have some pretty close friends like that who are who have also come from elsewhere and have lived here for years so so with them it's really I think quite s- spe- special our or s- quite special what we do with language

Like Julia, Agnieszka feels that talking to other (proficient) second language speakers of Finnish has a different quality compared to communication with native speakers. She explains this by saying that lingua franca interactions involve mutual support ("we often support each other when when we use Finnish") and by what she refers to as a "lower level", which orients more towards communicative goals than grammatical accuracy ("I don't maybe have to try as hard

because I know that the other person will understand anyway"). Agnieszka, too, mentions that an important difference with interactions with native speakers is that she does not expect other second language speakers to notice non-target-like expressions ("they don't even realise that I just said something wrong"). Agnieszka's description resonates with lingua franca research, which has found that lingua franca interactions are generally characterised by a high level of mutual support and cooperation (Seidlhofer 2004: 218). Like Julia, Agnieszka also emphasises the equality of lingua franca interactions and explicitly constructs herself and her interlocutors as being in the same boat ("then we have something in common we can marvel at things together").

Agnieszka brings up yet another aspect of her experience by stressing that speaking Finnish with other second language speakers allows her to use "funny sayings or words" which she and her interlocutor are aware "are made-up words". For her, these are expressions that are part of their relationship's history, especially in the case of close, long-established friends who speak Finnish as a second language ("with them it's really I think quite […] special what we do with language"). Thus, it seems that an orientation to native norms can be displaced (or complemented) not only by an orientation to communicative goals but also by an orientation to individual repertoires and interpersonal histories, almost creating an interpersonal linguistic subculture. Agnieszka contrasts this with her perspective on interactions with native speakers: here, she expects the other people involved in the conversation to monitor her language use more ("are they all the time watching my [grammar]") and is therefore reluctant to use language creatively and in that less norm-oriented way ("I wouldn't do anything like that with a native [speaker]"). Lingua franca interactions, on the other hand, seem to allow for linguistic creativity without the danger of being policed or of being considered a less than proficient speaker. Moreover, according to Agnieszka, second language speakers are more "merciful" with respect to each other's language use, thus also allowing for more space for exploring and experimenting (also see Section 5.2.3 and participants' comments on being "allowed to speak badly").

Finally, participants' accounts of lingua franca interactions also suggest that such interactions might play an important role in the development of their proficiency. The following excerpts from the interviews with Sergei and Veronika are examples of such a perspective:

Excerpt 27

SE: […] no ei ei ehkä ni- niinku hirveästi poikkeaa mutta mutta on ehkä vähän erilainen vähän erilainen sävy tai tunnelma mutta äh mutta joo ehkä mun niinku puolesta se vaatii vähemmän niinku ponnistusta ja

KR: mhm

SE: eli

KR: miksi

SE: no ni- ehkä kuitenkin kun puhuu suomalaisen kanssa ehkä äh ehkä niinku enemmän niinku ponnistusta siihen että tarkkuus olisi riittävän niinku hyvä ja sitten ähm

niinku äh enemmän kiinnittää huomiota äh ei koko ajan niinku riippuu tilanteesta kyllä ja mutta äh ehkä vähän erilainen vähän erilainen ei hirveästi mutta mut mä luulen että jotain siellä on erilaista heh

[…]

SE: ehkä se vaatii enemmän niinku kysy- kysymyksiä jokaiselta niinku osallistujalta (ja) vähän enemmän tarkentavia kysymyksiä eli tai tarkoititko sitä tai tarkoititko tätä

KR: jos puhut ulkomaalaisen kanssa

SE: joo ehkä sellaisia kysymyksiä tulee voi tulla enemmän

KR: enemmän siinä

SE: joo

KR: joo

SE: koska voi olla että joku tuntee sanan toinen ei tunne ja

KR: joo joo

SE: koska suomalaisen kanssa ei ehkä hirveästi reference kysymään eli mikä toi sana oli […]

SE: […] well it doesn't doesn't maybe li- like differ a lot but but there's maybe a slightly different slightly different tone or atmosphere but uh but yeah maybe on my part if requires a bit less like effort and

KR: mhm

SE: so

KR: why

SE: well li- maybe when you talk to a Finnish person maybe uh maybe like more like effort [goes into] being precise enough and then uhm like uh you pay more attention to uh not the whole time like it depends on the situation of course and but uh maybe a bit different a bit different not a lot but but I think that there is something different heh

[…]

SE: maybe it requires more like ques- questions from every like participant (and) a few more elaborating questions like or did you mean or did you mean this

KR: if you talk to a foreigner

SE: yeah maybe there will can be more questions like that

KR: more there

SE: yeah

KR: yeah

SE: because maybe somebody knows a word the other person doesn't and

KR: yeah yeah

SE: because with a Finnish person you maybe don't start asking a lot like what that word was […]

While Sergei does not often engage in lingua franca conversations with other proficient second language speakers of Finnish, he does feel that there is a different "tone" or "atmosphere" to such conversations. He explains that this is because lingua franca interactions require less "effort" from him, since his language use does not have to be quite as accurate or precise. Moreover, in his experience, interactions with other second language speakers naturally involve negotiations of meaning as well as explicit instances of learning ("more elaborating questions like or did you mean or did you mean this"; "maybe somebody knows a word

the other doesn't"). According to him, such instances are less likely to feature in interactions with native speakers of Finnish ("because with a Finnish person you maybe don't start asking a lot like what that word was"). Lingua franca research generally suggests that as long as a sufficient amount of understanding is achieved, interlocutors will adapt to each other's ways of talking and mostly ignore unconventional or idiosyncratic expressions (Canagarajah 2007: 926). However, Sergei's account seems to contradict this. For him, it is precisely in lingua franca interactions that explicit language learning is enabled. Thus, with regard to the development of advanced proficiency, the two types of interaction might complement each other: talking to native speakers seems to prompt Sergei to pay attention and improve the (grammatical or pragmatic) accuracy of his language use; speaking with other advanced second language speakers, on the other hand, allows for 'languaging about language' (Swain 2006: 96) and thus advances the development of language as a tool for thinking.

For Veronika, too, using Finnish as a lingua franca has played an important part in her language development. She produces the following account when I ask her about when and how she transitioned from using mostly English to using mostly Finnish in her everyday life:

Excerpt 28

VE: […] mutta se muutos mistä mä puhuin tapahtui sillä [suomen kielen kurssilla] alussa sen alussa mulla oli kaks kavereita puolalainen tyttö ja ja venäläinen tyttö ja me vain jotenkin niinku heti alusta asti puhuimme suomea toisilleenkin koska se on ihan samaa englanti on myös meidän vieras kieli

KR: *mmh*

VE: niin mä vain niinku päätin että no puhutaan suomea eli me keskenään puhuimme suomea ja se helpotti ja sitten niinku minun minun omassa tapauksessa se vielä se oli vain niinku kavereiden kanssa mutta sitten se oli se että [toinen kaveri] mä olin sen kanssa sen venäläisen tytön olin joskus niinku asioimassa vain niinku kaupassa se halusi ostaa jotain mekko ja ää se koko ajan puhui sille k- ää kauppiaa- tai myyjälle suomeksi vaikka se se oli hidas ja se sanoi että no odota ja se mieti miten sitä sanoo ja se ää myyjä antoi sille niinku aikaa ja mä olin että haa se [kaverikin] puhuu näin ku suomea vaikka se vain niinku kokeilee ja s- siitä se pikkuhiljaa lähti et mä tavallaan niinku päätin että okei no mä sitten käytän sitä kieltä myös niinku tavallisessa asioinnissa ja se kauppa sitten oli aika helppo ja pikkuhiljaa myös niinku kela ja kaikki ne […]

VE: […] but the change I was talking about happened on that [Finnish course] in the beginning when it started I had two friends a Polish girl and and a Russian girl and we just somehow like from the very start we spoke Finnish to each other because it really doesn't matter English is also our foreign language

*KR: *mmh**

VE: so I just like decided that well let's speak Finnish so we spoke Finnish between us and that made it easier and then like in my my own case it was still it was only like with friends but then then it was like this [friend] I was with her this Russian girl I was some time like just shopping like in a shop she wanted to buy a dress and uuh she spoke Finnish to the sh- uh shopkeep- or the salesperson all the time even if she she was slow ad she said well wait and she

> *thought how you say it and the uuh salesperson gave her like time and I was like haa [my friend] speaks Finnish like this even if she is just like having a go and t- that's where it started slowly that I in a way like decided that okay well I will use this language also like in ordinary errands and shopping was quite easy then and slowly also like Kela [Finnish social security services] and all of those […]*

In this excerpt, Veronika explains that an important turning point was the beginning of her first intermediate level language course, when she and her new friends on the course chose Finnish rather than English as their lingua franca. Even though she does not elaborate on this, she states that this "made it easier" for her to use Finnish as a language of communication, perhaps because it enabled her to take the role of a speaker or user, rather than a learner, of Finnish with her friends. Particularly important, however, was not only the lingua franca use of Finnish with her friends, but being with other intermediate or advanced speakers in everyday situations. Seeing her friend use Finnish in service encounters motivated Veronika to start using Finnish in similar situations herself. Thus, lingua franca environments can also provide learners with a window into their possible or future speaker selves (see Dörnyei 2009a).

The interview data reviewed here suggest that all my participants use Finnish as a lingua franca at least with some friends or acquaintances. These interactions are usually experienced very positively. Participants feel that lingua franca interactions involve less pressure to speak correctly and accurately (Julia, Agnieszka, Sergei), while opening up space for using language creatively (Agnieszka), enabling explicit language learning (Sergei), as well as providing direct role models for language learners (Veronika). Conversely, the fact that many participants do feel that lingua franca interactions have a decidedly different quality suggests that their orientation to native speaker norms and ideals of nativelikeness is rather strong outside such interactions, especially given that my participants are already proficient speakers of Finnish.

5.4 Discussion

In this chapter, I have analysed my participants' accounts of their everyday experiences from the viewpoint of language ideologies and ideologies of nativeness in particular. In Section 5.1, I discussed how my participants categorise themselves, how they are categorised by others, what discourses about language and speakers they invoke in their accounts, and what this can tell us more generally about language ideologies in the context of Finnish as a second language. In Section 5.2., I analysed how participants who are categorised as native in some interactions and as non-native in others reflect on how they carefully navigate the indexical relationship between language use (e.g. accent, grammatical inaccuracy) and social identity (e.g. in terms of nativeness/non-nativeness, competence or interactional legitimacy). Finally, in Section 5.3, I explored the effects of the native

speaker ideal on how participants view their linguistic repertoires and experience interactions with native/other non-native speakers.

The analysis points to clear 'native speaker effects' (Doerr 2009: 15) in the sense that my participants frequently draw on ideologies of nativeness in order to make sense of their experiences as advanced second language speakers of Finnish. Moreover, their accounts draw the picture of a rather normative environment in which ideologies of nativeness have a strong presence. For instance, ideologies that construct Finnishness as a cluster of features including accent-free speech, a Finnish name and even stereotypical looks are echoed strongly in the interviews. Even in settings where normative ideals play a less prominent role, experiences are still to some extent mediated by ideologies of nativeness. For instance, although it can be empowering to experience that one's language skills may be enough even if they are not nativelike, a general orientation to nativeness (e.g. in the notion of a grammar mistake), is still present. Similarly, while Finnish-as-a-lingua-franca interactions are experienced as liberating by many participants, it can be argued that it is precisely this perceived difference between interactions with native speakers and those with other second language speakers that attests to the presence of ideologies of nativeness. Finally, while some sociolinguistic authors have argued that the phenomenon of second language speakers passing for native speakers destabilises the native/non-native binary (see e.g. Piller 2002), I have shown that ideologies of nativeness are also often consolidated in interactions unfolding around (threatened) instances of passing.

From a more theoretical point of view, this chapter has also looked into the relationship between ideologies, identities and interactional practices. In my analysis of the interview data it has often been difficult to distinguish what ideas about language my participants themselves hold and what ideas they have encountered through interaction with others, for example through how others react to them. In my view, the concept of historical body, understood as a person's "accumulated experience of social actions" (Scollon 2001: 6), offers a useful perspective here. When speakers enter situations of language use, they already hold certain ideas about language based on their past experience with language use. However, when entering a new context, speakers are likely to encounter different ideas, both explicitly in discourse and implicitly in their interlocutors' practices. This may force them to develop new practices of their own which, over time, become part of their historical bodies. This helps explain, for instance, the accounts of avoiding passing for a native speaker. Their experiences have taught my participants that they are somewhat unexpected speakers in the language ideological context of Finland. They therefore now routinely anticipate the possibility of being miscategorised as a speaker and have developed their own interactional strategies for managing first encounters.

6 POSITIONING AND LEGITIMACY IN ADVANCED SECOND LANGUAGE USE OF FINNISH

In this chapter, I investigate participants' accounts of how they position themselves and are positioned by others with regard to language. I am interested in particular in accounts of how the position of a legitimate speaker of Finnish is negotiated and achieved, as well as in accounts of instances where such a position might be challenged or refused by others. I am also interested in the language ideological processes involved in the negotiation of social identity and legitimacy. The chapter reflects my analytical approach, which is both theory-driven and data-driven (see Chapter 4.1.2). That is, while the theoretical notions of identity/positioning, legitimacy and language ideology guided my perspective on participants' accounts, the topics of this chapter emerged from meaningful instances in the data, which in turn informed how the theoretical concepts were applied in the analysis.

I start the chapter by exploring positionings as learners or speakers of Finnish (5.1). Here, I focus on accounts of situations in which language itself becomes the focus of the interaction, and the ways in which this focus has consequences for the social positioning of the interlocutors. In the second part of the chapter, I analyse how my participants experience issues of language choice (especially between Finnish and English) as well as the use of different varieties of Finnish with regard to their positioning (5.2). Finally, I reflect on issues of positioning that go somewhat beyond positioning through language use in interaction, and take a look at accounts in which participants' experiences may be best understood as emerging at the intersection of discourse cycles (5.3).

6.1 Learner or speaker: focus on language and experiences of positioning in interaction

6.1.1 Language learning and a focus on language

There is strong evidence that explicit learning processes (see e.g. De Keyser 2003; R. Ellis 2006; Dörnyei 2009b) play a positive role in second language learning (Norris & Ortega 2000: 500). The notion of explicit learning is related to several other concepts in language learning research, such as knowledge, awareness, consciousness, or noticing. In its broadest sense it can be defined as "some kind of attention to form, that is, either through the explicit teaching of grammar and explicit error correction, or at least through more indirect means such as input enhancement" (DeKeyser 2003: 321), and it is contrasted with implicit learning, which is taken to occur unconsciously through simple exposure to the target language. Contexts of formal language instruction typically involve a range of practices aimed at drawing attention to linguistic forms and structures, as well as at developing learners' metalinguistic knowledge and awareness (see e.g. N. C. Ellis 2011). However, instances of focus on linguistic form can also be generated by participants in everyday social activities not specifically organised around language learning (Kasper & Burch 2016; for a study of everyday second language conversations in the Finnish context, see Lilja 2010). Moreover, it can be argued that learners' own metalinguistic reflection and talk about language can be seen as particularly important for advanced language learners, who are expected to move beyond simply producing intelligible speech to also mastering stylistic features and even understanding the use of playful language and humour (Swain 2006).

Situations where language itself becomes the focus of an interaction are not only potential language learning events, but they also play a part in how speakers are positioned. Social action by default involves the positioning of participants (Scollon 2001: 7), and participants are usually positioned in multiple ways (with regard to institutional and other social roles, gender, linguistic background, etc.), resulting in an ongoing negotiation of social identities (Blackledge & Pavlenko 2001). Identities and practices both precede interaction (e.g. through social roles or participants' habitus) and emerge in and from interaction (Firth 2009: 130), and the degree to which they are negotiable depends on the social context. For instance, while social roles in the classroom are ultimately a product of situational discourse (Richards 2006), the organisation of classroom talk usually strongly orients towards the predefined roles of teacher/student or expert/novice: it is the teacher who initiates sequences, approves of answers, and manages classroom interaction in general (see e.g. Nassaji & Wells 2000). In settings of formal language instruction, this means that teachers' practices of recasting, evaluating or otherwise explicitly commenting on students' language use are sanctioned by the interaction order of the language classroom and the social roles assigned to the participants. At the same time, however, these instances also serve to position the

participants in the interaction, and thus reinforce the legitimacy of these roles. For instance, Menard-Warwick's (2007) discourse analytical study of an adult second language classroom shows how a focus on grammatical form or word choice was employed in one instance by the teacher to assert her position as teacher and expert, and in another by a student to secure her position as the most advanced student in the class. She argues that learners' non-standard uses of grammatically obligatory forms, i.e., what are commonly called grammar mistakes, and the teacher's (or other students') interactional focus on these forms, can be key resources for positioning in the language classroom (Menard-Warwick 2007: 271).

For highly proficient second language speakers, it is usually various situations in everyday life rather than the language classroom where advanced language learning takes place. In such situations, which range from conversations with partners, friends and family to work meetings and service encounters, the social roles and positionings that participants assume are usually not explicitly those of language learners. Firth's (1996, 2009) studies of lingua franca interactions in a business context and Kurhila's (2004) study of interactions between first and second language speakers in an institutional setting show that, outside the language classroom, communicative problems are routinely ignored and participants typically focus on communicative goals rather than on inaccurate language use, even if this language use causes problems in understanding. With regard to positioning, these studies found that in social situations outside the classroom, the roles of teacher/student or expert/novice are usually avoided, and other social roles (e.g. secretary/client, see Kurhila 2004; business partners, see Firth 2009) are made salient. Firth (2009: 149) suspects that one reason why there seems to be a preference for discursively achieving and maintaining a sense of normality (Firth 1996) is that highlighting non-standard language use and therefore questioning a speaker's linguistic legitimacy can also question other kinds of relevant identities (e.g. their professional identity).

This does not mean that a focus on form does not occur outside language classrooms. On the contrary, the very idea of language learning 'in the wild' (e.g. Wagner 2015) presumes that everyday interactions can be co-constructed by participants as language learning events. For instance, Eskildsen and Theodórsdóttir (2017) analyse two service interactions between an L1 speaker and a (beginning) L2 learner of Icelandic. They show how the framing of the interaction as both a service encounter and a language learning event is initiated and upheld by the L2 learner, who asks for permission to use Icelandic and later insists on using it rather than English. This framing then allows for a focus on language, as the L1 speaker assumes the role of the language expert and engages, among other things, in repair practices rather than switching into English (Eskildsen & Theodórsdóttir 2017: 147). On the other hand, L2 speaker status and non-target-like language use can also be made salient to the disadvantage of the L2 speaker. Wagner (2015) analyses an interaction between a supermarket employee who is an L2 speaker of Danish and a customer who is an L1 speaker of Danish. The customer asks for a particular item and then falsely treats the employee's request for repetition as

failure to understand the word, thus positioning the employee as a learner and deficient speaker of Danish rather than as a competent Danish speaker. Like Firth (2009), Wagner argues that calling into question a participant's linguistic competence is also closely intertwined with calling into question other competences (e.g. someone's professional competence as a shop employee). He concludes that, in the context of second language use, a seemingly innocent disturbance in the interactional sequence (a request for repetition) can make broader questions of identity and competence relevant (Wagner 2015: 82).

Accounts of both practices, the practice of constructing normality and the practice of making non-target-like language use salient, can be found in my data. For instance, when asked whether they encounter difficulties related to language in everyday life, most of my participants stress that they manage well and that their language use is usually not commented upon in most encounters of everyday life, especially brief public interactions like service encounters. All the participants do, however, also give accounts of situations where their language use is in the focus of the interaction, either because they themselves choose to draw attention to it or because others highlight it. In the next sections, I will examine such accounts in more detail. Rather than assessing when or how often my participants experience either form of positioning, I explore how they negotiate these positionings in the way they report them in their interview. Based on the research described above, I start with the assumption that in the context of second language learning and use, an explicit focus on language use is likely to position language users as learners or deficient speakers who need to be made aware of their unidiomatic language use by others (usually native speakers), while an interactional focus on communicative goals positions them simply as speakers. I first look at accounts of situations in which a focus on language is invited by my participants themselves (6.1.1) and those in which the focus on language is brought in by other participants (6.1.2) before looking at reports of situations in which a focus on language is consciously forgone by my participants (6.1.3).

6.1.2 '…sometimes you just don't remember what the word was': self-initiated focus on language

The first excerpt discussed is from the interview with Sandra. In the interview, Sandra describes what could be seen as a strategy for advanced language learning. However, in terms of positioning, the structure of her account presents clearly separated situations for speaking and learning:

Excerpt 28

SA: und ähm äh also ich hör eigentlich immer sehr genau zu was Leute so sprechen und überleg mir dann ob man das jetzt ob das jetzt gut is das so zu sagen oder oder warum die das jetzt so gesagt haben oder ah der hat so ein Wort benutzt das

KR: mhm

SA: benutz ich selber ja nich und ähm und ja dann unterhalt ich mich auch mit meinem Mann da manchmal drüber der hat so ein Wort benutzt und der oder hat so n Satz

gesagt und ähm würdst du den denn selber auch benutzen und war das deiner Meinung nach komisch das Wort zu benu- so zu benutzen oder so

SA: *and uhm uh well I actually always listen very carefully to how people are talking and think about whether you say whether it is good to say it that way or or why they said it the way they did or okay this person used that word that*

KR: *mhm*

SA: *I wouldn't use myself and uhm and then I also talk to my husband about it sometimes that person has used this word and that person has said that sentence and uhm would you use that yourself too and do you think it was strange to use the wor- to use the word in this way or something like that*

In this short excerpt, Sandra describes listening carefully to how people around her speak and paying special attention to expressions that she is not entirely familiar with. This goes beyond identifying unfamiliar words and learning their meanings. As Byrnes (2006a: 5) notes, at its core, advanced language learning is about becoming capable of making informed choices in language use, i.e., choices that are sensitive to the cultural, situational and linguistic context, and can even include deliberate violations of norms of language use. This is why, for Sandra, it is important to think about whether an expression is, for instance, established or not ("it is good to say it that way"), what a speaker might wish to express with it ("why they said it the way they did"), and what kinds of speakers are likely to use it ("this person used that word that I wouldn't use myself"). However, in the excerpt, Sandra does not report that she asks questions about expressions that catch her attention in the actual situations in which she encounters them. Instead, she implies that she saves her questions for later, when she can discuss them in private with her partner, even though she will only do this sometimes. Speaking about language matters with her partner can be seen as a form of 'languaging about language' (Swain 2006: 96), i.e., thinking aloud about language use and thus engaging in explicit learning in an informal context.

In terms of Sandra's positioning, her reported practice allows her to participate in everyday life as a speaker, while using the resources she encounters in more public environments for developing further in private her already highly advanced second language competence. Indeed, Firth (2009: 149) observes that by deflecting attention from language use and issues of proficiency in everyday interactions, speakers effectively treat matters of second language competence as belonging to the sphere of the private. He suspects that in doing so, speakers are avoiding the questioning of other kinds of competences (e.g. professional) that might follow from drawing attention to their language use and to possible gaps in their linguistic competence (Firth 2009: 149). For Sandra, linguistic and professional competence are closely intertwined, as she works as a teacher of Finnish as a second language in the state-sponsored integration training programme for migrants. In the interview, she admits that in order to assert her professional competence, she feels that she needs to speak particularly target-like Finnish with her Finnish teaching colleagues. It could be argued that the practice of keeping

moments of languaging about language use private can thus help her assert her status as a Finnish language professional in other situations.

Moreover, a focus on linguistic form in interactions in her family context does not automatically position her as a learner. As Sandra repeatedly emphasises in the interview, she and her partner are both language enthusiasts and both have a personal and professional interest in questions concerning different languages and their use (including Sandra's first language, German). Thus, in a situation where Sandra asks her husband about a word she has been thinking about, the roles of the learner asking for advice and the expert native speaker are not the only ones available; we can assume that she can also draw on their more equal positionings as people who share an interest in language and details of language use.

On the other hand, even advanced learners cannot avoid exposing gaps in their second language repertoire altogether. Consider the following excerpts from the interviews with two participants, Julia and Judit:

Excerpt 29

JL: also wenn wenn ich irgendn Wort auf Finnisch nich kann dann entweder umschreib ichs oder sags auf Deutsch auch wenn ich weiß dass die andern nich verstehn aber dann wissen sie zumindest dass ich grade n Wort suche und deswegen ruhig bin

JL: well when I don't know some word in Finnish then I either try to paraphrase it or I say it in German even if I know that the others won't understand but then at least they know that I'm looking for a word and am silent because of that

Excerpt 30

JD: mut toki tämä kaveripiiri on (.) on sillä lailla aika kiva kyllä mä sen huomaan että jos mua väsyttää että joskus menee paljon huonommin tuo puhuminen että tuntuu et en muista en pysty mut se ( ) sekin on ihanaa että si- silloin kun kaikki tietää että mä en oo en oo s- sillä lailla suomalainen että saa sanoa tiiätkö mä en nyt muista sitä sanaa että keksi sinä että mikä se on(h) (.) kyl se t- toimii se kommunikaatio

KR: mmh

JD: että mä sanon tiiätkö tuo tuo juttu mitä laitat tonne mä en nyt muist(h)a sen nimee että että se on se on aika kivaa että että pystyy tällä tavallakin ku joskus on vaan näin että ei vaan tuu mieleen että mikä se sana oli

JD: but of course this circle of friends is (.) is quite nice in this way I do notice that when I'm tired it goes a lot worse the talking I mean like I feel that I don't remember [that] I just can't but it ( ) that is wonderful too that whe- when everybody knows that I'm not I'm not Finnish in that way I can say you know I don't remember this word right now you come up with it(h) (.) yeah it w- works the communication

KR: mmh

JD: that I say you know that that thing that you put there I don't remember what it's call(h)ed that is that is quite nice that that it works this way too because sometimes you just don't remember what the word was

In Excerpt 29, Julia describes how, when she does not know a word in Finnish, she will not resort to using English, but will either say it in a different way or use the German word, "even if the others don't understand it". Research has shown that less proficient second language speakers often resort to asking about a missing word directly, while paraphrasing the intended meaning is a strategy that is more accessible to advanced learners, who have more linguistic resources at their disposal (Hilton 2008: 160-161). It can therefore be assumed that through paraphrasing, participants can avoid interruptions of the conversational flow and can keep the focus on the ongoing social action. Julia's strategy of using a German word instead, on the other hand, can be assumed to cause a clearer break in the conversation. However, because her interlocutors usually do not understand the word, this cannot be read as a request for translation. Rather, according to her account, she uses German to signal that she is looking for the word in Finnish and needs to extend her turn. Both strategies, despite openly showing gaps in her competence, can thus be understood as Julia maintaining her positioning as a speaker, rather than becoming a learner asking for advice.

An analysis of Excerpt 30 points to a similar conclusion. Here, Judit describes how she deals with situations when she is tired and therefore unable to access all her Finnish resources. She says that, at least in her circle of friends, she makes these difficulties explicit, e.g. by paraphrasing ("that thing that you put there") and asking others to fill in the lexical gaps ("you come up with it(h)"). Importantly, this is not described as a learning opportunity, but rather serves to remind Judit's friends, who are already very familiar with her and her linguistic background, that these words are part of her usual repertoire but that she simply cannot remember them just then. The main aim of these practices can then be seen as keeping the conversation going, and this seems to be successful ("yeah it w- works the communication").

Judit's description of herself as not "Finnish in that way" is a good example of level 3 narrative positioning (see De Fina 2013), making reference to broader identities and discourses. Judit's description suggests that she considers herself a somewhat different speaker of Finnish than her friends, for instance, when she forgets words or needs more time to express her thoughts. On the other hand, her phrasing also implies that she is Finnish at least in some way, a different kind of Finnish speaker perhaps, but nonetheless a Finnish speaker. In sum, Julia's and Judit's accounts give examples of how second language speakers can make their language use salient without positioning themselves as learners. Rather, by proactively drawing attention to (momentary) gaps in their competence, they aim to reinforce their positioning as legitimate participants and speakers.

It should be noted that all of the accounts discussed in this chapter so far deal with the sphere of the private (relationship or circle of friends) and provide fairly generalised descriptions of practices. In contrast, the next excerpt is an example of how one of my participants, Marie, navigates possible positionings in a service encounter. It also provides both a more detailed account of an actual situation and insights into how Marie herself contextualises and rationalises her

practices. In the part of the interview preceding her statement, I ask Marie whether it (still) happens that people address her in English in public settings. She responds that it does not and never really did, and then continues as follows:

Excerpt 31

MA: […] yllättävää kyllä nii mulle ei nyt enää vaik mulla ois niinku ihan vieras mut mä luulen et se johtuu niinku tilanteest ku nyt nykyään puhutaan niinku paljon enemmän siitä että kuinka voi olla äähm tavallaan ulkomaalaisena n- ulkomaa- ulkomaalaistaustaisii ehkä niinku lähinnä noin ääh suomalaisia niin ääh joilla on niinku vähä eri nimi ja sitte eivät näytä vain tota niinku ihan suomalaisilta ja näin nii sit ehkä ihmiset ääh alkaa ymmärtää että et että no ensiksi suomeks ja sitte jos tarve- ääh tarvetta on niinku englanniks mut ei ei kyl (.) ja vai- n- nyt mä olin äksäksällässä ääh viime viikolla (h)aina vaikea taivutuksis siis aina kun mä teen virheen siis tää on mun kavereitten kanssa vähän silleen vitsailun aihe mutta aina kun mä teen virheen mä olen ööh vai miten se nyt mee

KR: heh heh heh heh heh

MA: heh et aina tää on vähän meta

KR: heh

MA: ääh miten se nyt me- menikään (.) mut no mä olin ääh kaupassa (.) mä etin ääh treenihanskoja m(h)itä *v(h)aan* ihan tyhmä tyhmä aihe mutta ähm mut tuli mieleen että sali käsineet vai mitä ne onkaan niinku ei mitään mä en tiennyt et miten ööh sanotaan treenihanskat ja sit mä menin niinku kysyy että hei tota ääh mä en oikein tiedä miten s- nyt sanotaan suomeks tai siis mikä on se oikea niinku suomenkielinen sana mut mä etin ääh sali äh käsineitä ja sit se oli joo treenihanskoja ne on tuolla ne ei <u>miten</u>kään reagoinu mä olin (että) joo ehkä treenihanska on paljon paremmin niink(h)u s(h)alikäsine

KR: heh heh heh

MA: mutta kiitos ja sit menin sinne […]

MA: […] surprisingly enough it doesn't happen any more even if I have a completely foreign but I think that it's because of like the situation because now nowadays there is like a lot more talk about how you can be uuhm as a foreigner l- with a for- foreign background maybe mainly that uuh Finns that uuh who have a bit of a different name and maybe just don't look very much like Finns ja then maybe people uuh are starting to understand that that well first in Finnish and then if nee- uuh need be like in English but not not really (.) and fo- n- now I was at XXL [äksäksälässä] uuh last week (h)always difficult in the inflections like always when I make a mistake like this it's like a joke between me and my friends but always when I make a mistake I'm like uuh or how does it go now

KR: heh heh heh heh heh

MA: heh it's always a bit meta

KR: heh

*MA: uuh how did it go again (.) but well I was uuh in the shop (.) I was looking for uuh gym gloves w(h)hat*ev(h)er* a really silly silly topic but uhm but I thought training mittens or whatever they are like absolutely no I didn't know uuh how you say gym gloves and then I went like and asked hi uuh I don't really know how t- you say in Finnish or like what is the proper like Finnish word but I'm looking for uuh training uh mittens and then she [he] was like right gym gloves they are over there they didn't react in <u>any</u> way I was (like) yeah maybe gym gloves is much better then lik(h)e tr(h)aining mitten*

KR: heh heh heh
MA: but thank you and then I went over there […]

The excerpt can be divided into three parts. In the first part, Marie explains that, surprisingly, people no longer use English with her. In an attempt to explain this, Marie refers to public debates about the position of foreigners or people with a migration background in Finland, using impersonal or otherwise generalising expressions (e.g. "nowadays there is talk about", "people are starting to understand", "if need be"). She then implies that these debates have led to a change in people's behaviour: people are beginning to understand that they should not base their language choice on a person's appearance but rather should always start by speaking Finnish and only switch to English if necessary. She concludes this part by emphasising that nobody addresses her in English or switches into English with her. In her account, Marie indeed shows great awareness of current media debates surrounding Finnishness. Researchers agree that, in Finland, Finnishness is still strongly associated with whiteness (see e.g. Tuori 2009: 73). However, in the past few years the voices and experiences of Finns of colour, while still marginal on the whole, have become more present in the media (see e.g. Keskinen 2018: 162).[27] Marie's word choices also reference public discourses as she first talks about "foreigners", then corrects this to "people with a foreign background", and finally about Finns "who have a bit of a different name", reflecting discussions about social categorisation and politically correct language.

The second part begins when Marie starts telling a story about something that happened to her the previous week but she trips over the inflection of the acronym XXL (a popular sports and outdoor retailer in Finland). In Finnish, spatial relations are expressed by a case marker at the end of the noun (e.g. *kauppa* 'shop'; *kaupa<u>ssa</u>* 'in the shop'). Acronyms can be difficult in Finnish because their inflection follows different rules, depending on how the acronyms are pronounced (e.g. as words, as individual letters or as the original unabbreviated phrase; see Maamies 2000; ISK § 169).[28] Marie's difficulty is therefore understandable, but nevertheless, she immediately laughingly comments on her mistake ("(h)always difficult in the inflections") and goes on to tell me that her habit of commenting on her own mistakes has already become the subject of jokes in her circle of friends. This small incident links well to what Marie says about her historical body elsewhere in the interview, where she frequently emphasises that she hates making mistakes and is quite pedantic and strict with herself when it comes to language.

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27 For instance, the blog *Ruskeat tytöt* ('Brown girls'; see Chapter 2.2), an online publication written by Finnish feminists of colour[27], went online only a few months before my interview with Marie.

28 The phrase 'at XXL' in Finnish is spelled *XXL:ssä* and pronounced *äks-äks-äl-l-ä-ssä*, requiring correct pronounciation of individual letters in Finnish, the correct case marker according to the principle of vowel harmony (*-ssä* and not *-ssa*; ISK § 15), choice of the correct linking vowel (*ä*), as well as gemination of the final consonant of the acronym (*-älässä* not *-älässä*).

Finally, she resumes her story, this time replacing the troublesome word (*äksäksällässä*, 'at XXL') with a simpler one (*kaupassa*, 'in the shop'). She evokes the interaction order of a typical situation in a store involving the customer asking the salesperson whereabouts in the shop to find what they are looking for. The challenge in this situation is that Marie does not know the precise word for what she wants. Before posing the question, she therefore explicitly frames this as a gap in her competence in Finnish ("hi uuh I don't really know how t- you say in Finnish") and then uses the best approximation she can think of (*salikäsineet*, 'gym mitts'). The salesperson does not comment on her language use but simply replaces the less idiomatic word with the more idiomatic one (*treenihanskat*, 'training gloves') and goes on to tell her where to find the gloves. Marie then comments on the word again before thanking the salesperson and moving on. In the story, then, it is Marie herself who draws attention to language, while the salesperson seems to be more oriented to the interactional goal. However, the salesperson follows Marie's invitation to provide the correct word in Finnish and Marie's affirmation of this ("yeah maybe gym gloves is much better then lik(h)e tr(h)aining mitten") indicates that learning has indeed taken place.

At first glance, the three parts seem to have little to do with each other. However, they are all part of Marie's answer to my question about whether people sometimes address her in English. Her reference to public debates suggests that Marie herself sees this as an issue connected to ideologies of Finnish and Finnishness. In a way, the topic of the debates she refers to – that it is problematic to automatically address in English anyone who looks foreign – contrasts with her own experience, as Marie is one of the participants who experiences situations of passing for a native speaker fairly frequently. Thus, we can assume that she cites these debates as an example of more general changes in perceptions of who is considered Finnish and who is considered a legitimate speaker of Finnish. However, as becomes clear in the third part of her story, Marie also carefully manages encounters such as the one in the store. She reports opening the interaction by warning the salesperson that she does not know the correct term for what she is looking for, therefore drawing attention to the language use that is about to follow. This advance warning already involves multiple positionings. First, by starting the conversation in flawless Finnish, Marie positions herself as as a fluent speaker of Finnish. Second, she clearly marks herself as a non-native speaker, contrasting the word she is about to use with proper Finnish ("what is the proper like Finnish word"). Finally, with her comment she also positions herself as a very advanced second language speaker who might not know the proper word but is at least aware of unidiomatic expressions and, possibly, as an ambitious learner who wants to get things right.

The interview excerpts analysed here are accounts of situations in which my participants openly navigate gaps in their second language competence. All the instances can be seen as involving at least the potential for language learning, for instance, by creating an opportunity for 'languaging about language' (Swain 2006: 96) or by indirectly eliciting an idiomatic expression. At the same time, the

accounts contain some evidence that such instances of self-initiated focus on language are accompanied by interactional strategies aimed at sustaining the position of a legitimate speaker, for instance, by keeping learning moments private or by displaying awareness of and actively managing linguistic gaps in the interaction with others. Such strategies highlight the importance of a sense of agency in negotiating interactional positionings, raising the question of how my participants experience situations in which a focus on language is initiated by others.

6.1.3 '…and then the other person just picks some word and laughs': other-initiated focus on language

In the interviews, accounts of other-initiated focus on language were often given in response to my question whether participants had experienced being corrected by other people. In general, my participants reported that this happened very rarely. Many of them also declared that it does not bother them when it does happen, and some even said that they wished people would do it more often so that they could improve their language skills. Nevertheless, a closer look at these accounts reveals that whether they feel good about others commenting on their language use crucially depends on the interactional context as well as their relationship with the other participants. Most of them said that they let their partners or close friends to correct them and that they find this useful. However, even in these close relationships, it depends on how the practice of correcting is framed, as the following excerpt from the interview with Julia illustrates:

Excerpt 32

JL: […] sonst nich aber meine Freunde korrigieren mich (.) meistens nur aus Spaß

KR: okay heh heh in wie- in welchem Sinn

JL: na weil sie einfach nur zum Beispiel hab ich einmal äh es gibt ja zum Beispiel einer von uns wenn wir zu zweit sind is in Finnland *toinen meistä* (.) und ich hab halt komplett von Deutsch auf Finnisch hab ich halt *yksi meistä* […] was ja total dämlich is weil dann wir sehr sehr viele sind […] und dann ärgert hal- und dann hat zum Beispiel die Freundin mich geärgert und hat gesagt hat sich umgedreht und hat gesagt wo ist der Rest von uns

KR: ja heh heh

JL: und insofern in de- in dem Sinne aber das is schön denn dann lern ich dadurch weil sonst hätt ich wahrscheinlich immer wieder noch *yksi meistä* gesagt weil weil ich sonst […] nicht korrigiert werde […]aber (.) ja meine Freunde korrigieren mich (.) grade wenns irgendwelche lustigen Sachen sind […] wenns nich so lustige Sachen sind lassens sies einfach […] durchgehen

KR: und das das stört dich dann aber auch nich

JL: überhaupt nich ich mag das

KR: ja ja

JL: ja also es kommt natürlich drauf an wenn es jetzt jemand wäre der ders tatsächlich ernst nehmen würde die ganze Zeit und so […] vonwegen so das ist falsch und das ist falsch und das hast du auch falsch gemacht und […] denk mal über da- da- das Wort nach also wenn jetzt hier irgendjemand so von oben herab so anfangen würde meinen

meinen Lehrer zu spielen von wegen so so na was wäre denn das für ein Wort das glaube ich würde mich sehr nerven aber sonst aber so einfach nur als Witz is das in Ordnung

JL: *[…] otherwise not but my friends do correct me (.) mostly just for fun*

KR: *okay heh heh in wha- in what sense*

JL: *well because they just for example I once uh there's for example one of us when there's two of us is in Finland* toinen meistä *[one of us (two)] (.) and I [translated] exactly from German to Finnish and then I [said]* yksi meistä *[one of us (many)] […] which is completely stupid because then there are many many of us […] and then they tea- and then my friend teased me for example and said and turned around and said where's the rest of us*

KR: *yeah heh heh*

JL: *and in that- in that sense but that is nice because that's how I learn because otherwise I would have said* yksi meistä *many more times because because otherwise I […] wouldn't be corrected […] but (.) yes my friends correct me (.) especially if it's something funny […] if it's not that funny they will just ignore it*

KR: *but it doesn't bother you then*

JL: *not at all I like it*

KR: *yeah yeah*

JL: *well it depends of course if it were someone who actually took it seriously all the time like […] like this is wrong and that is wrong and that you did wrong too […] think about thi- thi- this word so if someone would somehow like from above like start playing my my teacher like can you tell me what this word is that would really annoy me I think but otherwise but just as a joke it's okay*

In this excerpt, Julia reports a situation where her friend draws attention to Julia's language use, specifically her unidiomatic use of *yksi meistä* ('one of us many') instead of *toinen meistä* ('one of us two'). As Julia describes it, her friend does not directly correct her, but rather begins to tease her, looking around and asking "where's the rest of us". Julia explicitly frames this episode as a moment of learning ("otherwise I would have said *yksi meistä* many more times") and says that she enjoys this kind of interaction. However, she also emphasises that her friends only correct her 'for fun' ("especially if it's something funny […] if it's not that funny they will just ignore it"). Sociolinguistic research has suggested that one of the main functions of teasing for fun is the strengthening of bonds between friends (Pichler 2006: 244). With respect to positioning, this means that while a focus on form has the potential to delegitimise a speaker (see 6.1.1), this can be offset by benevolent teasing, which emphasises the equal and affectionate relationship between friends. Indeed, as Pichler (2006) demonstrates, teasing can also be used to bring up sensitive topics without threatening the speaker's own or their interlocutor's face (Goffman 1982 [1967]). Thus, teasing can also be seen as allowing Julia's friend to correct non-target-like speech in a non-face-threatening way.

In her account, Julia contrasts this positively evaluated episode with a fictional scenario in which someone takes correcting her very seriously. She imagines such a person's voice criticising her and talking down to her ("this is wrong and that is wrong and that you did wrong too"). On the level of her story (level

1; see Chapter 4.3.2 and Bamberg & Georgakopoulou 2008: 385), she positions this fictional person as above and herself as below, while also positioning them with regard to social concept (level 3; see De Fina 2013) as a teacher as well as herself, implicitly, as a student. Arguably, the character of the would-be teacher invokes not only a social role but the whole nexus of practice of formal language instruction, in which a focus on form is a central teaching strategy. However, Julia feels strongly that practices associated with this nexus have no place in the sphere of informal interaction with her friends. It is thus crucial that her friends' occasional attention to Julia's language use takes the shape of teasing, not teaching.

The following two excerpts offer accounts of situations where other-initiated focus on my participants' language use does indeed represent a threat to their position as legitimate speakers. First, Agnieszka gives an example of being interrupted when telling a story:

Excerpt 33

AG: joo on on on ollu suora- on suoraan korjannu ja nii seki siis se voi olla tosi hyvä se riippuu siitä kuka sen tekee

KR: mhm

AG: ja miten

KR: mitkä ne kriteerit siinä on

AG: joo no (.) että pitää olla varmasti joku semmonen suht läheinen ihminen johon mä luotan (.) ja sitte se että se tekee sen jotenki asianmukaisesti ja kohteliaasti koska mä oon myöskin mulla on myöskin muutaman kerran tapahtunut näin myöskin sellaises aika läheises suhtees

KR: mhm

AG: että että mä just yritin selittää jotain ja mä olin niin keskittynyt siihen asiaan ettei se kieliasu kauheasti kiinnostanut siinä hetkellä ja sitten se toinen just poimi jotain sanaa ja nauroi ihan=

KR: mmmh

AG: =niinku huvittuneesti=

KR: mmh

AG: =ku se ( ) huvittuneena ku se oli just niin hauskaa niin se on semmonen huono tapa korjata toista että että siis silloin kun kun kuitenkin se se se asia sinänsä on tärkein se kielellinen muoto et on se eri asia jos mä vaikka just no vaikkapa pyydän mun mieheltä että hei mä nyt ker- mulla on huomenna joku juttu ja mun pitää just jotain kertoo suomeks niin mä vas- tällainen et harjoittelen niin mä kerron vähän ja jos sä voisit nyt poimia näitä virheitä vähän korjata niin silloin se on musta ihan ok

AG: yes yeah yeah there has been direc- they have corrected me directly and yeah that too like it can be really good it depends on who does it

KR: mhm

AG: and how

KR: what are the criteria there

AG: *well (.) it certainly has to be a person who is relatively close whom I trust (.) and then they have to do it somehow appropriately and politely because I also am that has also happened to me a few times also in a relatively close relationship*

KR: *mhm*

AG: *that that I was just trying to explain something and I was so focused on that that I wasn't particularly interested in the linguistic form and then the other person just picked some word and laughed quite=*

KR: *mmmh*

AG: *=like amusedly=*

KR: *mmh*

AG: *=[…] because it was was that funny so that is a bad way of correcting someone like when when the the the topic itself is the most important thing the linguistic form I mean it's a different matter if I for example well if I ask for example my husband hey I'm going to tel- I have a thing tomorrow and I have to say something in Finnish then I- something like that I'll practise I'll talk a bit and if you could pick out the mistakes correct me a bit then in that situation it's totally okay for me*

Agnieszka starts her account by saying that being corrected can indeed be good (in terms of language learning), but she immediately qualifies that by saying it depends on who does it and how: in order to create a positive learning experience it has to be someone close whom she trusts, and the situation has to be handled politely and matter-of-factly, already pointing to the importance of social positioning and issues of legitimacy. She then gives an example of how it should not be done, and recounts her experience of being interrupted by her interlocutor when trying to explain something that was important to her. In her account, Agnieszka stresses the conflict between her own focus on what she was trying to explain ("I was so focused on that") and her interlocutor's focus on language ("then the other person just picked some word"). From the perspective of linguistic competence as the 'right to speech' (Bourdieu 1977: 648), it is easy to see how Agnieszka feels delegitimised by this practice: it is not that her interlocutor disagrees with her, but rather that they reject her framing of the situation as focused on communicative goals as well as her positioning of herself as the legitimate story teller. The episode described here by Agnieszka is referred to by her as "funny" but, in contrast to Julia's account (Excerpt 32), the other participant in Agnieszka's story is positioned as laughing *at* her, not *with* her. Indeed, it is rendered ironically from the other's perspective: "because it was just that funny". In other words, Agnieszka's account can be seen as describing how her positioning of herself as a speaker is overruled by her interlocutor's positioning of her as a learner.

The point is not that Agnieszka does not identify as a learner at all, or is unwilling ever to take the position of a learner in interaction. Towards the end of the excerpt she explains that she does sometimes ask for help when preparing for something important that she has to do in Finnish, and that she has no objection to being corrected in these situations. However, what seems to be important is that in such a situation it is she who decides about the framing of the interaction (as a learning event) and her own positioning (as a learner of Finnish). Her instructions are rendered by her partly in direct speech ("hey I'm going to tel- I

have a thing tomorrow and I have to say something in Finnish then I- something like that I'll practise I'll talk a bit and if you could pick out the mistakes correct me a bit"), emphasising her agency in such situations.

The following account by Sandra deals with similar issues:

Excerpt 34

SA: ähm weil es auch oft eben so is dass ähm ich irgendwas am erzählen bin was äh an dem ich irgendwie emotional beteiligt bin und was mir jetzt wichtig is und was ich irgendwie rüberbringen möchte und auf das ich irgendwie gerne auch ne echte Reaktion hätte und wenn dann die Reaktion kommt [von meinem Partner] äh so man sagt übrigens nich so sondern so dann is manchmal so arggh ich äh das is jetzt eigentlich nich das Thema sozusagen andererseits is es ja schon so dass es ähm nützlich ist für mich heh aber wenn ich zum Beispiel irgendwie grade was erzählt habe über was dass ich mich geärgert hab oder irgendwie so und dann dann kommt so n Kommentar dann kanns schon auch sein dass ich äh nich so äh sehr sachlich darauf r(h)eag(h)ieren k(h)ann heh

KR: heh okay

SA: ja ähm und mit andern Leuten kommts tatsächlich auch sehr viel weniger vor also er macht das schon schon am häufigsten eher

KR: mmh

SA: was manchmal vorkommt is dass wenn ich irgendwie ähm also es is ja manchmal tatsächlich so wenn man müde is oder so dann ähm (.) dann macht man längere Pausen oder muss doch mal länger nach nem Wort suchen oder irgendwie sowas und dass dann Leute meinen Satz beenden das kommt auch schon mal vor äh und das ärgert mich auch immer ähm aber äh ja is ja eigentlich nett also die ham ham mir ja tatsächlich damit geholfen und ähm (.) es ist insofern ja auch ne gute Sache aber normalerweise is es natürlich so dass es unnötig is weil ich das Wort ja weiß ich hab halt nur jetzt irgendwie grad (.) musste ne kleine Pause machen und das is natürlich auch so was wenn die Leute wissen dass ich Ausländerin bin dann äh wird natürlich die Pause so interpretiert dass ich jetzt nich dass ich jetzt das Wort nicht weiß (.) ähm wenn ich wenn die denken würden ich wär Muttersprachlerin dann ähm würden sie mich die Pause machen lassen bin ich mir relativ sicher und das ist sowas was mich bisschen ärgert dadran

SA: uhm because often it's like I'm telling [my husband] about something that uhm that I'm emotionally engaged with and that is important to me and that I want to express and that I would like a genuine reaction to and when the reaction is uh you actually don't say it like this but like that then I'm sometimes like argh I uh this is actually not the topic on the other hand it's true that it's useful for me heh but when I've for example just told a story about something where I got upset or something like that and then there's a comment like that then I might not uh react uh v(h)ery f(h)airly heh

KR: heh okay

SA: uhm and with other people it actually does happen a lot less he is probably does it the most

KR: mmh

SA: what happens sometimes is that when I'm somehow uhm well it's just like that sometimes when you're tired or something then uhm (.) then you take longer breaks or you actually take longer looking for words or something like that and that people finish my sentence that happens sometimes uh and that also always annoys me uhm but uh well it's actually nice I mean they

have have actually helped me with it and uhm (.) in that way it's a good thing but normally it's of course unnecessary because I do know the word I just somehow had to (.) I had to take a short break and when people know that I'm a foreigner then uh of course they interpret the break as meaning that I don't know the word (.) uhm if they thought I was a native speaker then uhm they would let me take the break I'm pretty sure about that and that is what annoys me about it

Sandra begins by talking about being corrected while talking to her partner. Like Agnieszka, she believes that being corrected is generally useful, but that even in close relationships it is not always appropriate. She says that this is the case especially when she is emotionally involved in her story and emphasises this through a long string of clauses ("something that uhm that I'm emotionally engaged with and that is important to me and that I want to express and that I would like a genuine reaction to"; emphasis added). It can be argued that what Sandra is pointing at here goes beyond a focus on communicative goals (see e.g. Firth 2009): when talking about an upsetting event, she does not simply want to get the message across, but she wants be taken seriously as a person, for which her positioning as a legitimate speaker is a critical requirement.

In the second part of the excerpt, Sandra moves on to explain how people other than her partner do not usually openly correct her, but instead sometimes finish her sentences on her behalf. Research in conversation analysis has shown that collaborative strategies are not uncommon in everyday talk, for instance, when speakers are dealing with delicate topics (see Lerner 2013) or in lingua franca interaction (see e.g. Mauranen 2006). However, in her account, Sandra interprets other-completion not as a collaborative practice but as a result of a misjudgement of her linguistic competence. She stresses that such situations emerge when she is tired and takes longer breaks in conversation, and that while her interlocutor's interventions might "actually help", they are really "unnecessary" because she actually knows the word. Interestingly, Sandra connects being positioned as a learner in such situations (level 1 positioning) to being perceived as a foreigner (level 3 positioning) (see Bamberg & Georgakopoulou 2008: 385). That is, she seems to feel that others feel entitled to complete her sentences not because she is ostensibly performing a word search (see Brouwer 2003) but because they are categorising her as a foreigner and assuming that she must therefore also be a learner.

It is worth noting that all the examples of a focus on language discussed in this chapter so far revolve around words (Excerpt 28, Sandra: "sometimes that person has used this word"; Excerpt 29, Julia: "when I don't know some word"; Excerpt 30, Judit: "you don't remember what the word was"; Excerpt 31, Marie: "what is the proper like Finnish word"; Excerpt 32, Julia: "can you tell me what this word is"; Excerpt 33, Agnieszka: "the other person just picked some word and laughed"; Excerpt 34, Sandra: "they interpret the break as meaning that I don't know the word"). This is in line with Silverstein's (2001) observation that clearly segmentable elements of language that can be assigned meaning in a straightforward way, such as words or suffixes, are more likely to be noticed by speakers than elements whose meaning is distributed, as are many syntactical

features. Clearly segmentable elements are thus also more likely to be the subject of open discussion or negotiation (both in everyday situations and in a research interview), which may explain why words take such a central position in my participants' accounts.

Summing up, the data discussed here suggest that being corrected and receiving feedback from others is something that occurs predominantly in close relationships (with partners or friends), and that my participants generally experience this as beneficial to their language learning. At the same time, it has become clear that practices of correcting also always represent potential threats to their legitimacy as speakers of Finnish. This threat is navigated carefully: by my participants when trying to control their social positioning through metapragmatic comment on gaps in their second language competence, and by interlocutors when making sure that correcting takes the character of teasing, not teaching. Finally, an uninvited focus on language can also be experienced as a clearly delegitimising practice, even in close relationships. In the following, I turn to accounts of situations in which my participants deliberately forgo a focus on language.

6.1.4 'I don't maybe want to always ask what we're talking about': forgoing a focus on language

The analysis thus far has shown that, while my participants seem to be generally interested in learning and further developing their competence, learning opportunities, communicative goals, and positioning as learners and speakers are carefully navigated. They tend to feel that language learning activities are basically a private matter (see also Firth 2009), which makes open learning more feasible in close personal relationships. Here, in contrast, I analyse two accounts of situations from institutional settings in which my participants deliberately forgo a focus on language.

The following excerpt is from the interview with Emilie, who works as a project manager. Her day-to-day working life is in practice bilingual: according to her, she usually uses English in the core tasks of her work (e.g. reporting or funding applications) and Finnish for smaller, organisational tasks (e.g. writing emails or notices of meetings). In interactions with her colleagues she reports using both languages: she still uses mainly English with some people whom she has worked with for several years (the language choice thus being a remnant of a time when she preferred speaking English), but she uses only Finnish with the colleagues working on a project that has just started. She also says that she sometimes uses English in interactions otherwise conducted in Finnish, for instance when she does not know a specific word or when her colleagues ask for clarification. On the whole, she feels that her colleagues are very accepting of her choice of using Finnish and of her as a Finnish speaker. In the interview, however, Emilie describes some situations that she experiences as difficult at her workplace. She had previously talked about the difficulties with Finnish that she had encountered when she had just started learning the language. I then ask her whether there are still situations in which she has difficulties with the language:

Excerpt 35

KR: […] o- onko nykyään enää sellaisia tilanteita jotka on sun mielestä jotenkin vähän vaikeita kielen suhteen

EM: mmh (.) joo ehkä vielä töissä mä voisin sanoa jos on joku strategi- strategiapäivä tai tai joo sellasta kokous josta puhutaan eli miten miten voidaan kehittää mitä me tehdään eli ja ehkä joskus on mulle vielä vähän vaikea ymmärtää mistä kaikki puhuu ja kun se on niin virallinen en mä ehkä sitten halua kysyä aina eli mistä puhutaan tai joskus on ehkä vähän epäselvää tai en ole ihan varma mistä puhutaan ja sitten en mä voi kertoa oma mielipide tai miten mä voisin osallistua ehkä tää on vielä vähän vaikea en mä halua vain olla töissä jossain ja olen vain siellä mut haluaisin myös osallistua eli miten se yritys tai keskus miten miten kehitetään ( ) mikä mun rooli voisi olla

KR: […] nowadays a- are there still situations that you find a bit difficult with regard to language

EM: mmh (.) yeah maybe still at work I could say when we have a strateg- strategy day or or yeah like a meeting where we talk about like how how we can develop what we do and maybe sometimes understanding what everyone is talking about it's still a bit difficult for me and because it's so official I don't maybe want to always ask what we're talking about or sometimes it's maybe a bit unclear or I'm not quite sure what we are talking about and then I can't give my own opinion or how I could participate maybe that is still a bit difficult I don't just want to work somewhere and just be there but I would also like to participate like how the company or organisation how how we can develop ( ) what my role could be

In this excerpt, Emilie tells me about the difficulties she experiences in some work meetings, for example strategy days. With respect to Emilie's linguistic historical body, we can assume that such meetings, where the general future direction of the whole company is discussed, are more likely to involve unfamiliar subject matter and new vocabulary than meetings about projects that she has worked on herself. In any case, Emilie admits that she sometimes does not understand or is at least unsure about the details of the ongoing discussion, and therefore finds it difficult to contribute with her own opinion. This points to the interaction order of a meeting, which requires contributions to be relevant to the ongoing discussion. Relevance is a basic principle in communication (Grice 1975), and in business meetings relevance is typically constructed with reference to topics and goals introduced earlier in the discussion as well as the general values of the organisation. This makes it difficult to contribute without adequate knowledge of the matter under discussion. At the same time, Emilie does not want to ask for clarification, since the context "is so official". With this description, she makes a specific discourse relevant to her experience. This discourse as a 'way of being in the world' (Gee 1999: 7) comprises the identities one is expected to assume in an official meeting (e.g. boss, chairperson, co-worker, professional) as well as the behaviours one is expected to engage in (e.g. following the conversation, making relevant contributions). Emilie feels that her asking for clarification would not be the sort of behaviour expected in an official meeting, especially if it happened frequently ("I don't maybe want to always ask what we're talking about"). Her narrative suggests, then, that she is a legitimate participant in the meeting but

that the price of her interactional legitimacy was forgoing full participation in the decision making.

The ambiguity with regard to Emilie's position in the meeting is also apparent in how she positions herself within the narrative (positioning level 1). On the one hand, when she explains what the strategy day is about ("how we can develop what we do"; emphasis added), she is clearly seeing herself as a part of the company or work team. On the other hand, with regard to the interaction in the meeting itself, she seems to make a distinction between herself and everyone else ("sometimes understanding what everyone is talking about it's still a bit difficult for me"; emphasis added). Finally, her other statements are ambiguous in this respect: the Finnish passive present form *puhutaan* can be read as either including her in the conversation ('what we are talking about') or as being somewhat detached from her ('what is (generally) talked about'; see ISK § 1326). The conclusion of the narrative can be seen as a comment on this dilemma: for Emilie, just being present at her workplace and formally participating in these meetings is not enough ("I don't just want to work somewhere and just be there"); she also wants to be an active member of the workplace community who contributes to developing the company ("I would also like to participate"; "what my role could be").

Julia has experienced somewhat similar difficulties in the context of her studies in a Finnish-medium programme. These difficulties are a topic in both the first interview and the second one, which occurred roughly a year after the first one. Julia has recently found out that her educational institution has a study counsellor (*opinto-ohjaaja*, a common position in Finnish educational institutions). In a meeting with this study counsellor, she realised how much information she had missed out on, especially during the first few weeks of her studies. The following excerpt is from our second interview, included here since it discusses the time when she was just starting out on her studies. It illustrates the difficulties Julia has encountered as well as her way of dealing with them:

Excerpt 36

KR: und hast du das Gefühl dass damals die Sprache ein ein Problem war was warum du das nich mitgekriegt hast oder

JL: wahrscheinlich

KR: einfach weil alles so neu war oder

JL: ja ich denk schon das hat das spielt beides mit rein also ich denk schon dass das dass es alles so neu war dass ichs und dass es vor allem so viel Information auf einmal kam

KR: mmh

JL: dass ich es einfach nich alles mitschreiben konnte ich hab halt dann immer mitgeschrieben wenn alle andern auch mitgeschrieben haben aber wenn sies (.) ich hab halt nich wirklich wahrscheinlich konnt ich nich nich komplett alles so prozessieren wie die andern schätz ich mal

KR: mmh

JL: oder denk ich mir jetzt im Nachhinein oder ich hab halt schlecht zugehört einfach in den ersten

KR: mmh

JL: Wochen oder sowas aber es sind halt ganz viele Dinge die ich einfach nich wusste

KR: mmh

JL: wir hatten auch zum Beispiel n Kurs der heißt [Abkürzung] und die ganze Zeit hatten (die/wir) gesagt ja und da könnt ihr dann punkte für [Abkürzung] wo ich so dachte was is denn [Abkürzung] ich kenn das Wort nich und im Wörterbuch stehts auch nich und was soll denn das Wort heißen und irgendwann hat mir jemand erklärt das is Abkürzung für [Kursname]

KR: and do you feel that the language was a problem back then what why you didn't catch those things or

JL: probably

KR: just because everything was so new or

JL: yeah I do think that did that both played a role I mean I do think that it that everything was so new and that I and especially that we got so much information at once

KR: mmh

JL: that I just couldn't take notes on everything I just always took notes when the others took notes too but when they (.) I couldn't really probably I couldn't couldn't process completely everything like the others I guess

KR: mmh

JL: or that's what I think now or then I just didn't listen carefully in the first

KR: mmh

JL: weeks or something like that but there are just so many things that I simply didn't know

KR: mmh

JL: we also for example had a course called [abbreviation] and (they/we) had said all the time yes and you can [get] credits for [abbreviation] and I thought to myself what is that [abbreviation] I don't know that word and it's not in the dictionary and what is that word supposed to mean and some time later someone explained to me that it's the abbreviation for [title of the course]

In this excerpt, Julia tries to explain why she missed out on so much information in the first few weeks of her studies. In the exchange preceding the excerpt she has already referred to her inexperience as a student in Finland as one of the reasons for her difficulties, thus attributing her challenges in organising her studies to her lack of experience (i.e. her historical body): because she did not attend school in Finland, she lacks knowledge about the Finnish educational system (e.g. the study counsellor); and because she moved to Finland just after graduating from high school, she had no experience of having to draw up her own course schedule. When I ask her whether she thinks that language played a part in this, too, she says that it probably was a combination of too much new information and her difficulty in processing this information in Finnish. This suggests that her linguistic difficulties did not (or did not only) consist in not knowing specific words or concepts but, rather, were caused by her being overwhelmed by the input.

Research in second language comprehension (see e.g. Vandergrift 2007) has shown that there is a wide range of comprehension difficulties, from not recog-

nising otherwise familiar words to missing the beginning of speech turns to understanding words on their own but not the communicated content (Goh 2000). Background knowledge is used as a resource for comprehension by all speakers, but it is particularly important for second language speakers. For instance, Tyler (2001) has argued that the seemingly effortless comprehension of speech by advanced L2 listeners can be attributed to their more intense use of background knowledge compared to L1 listeners. In an experiment, he was able to show that whether the topic of a listening comprehension task was available to listeners beforehand did not affect L1 listeners' performance inn the task but was significant for L2 listeners' performance. A situation such as the one described by Julia in the above excerpt, where new information is introduced in an unfamiliar context, can therefore be considered particularly challenging for L2 speakers, even very proficient ones.

Julia's reference to the teachers giving information and the students taking notes invokes a typical interaction order of a university classroom. This interaction order functions as a resource for Julia: even if she can not fully comprehend the information given or is unaware of what information is important, she can participate in the interaction order by taking notes when everyone else does. As with Emilie's position in the strategy meeting, Julia is thus a legitimate participant from the viewpoint of the interaction order. However, this situational legitimacy comes at a price, since her missing out on important information has consequences for her further study trajectory. On the narrative level, Julia's positioning is notable in the way she describes thinking to herself quietly ("I thought to myself"; "what is that word supposed to mean"). Thus, Julia positions herself as a silent participant both in the interaction she describes and through the narrative means she employs.

The analysis in the last three sections has shown that tensions regarding my participants' positioning as learners or speakers can arise from different sources. The excerpts in Section 6.1.2. describe situations in which my participants navigate gaps in their knowledge of Finnish while simultaneously trying to sustain their positioning as speakers through metapragmatic framing. Similarly, Excerpt 32 in Section 6.1.3 discusses a situation where a gap is identified by another interlocutor through the use of humour, thus mitigating the threat to my participant's positioning as a legitimate speaker. The remaining excerpts in Section 6.1.3, in contrast, show how a focus on language can be experienced as delegitimising when participants' self-positioning as speakers is overruled by their interlocutors positioning them as learners. Finally, the accounts discussed in this section suggest that tensions with regard to positioning can also arise from discrepancies between participants' linguistic historical bodies and the requirements of interaction orders in institutional contexts. That is, in order to position themselves as legitimate in those contexts, my participants feel that they cannot draw attention to gaps in their repertoire or to comprehension difficulties, so they forgo both potential opportunities for explicit language learning and the possibility of making a contribution to the discussion in the event itself.

In the next sections, I turn from situational positionings as learners/speakers to broader aspects of linguistic identity construction, namely the question of how my participants position themselves, their linguistic repertoires and their linguistic practices within the broader sociolinguistic ecology of Finland. I start by looking at how my participants navigate issues of language choice (6.2.1) before analysing how they position themselves with regard to colloquial (6.2.3) and regional (6.2.4) varieties of Finnish.

6.2 Speaking like a local: positioning and the sociolinguistic ecology of Finland

6.2.1 '…usually I somehow make it clear that I'm the one who does speak Finnish': positioning and language choice

Contexts where two or more languages are available for communication involve practices of 'initial language negotiation' (Yoneoka 2011), i.e., the negotiation within the first few turns of a conversation between strangers of the language to be used in the interaction. In the context of Finland, such instances of language negotiation most often involve Finnish and English. According to a Eurobarometer study, 70% of Finnish residents are able to hold a conversation in English (EC 2012: 21), and research has also attested the importance of English in everday life in Finland, especially for young, urban populations (Leppänen et al. 2011: 88). English, moreover, serves as the most common lingua franca in communication with non-Finnish speakers in Finland, and researchers have noted that especially beginning learners often struggle to create opportunities to practise Finnish, because their interlocutors will frequently and routinely switch to using English with anyone whom they take to be a foreigners (Kotilainen 2013; Martin 2007: 11). Here, it is important to stress that language choice and language negotiation are not only practical issues that need to be solved in order for communication to take place. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, any language use always involves the positioning of interlocutors, and this can also be and is often achieved by choosing between recognisably distinct languages.

In addition to playing an important role in everyday life in Finland, English is also part of most of my participants' linguistic repertoires. With the exception of the two Hungarian participants (Bianka and Judit), all the participants stated that alongside Finnish, English was another second language they felt proficient in. For those who had not studied Finnish prior to moving to Finland, English was also the first language of communication in Finland. Many also still used English, e.g., when working in international contexts or when communicating with friends who do not speak Finnish, but most of the participants claimed to now use mainly Finnish (and their first language) in their everyday lives. Still, questions of language negotiation were discussed even by these highly proficient Finnish speakers, as the following excerpt from the interview with Zuzana shows. Zuzana's partner speaks only a little Finnish and they mostly communicate in

English, although Zuzana has also learnt some of her partner's first language. Given that she has told me that, outside her home, she uses almost exclusively Finnish, I ask her how this works for her when she is out and about in public with her partner. She responds with the following story:

Excerpt 37

ZU: joo joo itse asiassa tulee nyt nyt meille tuli viimeksi mua rupes rupes heti naurettamaan öö (.) mäkkärissä tai hesessä tuolla (.) kadun nurkalla tuolla lähellä niin tota öö siis siellä niinku luultiin et mä oon kans niinku joku jonkun sortin ulkomaalainen koska se kassatyttö joka siinä oli niin puhu puhu mullekin niinku englantia vaikka m- mä menin ensin ensin niinku tilasin (.) itselleni taisin tilata itelle niinku suomeks mut en muista ihan tarkkaan (.) mut tota sit mun mies kuitenkin niinku tilas itelleen niinku suomeks murtaen ja englanniks loput niinku tota ruokaa ja sit kun meille tarjottiin vaihtoehdot niin meitä sit puhuteltiin niinku englannniks ja sit muakin ihan erikseen ja sitten mä menin hämilleni koska mä en tienny millä kielellä mä reagoisin et no (.) et (.) vastaanko mä suomeksi jolloin tätä tyttöä ehkä ehkä nolottaa (.) vai niinku pelataanko nyt tää peli loppuun et et niinku vastaan sitten englanniksi ja olen niinku muina miehinä et mä en osaa suomee (.) niinnii silloin tosiaankin niinku kommunikoitiin englanniks ja sit ku mä kävin vessassa ja olin lähössä sieltä niin en edes moikannut koska en en niinku nopeasti osannu päättää et millä kielellä mä nyt niinku moikkaisin

KR: joo

ZU: et et sanonko niinku *bye bye* vai niinku mitä vaikka sanoisin

KR: n(h)ii

ZU: nii (.) se oli nyt semmonen selkeä tilanne jolloin niinku tämmönen tapahtu mut mulle ei tuu mieleen nyt sitte (.) et ois niinku koskaan toiste käyny niin koska yleensä mä jotenkin niin niinku selkeästi annan ymmärtää et mä oon se joka kuitenkin puhuu suomee ja sitten puhun vaikka jos meitä on siinä kolme siis minä mun mies ja sit se joku kassahenkilö niin sit mä puhun vaikka hänelle niinku englantia selkeästi että toinen niinku tajuaa että hän ei niinku ymmärrä suomee

KR: mmh

ZU: tai sit niinku [puolison L1] hänelle ja sitten tälle kassaihmiselle suomee ja sitten kun niinku tavallaan tää asetelma on jo selvä niin sitten niinku saatan puhuu vain englantia et jota luultavasti kumpikin ymmärtää

ZU: yeah yeah actually now now we recently had I had had to laugh at once uuh (.) at MacDonald's or Hesburger over there (.) around the corner over there uuh well there they thought that I'm also some some kind of foreigner because the cashier who was there was like talked talked English to me too even if I I went first I like ordered first (.) but then my partner in turn like ordered for himself like in broken Finnish and the rest in English like the food and then when we were offered the options they talked like in English and then also to me especially and then I was confused because I didn't know which language to react in and well (.) so (.) do I answer in Finnish and it is maybe maybe going to embarrass that girl [the cashier] (.) or do I like play the game to the end now so like do I answer in English then and pretend like I don't know Finnish (.) so then we actually communicated in English and then when I went to the restroom and I was leaving I didn't even say goodbye because I wasn't wasn't able to like quickly decide what language I would say goodbye in

KR: yeah

ZU: *do I say like* bye bye *or like what would I say*

KR: *y(h)eah*

ZU: *yeah (.) that was a clear situation when something like that happened but I can't think of any (.) that there would have been another time like this because usually I somehow make it clear that I'm the one who does speak Finnish and then I speak for example if there's three of us so me my partner and then some cashier then I speak for example English with him clearly so that the other person like understands that he doesn't like understand Finnish*

KR: *mmh*

ZU: *or then like [partner's L1] with him and then Finnish with the cashier and then when like somehow this arrangement is clear already then I like might speak only English which both will probably understand*

In the first part of the excerpt, Zuzana describes a situation she recently experienced at a fast-food restaurant. As she and her partner are placing their orders at the counter, the issue of language choice between them and the (presumably Finnish-speaking) cashier emerges: while Zuzana would usually use Finnish in all service encounters, her partner only speaks a little Finnish. Zuzana recalls that in this situation, too, she would probably order in Finnish for herself (but cannot remember for sure), and that her partner would use "broken Finnish" and, finally, English to complete his order. According to Zuzana's account, the cashier then addresses them both in English to tell them about their options, but also uses English when addressing only Zuzana. While this causes her some confusion, she recounts that, in the end, she communicates in English, but on leaving the restaurant later she avoids saying goodbye because she feels unable to decide which language to use.

The interaction order Zuzana invokes in her account is typical of a fast-food restaurant: it is fairly routinised in that the roles of cashier and customers are clearly assigned and the interaction follows a script well known from most service encounters (greetings, order, clarification of options, payment, etc.; cf. Scollon 2001: 133). At the same time, participants in these interactions are usually strangers, i.e., the cashiers will usually not know anything about their customers apart from what they can infer from the immediate interactional context. While most service personnel in Finland can (still) be expected to speak Finnish, the language used with customers is negotiated within the first moments of the encounter. Zuzana's account shows that, at least for her, the language choice of the cashier has implications beyond the purely practical aims of getting the order done. When the cashier addresses not only her partner but also Zuzana, individually, in English, she gets confused and is not sure which language to use. This is because, from her perspective, she already made clear at the beginning of the interaction that she speaks Finnish. The cashier's decision to address her in English is experienced by Zuzana as positioning her as a non-Finnish speaker. Zuzana's experience is, in turn, based on ideologies that associate Finnish language with Finnishness and the use of English in Finland with the position of foreigner, as well as her historical body and trajectory as a late learner of Finnish. That is, while the cashier's language choice might have been automatic, or made

out of politeness towards her partner, Zuzana cannot help but feel that it relates to her and her identity as a speaker.

With regard to the narrative means that Zuzana employs in her account, her framing of the interaction as a game (cf. Goffman 1983: 5) is worth noting. Zuzana sees her options as either responding in Finnish, which might "embarrass that girl", or "playing the game to the end" and responding in English, which is what she chooses to do in the end. Her fear that she might embarrass the cashier resonates with Goffman's (1982 [1967]) notion of face, i.e., the social value that participants in social interactions can claim for themselves and that other participants usually try to help sustain through their actions. Zuzana's description of the situation as a game, on the other hand, is reminiscent of the idea of participants in face-to-face interactions entering a contract (Goffman 1983; Rawls 1987). Goffman notes that, in order not to risk threatening other participants' face, disturbances in the interaction order are routinely ignored (Goffman 1982 [1967]: 311). This is what Zuzana hints at when wondering, in her story, whether she should simply "pretend" she does not know Finnish. Her efforts to save her interlocutor's face continue to the end of the transaction, when she leaves without saying goodbye, thus consciously hiding a part of her linguistic repertoire throughout the interaction (see Hult 2014 on 'covert bilingualism').

In the final part of her narrative, Zuzana says that situations like this, in which she is addressed in English, are rare. On the basis of her account this can, however, not be seen as entirely coincidental, but also has to be understood as a result of the interactional work in which she engages. According to what she says, she usually makes sure that the distribution of language skills in the interaction is clear to everyone by pointedly speaking English or her partner's first language (which serves as a marker that he does not understand Finnish) to him, and Finnish to the service person. Only once this has been established ("then when like somehow this arrangement is clear already") will she perhaps use English herself. In other words, clearly indicating that she is a speaker of Finnish enables her to make practical choices regarding language (such as speaking English, which all parties involved understand) without risking being positioned as a foreigner or non-Finnish speaker herself.

A similar perspective is expressed in the following account, from the interview with Sophie:

Excerpt 38

SO: […] mut sitte on ehkä niinku eri eri tilanne kun se on lentokentällä et mulle aina puhutaan englantia ja myös niinku koneessa sitten (.) englantia ja ennen jopa kun mä avaan suuta mulle se sanoo no *hello* ja siiten se tyyppi joka on siis ihan niinku vaalee ja vaa- siis vaaleahiuksinen mo- öö s- no hyvää huomentaa (.) et tää on myös tosi=

KR: mitä mitä ( )

SO: =ää edelleen outoa minusta ja ja ärsyttävää joskus joskus on ärsyttävää

[…]

SO: […] mut joo joskus yks tyyppi s::e oli kun mä lähin mä lähin [ulkomaille] se oli aulassa tai niinku ääm (.) ääm (.) siis onks portti vai mikä se on

KR: se joo siis portin edessä joo

SO: joo

KR: joo

SO: että yks tyyppi niinku teki jotain niinku kauppahaastattelun tai jotain ja tuli puhumaan mulle niinku suoraan englanniks ja sitte niinku on niille jotka niinku muutkin tässä niinku suoraan suomeks

KR: ((clicks tongue))

SO: mut sit mä oon ehkä vähän niinku liian ylpee ja sitte mä haluun ehkä niinku näyttää liikaa siis liikaa näyttää et mä osaan mut ehkä niinku ajan mukaan tai siis ajan myötä mä vaan niinku ehkä jossain vaiheessa se huvittaa minua ja mä osaan ottaa vähän kevyemmin ja nykyään mä mä vastaan välillä myös niinku englanniks et miksei mä oon monikielinen osaan myös englantia

[…]

SO: […] nyt se vähän huvittaa mua koska mä oon aika niinku ää mä oon tarpeeksi itsevarma tästä mun suomen kielen taidosta (.) jotta voin vähän leikkiä et mä oon vä- vai(h)- heh heh ( ) oikesti [oma itseni] mut see on vain niinku si- joo se vähän huvittaa mua nyk- nykyään koska mä oon tarpeeks itsevarma (.) ehkä se on s- ehk- ja ehkä mä oon tajunnut vihdonkin koska mä oon vähän viisaampi et se ei oo niin tärkee *hh et mä näytän tyypille et mä osaan (.) nii ehkä joo ehkä nykyään se se se (.) se vaan huvittaa mua ja myös se voi niinku johtaa sellaisiin tilanteisiin joissa tyyppi niinku ihan lopussa huomaa et mä osaankin suomee et ( ) tää on hauskaa

SO: […] but then it's maybe like a different different situation because it's at the airport they always speak English to me and then also like on the plane (.) English and even before I open my mouth they say well hello *and then the person who is just like fair and bl- like blond uh well hyvää huomenta (.) so that's also very=*

KR: what what ( )

SO: =uh still strange to me and and annoying sometimes sometimes it's annoying

[…]

SO: […] but yeah one time this person th::at was when I was leaving I was leaving [for abroad] that was in the lobby or like uhm (.) uhm (.) like is it the gate or what is it

KR: it yeah like in front of the gate yeah

SO: yeah

KR: yeah

SO: so one person was like doing something like a sales pitch or something and came to talk to me like in English right away and then they're like to the others who like the others there like right away in Finnish

KR: ((clicks tongue))

SO: but then I'm maybe a bit like too proud and then I maybe want to like show too much like too badly show that I know [Finnish] but maybe like with time or like in the course of time I'm just like maybe at some point I find it amusing and I can take it a bit lighter and these days I I also sometimes respond like in English like why not I'm multilingual I also know English

[…]

SO: *[…] now I find it a bit amusing because I'm quite like uh I'm confident enough about my Finnish skills (.) so I can play a bit that I am ab- cha(h)- heh heh ( ) really [myself] but it is just like yeah I find it a bit amusing the- these days because I am confident enough (.) maybe it is i- mayb- and maybe I have finally understood because I'm a bit wiser that it's not that important *hh that I show that person that I know [Finnish] (.) so maybe yeah maybe these days it it it (.) I just find it amusing and it can also like lead to situations where the person realises like just at the end that I do know Finnish after all so ( ) that's funny*

Sophie's story describes two instances where she is addressed in English in service encounters at the airport. First, she tells me about her experience of being automatically addressed in English both at the airport and in the plane itself. From Sophie's perspective, the language choice seems to be based on her appearance, as she is addressed in English even before she has said anything herself, while a more stereotypically Finnish-looking person ("the person who is just like fair and bl- like blond") is automatically addressed in Finnish. The scenario is repeated when she is approached by a salesperson close to the gate: Sophie feels that she is the only one who is directly addressed in English, while the people around her are addressed in Finnish. Elsewhere in the interview, Sophie concedes that issues of language choice are particularly challenging at an airport, where staff are dealing with large numbers of both domestic and international customers. However, regardless of what motives for language choice are at play, Sophie treats ideologies that associate Nordic looks with Finnishness, and Finnishness with the Finnish language, as relevant to how she is addressed at the airport.

In the second part of the excerpt, Sophie describes her reaction to such incidents. Earlier in the interview I had asked her in what language she responds when addressed in English, and she tells me that she always responds in Finnish. She explains this as being because she is "too proud" and as wanting to "show them too much" that she actually speaks Finnish. Given that being addressed in English is a common experience for learners of Finnish in Finland, this can be seen as relating to Sophie's historical body: learning Finnish to a high level of proficiency is a significant part of her trajectory as well as something to be proud of, and therefore being addressed in English is experienced by her as a failure to recognise her efforts to become a speaker of Finnish. However, Sophie also seems to be critical of her own reaction, describing herself as being *too* proud and wanting to show off her Finnish skills *too* much. She then explains how, with time, she learnt to take situations like the ones she experienced at the airport less seriously and how, being, after all "a multilingual", she might nowadays even respond in English.

From the point of view of translanguaging, this statement simply points to a situation where whatever linguistic resources participants share can be used. From the point of view of language learning and legitimacy, however, Sophie's use of English in these situations stops being face-threatening only once she has become confident enough about her Finnish skills. Having also become "wiser" as a language user, she no longer feels the same need to show others that she can speak Finnish (cf. also Chapter 5.3.1 and Alexander's comments on worrying less

about making mistakes now that he is generally satisfied with his Finnish skills). While Sophie's story is an example of how she personally overcame the need to prove herself as a Finnish speaker, it also confirms that English can indeed be experienced as a threat to the legitimacy of second language speakers of Finnish. This is apparent also in their similar choice of narrative means: while Zuzana thinks about using English instead of Finnish in a service encounter as a game that she can play to avert others' loss of face, Sophie says that these days she is confident enough about her Finnish skills to allow herself to "play a bit" with the language situation. Both Zuzana's and Sophie's accounts thus frame the use of English as somehow fake or inauthentic, allowing them to distance themselves from a language choice made by others and not to take its implications too seriously.

In sum, these two interview excerpts show that participants consider the use of English to be far from neutral. Zuzana's and Sophie's accounts are indicative of a strong ideological association between English and foreigners, who are stereotypically thought to have no or only some slight knowledge of Finnish. Thus, the accounts cannot be seen as representing the isolated, personal views of my participants. Rather, they have to be understood against the backdrop of these ideologies, which have become part of my participants' historical bodies. For instance, Sophie used mostly English when she arrived in Finland and only transitioned to using Finnish in most contexts of everyday life (including educational contexts, relationships, her circle of friends, etc.) as she developed her Finnish skills. This shows that for Sophie, the association of Finnish and English with different speaker identities is not only a matter of abstract ideologies but of lived, biographical experience. It is, then, not surprising that being addressed in English causes my participants confusion and is experienced as a mismatch with their self-perception as competent speakers of Finnish; strategies such as thinking about using English as a game are employed to avert threats to their legitimacy.

In this section, I have discussed two examples of how language choice (Finnish vs. English) was experienced by my participants as an indicator of speaker identity (legitimate Finnish speaker vs. foreigner/non-Finnish speaker). However, some of my participants also experienced the use of English differently. Take, for instance, the following example from the interview with Agnieszka:

Excerpt 39

AG: [...] jos vaan saa niin kaikki sähköpostit ja tollaiset mieluummin kirjoitan englanniksi koska koska jos kirjoitan suomeks niin siihen menee ikä ja terveys eli mun pitää oikeasti googlettaa niin paljon (mä oon just)

KR: aivan

AG: s- s::illoin mä oon aika itse- jotenkin semmonen se i- itsekritiikki iskee ja mä varmistan kaikki sanat ja lauseet ja kaikki mitä vaan pystyy tarkistaan

KR: nii

AG: niin siihen menee tosi paljon aikaa monesti

KR: okei

AG: eli tavallaan töissä

[…]

AG: eli eli mä nimenomaan jos jos jos jutellaan ja ollaan jossain palaveris mä meen hoitamaan jotain asiaa sen sen henkilön kans tai ollaan vaikka lounaalla me aina puhutaan suomee mutta jos mä kirjoitan sille henkilölle niin käytän englantia ja ja monesti se henkilö vastaa englanniks

AG: [...] if anyhow possible I prefer to write all emails and such things in English because because if I write in Finnish it will take forever like I really need to google so much (I'm just)

KR: I see

AG: th- th::ehn I'm quite self- somehow like this self-criticism strikes and I check all the words and sentences and everything that you can possibly check

KR: right

AG: so that often takes a lot of time

KR: okay

AG: so at work sort of

[…]

AG: so so I precisely when when when we talk or when we're in a meeting I go and take care of something with this this person or we are at lunch for example we always talk in Finnish but when I write to that person I use English and and often that person responds in English

Agnieszka says that she frequently chooses to use English herself when writing work emails to colleagues, even to colleagues with whom she communicates in Finnish in face-to-face situations. The reason she gives for this is that writing emails in Finnish "takes forever" because she would have to look up too many things and would "check all the words and sentences and everything that you can possibly check". Given that this would be very time-consuming and she presumably wants to do her job efficiently, she prefers to write these emails in English. There is, however, another aspect to her language choice. The reason Agnieszka gives for choosing to write in English is that she is very critical of her writing in Finnish. That is, she seems to feel that her writing skills in Finnish are not good enough to engage in professional written communication, unless she spends a lot of time checking words and expressions. English, in this account, is thus framed not as threatening Agnieszka's legitimacy as a speaker of Finnish but as enhancing her legitimacy as a professional.

Agnieszka's account differs in multiple ways from the previous two accounts discussed in this section. For instance, in contrast to Zuzana's and Sophie's stories, it is Agnieszka herself who initiates the communication in English and, given that she has a routine of using Finnish in face-to-face interactions and English in written communication with specific people, she seems to have agency over her bilingual work practices. More importantly, however, compared to the service encounters described previously, the workplace is a high-stakes environment where contact with other people (especially colleagues) is often continuous

and where displaying professional competence is extremely important. That is, while Zuzana and Sophie experience the use of English as potentially deligitimising in public encounters, Agnieszka deliberately employs English to achieve legitimacy in her professional environment. This also links back to the question of good or target-like Finnish, in other words, what kinds of Finnish skills my participants consider enough for participation in different situations (see Chapter 5.3). It also raises the question where and how second language users like Agnieszka could develop their written language skills in a professional environment.

The excerpts analysed above show that the Finnish language is taken to be a strong marker of localness, while English seems to be strongly associated with being a foreigner. However, like any other language, Finnish is not monolithic in itself, but features different social and regional varieties and ways of speaking. In the next two parts of this chapter, I discuss how my participants relate their repertoires to colloquial (6.2.3) and regional (6.2.4) varieties of Finnish.

6.2.2 'I wanted to be cool speak *puhekieli* like the others': positioning and formal/colloquial Finnish

The term *puhekieli* (lit. 'speech language') can refer to any spoken variety of Finnish (e.g. local, dialectal, sociolectal), but is often contrasted specifically with *kirjakieli* (lit. 'book language'), the formal written standard of Finnish. In this sense, *kirjakieli* is somewhat synonymous with *yleiskieli* (lit. 'general language'), a term referring to standardised Finnish that follows official norms and recommendations and is shared by all Finnish speakers (Mielikäinen & Palander 2014: 40). *Puhekieli*, in contrast, is understood to refer to everyday, colloquial language use, which does not necessarily follow these norms (Viinikka & Voutilainen 2013). The contrast between the two varieties of Finnish is generally considered to be rather pronounced, with differences occurring on the levels of pronunciation as well as morphology and syntax (F. Karlsson 2015: 285). However, it is important to note that standard and colloquial Finnish cannot necessarily be seen as entirely separate varieties (see Viinikka & Voutilainen 2013), but are perhaps better understood as forming part of a stylistic continuum, allowing speakers and writers to choose different resources according to the degree of formality of a communicative situation. Moreover, the terms do not correlate neatly with written and spoken language use (Viinikka & Voutilainen 2013). That is, while the use of standard Finnish in spoken communication has generally decreased over the past few decades (Paunonen 2001: 237), colloquial Finnish is now widely used in many contexts of informal written communication (e.g. informal messages).

With regard to learners of Finnish as a second language, the differences between standard and colloquial Finnish pose their own challenges. In the early years of research on Finnish as a second language, there was considerable disagreement as to whether learners of Finnish should be taught standard Finnish first and colloquial Finnish later (e.g. Silfverberg 1993), or whether both varieties should be taught simultaneously (e.g. Storhammar 1994; Lauranto 1995). While many language teaching materials do now incorporate colloquial language forms (see Jokinen et al. 2011), language teaching registers still seem to draw heavily on

standard written forms, which are associated with intelligibility and correctness (Lehtonen 2015: 243), and learners still report difficulties understanding colloquial Finnish when they start to use the language outside the classroom (see e.g. S. Laakso 2015; Suni 2017). From a language ideological viewpoint, the use of standard written norms in spoken Finnish is, however, ambiguous. In her study of multilingual young people in Helsinki, Lehtonen (2015: 244) shows that the use of standard Finnish in spoken communication is mocked by her participants as 'bad Finnish' or 'immigrant' Finnish. This is precisely because such language forms (e.g. the consistent use of standard vs. colloquial pronouns, e.g. *minä* vs. *mä* 'I') can typically be observed in people who have learnt Finnish later in life in contexts of formal language instruction.

Advanced proficiency in Finnish thus includes knowledge of both standard written norms of Finnish and widely used colloquial forms, as well as the ability to use them appropriately in different communicative contexts. The participants of my study generally report using colloquial Finnish frequently and comfortably, and attribute this to having been taught about it on language courses as well as to the vast amounts of spoken language they have been exposed to while learning Finnish in Finland. Some participants report that even if they started out learning standard written Finnish in language courses, they are now so immersed in spoken Finnish that writing texts in formal standard Finnish (e.g. for academic essays or work reports) has become challenging. For most, the greatest challenge seems to lie in the question of appropriateness, i.e., what forms to use in what kinds of situations, in particular those that fall somewhere between clearly formal and clearly informal situations of language use (e.g. work emails). Moreover, in my participants' accounts, the issue of appropriateness is discussed not only with regard to situations of language use, but also with regard to their sociolinguistic identities and the positionings that standard and colloquial language forms afford. Consider the following account by Alexander:

Excerpt 40

KR: ( ) ähm (.) mmh (.) was ich frag- ah was ich fragen wollte war wie wie is es mit ich mein Finnisch und Grammatik ist das eine aber wie war das mit *puhekieli* und wie is das

AL: ja am Anfang natürlich total schwer

KR: mhm

AL: und am Anfang war das auch hmm also am Anfang weiß ich war das Problem total dass ich dann oft den Stil gemischt hab so dass das total unnatürlich wurde dass ich cool sein wollte wie die andern *puhekieli* sprechen aber dann andere w- Dinge in meiner Sprache nicht *puhekieli* waren (.) und dann dann schon wieder so ein *sekamelska* hatte (.) heutzutage würde ich öh hm oh das müsst ich mehr drauf achten ich glaub nich dass ich damit noch Probleme hab (.) wahrscheinlich auch deswegen weil ich jetzt mit Finnen ganz viel zu tun hab mit denen ich nur Finnisch spreche und dann muss man ja einfach nur nachlabern (.) was natürlich überhaupt gar nich geht dass ich irgendnen Dialekt kopieren kann=

KR: mhm mhm

AL: =das das das wär toll wenn ich ah könnt ich würden die Leute mir hier anhören dass=

KR: heh:: heh heh

AL: =ich in [Stadt in Finnland] gewohnt hab aber das haut noch nich hin so fern es- so s(h)ehr ichs auch versuche dann kommt irgendwas ziemlich Peinliches bei raus

KR: okay

AL: hah hah hah hah

KR: also bei *puhekieli* geht das aber das so mhm

AL: bei *puhekieli* geht das ja wahrscheinlich weil das so allgegenwärtig ist

KR: mhm mhm (.) aber du würdest schon sagen dass man das unbedingt braucht also das gehört

AL: ja find ich schon das gehört dazu weil sonst stempelt man sich irgendwie immer sofort als anders ab

KR: mhm

AL: also was heißt man braucht es wenn man dazugehören will (.) denn ich kenne auch Leute die dieses *puhekieli* nich sprechen aber das sind alles irgendwelche akademischen Men-schen kurz vor der Rente

KR: mmh

AL: ich fänd das schon sehr merkwürdig wenn man Standardsprache so als junger Mensch mit anderen Finnen sprechen würde

KR: ( ) uhm (.) mmh (.) what I wan- uh what I wanted to ask was how how about I mean Finnish and grammar is one thing but how was it with puhekieli *and how is it*

AL: well at the beginning really difficult of course

KR: mhm

AL: and at the beginning it was also hmm well at the beginning I know that the problem really was that I often mixed the style so that it became completely unnatural that I wanted to be cool talk puhekieli *like the others but that other w- things in my speech were not* puhekieli *(.) and that then then I got this kind of* sekamelska *[mishmash] again (.) these days I would uh hm oh I should try to pay more attention to that I don't think that I still have problems with that (.) probably also because now I have a lot to do with Finns with whom I only speak Finnish and then you basically just have to talk like they talk (.) what doesn't work at all of course is that I could imitate some dialect=*

KR: mhm mhm

AL: =that that that would be fun if I uh I could people would hear that=

KR: heh:: heh heh

AL: =I've lived in [town in Finland] but that doesn't work yet as far as- no matter how h(h)ard I try the result is something quite embarrassing

KR: okay

AL: hah hah hah hah

KR: but with puhekieli *it works mhm*

AL: with puhekieli *it works yes probably because it's so ubiquitous*

KR: mhm mhm (.) but you would say that you absolutely need that like that is part of [being a Finnish speaker]

AL: yeah that's what I think it's part of it because otherwise you somehow always immediately label yourself as different

KR: *mhm*

AL: *well I don't know if you absolutely need it if you want to belong (.) because I also know people who don't speak* puhekieli *but they are all like some kind of academic people close to retirement*

KR: *mmh*

AL: *I would find it very strange if as a young person you spoke standard language with other Finns*

Alexander says that at the beginning of his language learning trajectory, speaking colloquial Finnish was "really difficult of course". This phrasing implies that Alexander sees colloquial Finnish as an obvious challenge for any beginning learner, but it might also be connected to his personal experience of receiving extensive formal language training before and concurrently with his increasing use of (colloquial) Finnish in everyday life. He then gives a more detailed description of his initial difficulties with colloquial language: he says that he did make an effort to speak colloquial Finnish but often ended up using a mixture, some features associated with colloquial language and others associated with standard (written) language, something he refers to as *sekamelska* (a derogative term in Finnish describing something mixed up or chaotic). Now, however, Alexander feels that using colloquial language is no longer a challenge for him. He implies that, unlike at the beginning of his language learning trajectory, his way of using colloquial Finnish no longer sounds forced and is now quite natural. He thinks this is because of his use of Finnish with Finns in everyday situations and, therefore, his increased exposure to colloquial Finnish. Thus, through interaction with his environment, simply through talking "like they talk", hearing and using colloquial Finnish has become part of his own historical body.

Importantly, Alexander also tells me that his motivation for trying to learn and use colloquial language was to be "cool" and "talk *puhekieli* like the others'. Bucholtz (2001: 85) defines coolness as "engagement with and participation in the trends and practices of youth culture", including linguistic practices such as the use of slang. Alexander, too, links coolness to youth and a certain kind of informality or relaxedness: he seems to be referring to his peers when he mentions that he wanted to talk like the others, and he describes people who do not use colloquial Finnish as "some kind of academic people close to retirement". To Alexander, speaking colloquial Finnish is also a way of belonging, since he feels that not speaking it would mean being labelled as different. Alexander's perspective on *puhekieli* as a marker of coolness and belonging also explains why he evaluates his initial attempts at speaking it rather negatively: simply adding colloquialisms to his repertoire did not grant him legitimacy as a competent, young user of Finnish because, he felt, his language use sounded unnatural. This is reminiscent of Bourdieu's (1977) perspective on dominant language, where legitimacy can only be achieved when language is used not only correctly but also confidently and in a markedly casual way, i.e., speakers cannot *sound* as though they are making an effort (see Chapter 3.2.3). Arguably, Alexander, too, sees colloquial Finnish as something that had to become natural to him in order to actually add to what he thought of as his coolness.

Alexander's experience can be contrasted with Sergei's. In the interview, Sergei tells me that the language courses he took before coming to Finland dealt explicitly with spoken language and therefore prepared him rather well for the move, so that when he arrived, everyday spoken language was not "a complete shock", but only "a small shock" to him. He also distinguishes between *puhekieli* (colloquial Finnish) and *yleiskieli* (standard Finnish) and claims that, even though his productive repertoire includes some widely used colloquialisms (e.g. *mä oon* instead of *minä olen* 'I am') and is already more colloquial than at the beginning of his language learning trajectory, he ultimately makes very little use of the *puhekieli* style. In the following excerpt, he explains in more detail what forms he does or does not use, and why:

Excerpt 41

SE: [...] ehkä kun mä [asuin] helsingissä heillä on vähän erilainen ehkä puhekieli

KR: hm

SE: heillä saattaa olla sellaisia ähm (.) niinku en tiedä käytetäänkö [täällä] hirveästi tuutsä

KR: mmh

SE: äh ähm (.) tiiätsä tai tai ähm eli sitä m:ä en käytä äh heh ehkä miksi no en tiedä mmh ehkä mä mä luulen että olen ulkomaalainen kuitenkin ja on kivempi jos mä pitäydyn vähän äh kirjakielisimmissä muodoissa m:inusta se on minusta se kuulostaa paremmalta ähm (.) ja ehkä antaa enemmän sel- sellaisen kuvan että mä ähm (.) henkilö on vähän opiskellut vähän myös kielioppia ei heh heh heh heh eli heh heh ehkä sen takia mutta

KR: siis koska se kuulostaa oikeammalta

SE: joo

KR: mikä siinä on onko siinä sit ero että jos sä sanoit sanoisit vaikka tuutsä ja meetsä ja niinku joku helsinkiläinen niinku suomalainen tekee samaa niin onko siinä joku ero

SE: joo mä luulen että mä en en pysty niinku sanomaan sitä samalla no jonkun muodon jo mutta se on niin iso niinku se on m(h)elkein kokonainen kieli ja mä tiedän siitä pari kolme muotoa no ei sitten ole paljon järkeä käyttää jos muuten niinku heh äh (.) no (.) ehkä näistä syistä tai (.) ( ) (.) äh (.) *hh no jo toisaalta on kyllä kivaa jos jos pystyy käyttämään niinku puhekieltä hyvin luontevasti samalla tavalla kuin keskustelukumppanit äh sitten ehkä keskustelu myös sujuu äh sujuu nopeammin äh mutta ei välttämättä en tiedä hh

SE: [...] maybe when I [lived] in Helsinki they have a bit of a different maybe spoken language

KR: hm

SE: they might have like uhm (.) like I don't know if people [here] use tuutsä *[are you coming] a lot*

KR: mmh

SE: uh uhm (.) tiiätsä *[do you know] or or uhm so that I: don't use uh heh maybe why well I don't know mmh maybe I I think that I'm a foreigner after all and it's nicer if I stick uh a bit with the most written forms I: I think that sounds better uhm (.) and maybe it more conveys th- the image that I uhm (.) the person has studied the grammar a bit also a bit heh heh heh heh so heh heh maybe that's why but*

KR: so because it sounds more correct

SE: *yes*

KR: *what is so is there a difference if you said would say for example* tuutsä *[are you coming] and* meetsä *[are you going] and like some like Finnish person from Helsinki does the same like is there a difference*

SE: *yeah I think that I can't can't like say it in the same [way] well some form sure but it is so big like it is alm(h)ost a whole language and I know two or three forms well it doesn't make much sense to use [them] if otherwise like heh uh (.) well (.) maybe because of that or (.) ( ) (.) uh (.) *hh well okay on the other hand it really is nice if if you can use like spoken language very naturally in the same way as the people you're talking to uh then maybe the conversation also flows uh flows faster uh but not necessarily I don't know hh*

Sergei has spent some time in the Helsinki area and so he knows the kind of colloquial Finnish spoken there, which he considers "a bit different" from the variety spoken where he lives now. He cites the colloquial forms *tuutsä* 'are you coming' and *tiiätsä* 'do you know', typical of the Helsinki region, as examples of forms he never felt comfortable using (cf. the colloquial forms *tuutko* and *tiiätkö* used in many other parts of Finland, or the standard written forms *tuletko* and *tiedätkö* also acceptable in most situations of spoken language use). Instead, he says that, in general, he prefers to use forms that are closer to standard written language (or at least forms that are very common in spoken Finnish everywhere, such as *mä oon* 'I am', see above). He gives two reasons for this preference. First, he feels that standard forms sound better because they give the impression that the speaker "has studied the grammar a bit also". This does not, however, seem to apply to all speakers, but is conditioned by his status as a foreigner: Sergei seems to imply that, for a second language speaker of Finnish, linguistic legitimacy is easier to reach by displaying competence in proper Finnish, i.e. grammatically correct, standard written language.[29]

The second reason is different in nature and Sergei gives it in response to my question about whether there is a difference between him using forms like *tuutsä* and a Finnish person from Helsinki doing so. He replies that he would be unable to "say it in the same [way]" and, moreover, it does not make sense to only use the "two or three forms" he knows, considering that colloquial Finnish of the Helsinki area is "so big like it is alm(h)ost a whole language". Here, Sergei invokes the idea that simply knowing linguistic forms does not grant him the right to use them. He seems to feel that, perhaps other than standard language that second language learners can acquire piece by piece, colloquial language (especially a variety with strong local associations like Helsinki colloquial Finnish) is strongly indexical of an identity that he cannot just assume by including a few forms or expressions in his language use. In other words, in Sergei's account legitimacy is closely connected to authenticity: in his view, using Helsinki expressions would not sound good because they do not fit in with his background and could therefore be considered inauthentic.

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[29] Another reason why Sergei might feel more comfortable using mostly standard Finnish forms is that in Russia, speakers of colloquial forms of Russian (*prostorechiye* 'simple, uneducated speech') are traditionally looked down upon (Mustajoki 2012: 197). Although Sergei does not mention this explicitly, it is possible that such attitudes are still part of his historical body.

At first glance, Alexander's and Sergei's views on colloquial Finnish seem very different: while for Alexander, speaking colloquial Finnish is indispensable in order to be part of the Finnish-speaking community, Sergei does not feel comfortable using it, or at least too much of it. Arguably, their stances are connected to their being at different stages in their learning trajectories and thus to their historical bodies. Sergei has been in Finland for only a few months and, based on his interview account, still very much identifies as a learner of Finnish. Thus, his strategy for achieving linguistic legitimacy relies to a great extent on learning what he considers proper Finnish (something which also used to be of great importance to Alexander). Alexander, on the other hand, has lived in Finland for many years and his aspirations have shifted more and more to being a good enough speaker of Finnish, someone who gets by in everyday life (see Chapter 5.3.1). For already highly proficient speakers like him, it can therefore be important to display belonging by speaking like everyone else. On the other hand, there are also important similarities in both participants' accounts. While Alexander states without hesitation that knowing colloquial Finnish is very important, Sergei at least admits that speaking "naturally in the same way as the people you're talking to" can be beneficial to the conversational flow. Crucially, they both invoke the idea that colloquial Finnish is "a whole language" rather than a collection of singular expressions and, that being the case, speaking it has to sound natural. Again, the participants differ mostly in how they perceive their historical bodies: for Alexander, the phase in which he spoke an inauthentic-seeming "mishmash" (*sekamelska*) of colloquial and standard language is far behind him, whereas Sergei sees himself as being precisely at this stage.

Alexander's and Sergei's accounts, then, offer some insight into how using colloquial Finnish is about more than knowledge of particular forms and their use in context. While in both accounts knowing colloquial Finnish is seen as an important part of being a proficient speaker of Finnish, its use seems to demand a greater degree of authenticity from speakers than standard language. In other words, what matters is not only what is said but 'the whole social person' (Bourdieu 1977: 653), and what sounds appropriate or natural when uttered by a native speaker might sound inappropriate or unnatural when uttered by a second language speaker (see Howard et al. 2013: 354-355). Colloquial Finnish therefore only contributes to legitimately sounding like a local when it is used effortlessly. In the next section, I turn to yet another type of linguistic variation that often directly indexes localness by investigating how my participants position themselves with regard to regional varieties of Finnish.

6.2.3 '…but then it still somehow didn't feel right': positioning and regional varieties of Finnish

In Section 6.2.2, I discussed how, in the sociolinguistic context of Finland, standard Finnish (or *kirjakieli* lit. 'book language') is frequently contrasted with colloquial Finnish (or *puhekieli* lit. 'speech language'), and how the parallel use of the two varieties, as well as judgments about their appropriateness in different contexts, can present a challenge to beginning and also advanced second language

learners of Finnish. At the same time, my participants' accounts strongly suggest that they see adopting at least some features of colloquial Finnish as an integral part of being a legitimate highly proficient user of Finnish. In addition to colloquial Finnish, standard Finnish can, however, also be contrasted with linguistic features that are associated with a certain place or region in Finland. In everyday speech, *puhekieli* ('speech language') and *murre* ('dialect') are often used interchangeably to describe more or less locally shaped informal varieties of Finnish (Mielikäinen & Palander 2014: 41).

Mantila (1997: 9) suggests that rather than taking clearly defined varieties as a starting point, contemporary spoken Finnish should be studied with regard to specific linguistic features and their likely occurrence according to, for instance, region, age, socioeconomic status and speech situation. Thus, while some features of colloquial Finnish can be seen as neutral with regard to region or age and are frequently used by speakers of any age anywhere in Finland, others are expanding at varying speed and driven by different factors, and yet others are clearly associated with a particular (often non-urban) region (Mantila 1997: 11-22). Colloquial language free of distinctive regional features is sometimes referred to as *yleispuhekieli*, i.e. 'general' or 'standard' colloquial language (KS 2018; also see Mielikäinen & Palander 2014: 44; Nuolijärvi & Sorjonen 2005: 17), although this, again, should be taken to refer to specific features and not a variety of Finnish used by all Finnish speakers (Mantila 1997: 13). The Helsinki region is a rather special case: originally founded in a Swedish-speaking area, Helsinki became a melting pot for the different varieties of Finnish brought in by speakers who moved there from other parts of Finland. Helsinki colloquial Finnish has since then had an enormous influence on the development of colloquial Finnish elsewhere in the country (Mielikäinen & Palander 2014: 44). Nonetheless, Helsinki colloquial Finnish also contains features, especially lexical items, that are clearly locally grounded and are often described as Helsinki slang (*Stadin slangi*), a contemporary form of the old slang that had evolved in the multilingual capital in the late 19th century (see Paunonen 2000: 14-17).

Looking at my interview data, the inseparability of generic and regional features of colloquial Finnish is already reflected in the excerpts discussed above (6.2.2). In Excerpt 40, Alexander mentions dialectal variation when asked about how he acquired colloquial language. While he sees colloquial language as challenging for beginning learners but, in the end, indispensable for communicating in proficient and legitimate ways, he regards regional dialects as more difficult to master. On the one hand, he suggests that he would enjoy it if other people could hear that he has also lived elsewhere in Finland, but on the other, his experience is that this "doesn't work at all" and that whenever he tries, "the result is something quite embarrassing". However, even if his personal experience is that it has been impossible for him to use local dialectal features naturally, both types of variation seem to appear in his interview as markers of (a certain kind of) linguistic belonging. His mentioning them together also reflects the linguistic reality of colloquial language often being locally shaped, thus making the distinction between regional dialects and general spoken

language difficult (see Mielikäinen & Palander 2014: 41). Similarly, in Excerpt 41, Sergei mentions that he feels comfortable using some features of colloquial Finnish, but not those that are associated particularly strongly with Helsinki, where he no longer lives.

A closer look at participants' statements about the use of regional varieties of Finnish reveals similar patterns of experience and reasoning as can be found with regard to colloquial Finnish. For some participants, the local dialect is a natural part of their linguistic environment and thus of their changing historical bodies, while others stress the conscious choices they make with regard to using (or, rather, not using) dialect features. An example of the former experience can be found in the following excerpt from the interview with Julia, who lives outside the Helsinki region:

Excerpt 42

JL: =ich wei- wu- habs selbst nich mitbekommen aber ich ich denk einfach [hier] fängt man an [den lokalen Dialekt] zu sprechen und ich war aber irgenwann wir hatten also immer unsere Ausbildung […] äh das ist immer in Helsinki und dann kommen wir halt nach Helsinki und da hab ich mich einfach nur vorgestellt wer ich bin und hab erzählt woher ich komme und so und dann sagt sie du sprichst aber gutes [lokaler Dialekt]

KR: heh heh heh

JL: und in dem Moment dacht ich Moment ich sprech Finnisch ich hab ich wusst es überhaupt nich […] aber ja in sofern denk ich schon dass ich [den lokalen Dialekt] spreche wahrscheinlich auch weil meine also ich hab jetz viele meiner Freunde sprechen richtig starkes [Dialekt] ich denk daran gewöhnt mich- gewöhnt man sich dann auch irgendwann
[…]

JL: wobei ich denk is auch ganz gut da zum zum in- sich integrieren wenn ich die ganze zeit nur Hochfinnisch *kirjakieltä* sprechen würde das wär schon komisch (.) ich glaub das würde mich auch relativ aus- ausschließen

KR: von aus

JL: aus Freun- Freundschaftskreisen oder so

KR: ja mmh mmh

JL: und ich denk es ist ja auch normal in Deutschland wenn de (.) zum Beispiel wenn ich jetz [woandershin] gezogen wäre wä- hätt ich hätt ich wahrscheinlich auch angefangen mehr Hochdeutsch zu sprechen

KR: mmh (.)

JL: aber man passt sich halt seiner Umgebung an

JL: =I kno- kne- I didn't notice myself but I think that [here] you simply start speaking [the local dialect] but I was at some point well we always had our training […] uh that is always in Helsinki and then we're in Helsinki and I just introduced myself who I am and where I come from and so on and then she was like wow your [local dialect] is very good

KR: heh heh heh

JL: and at that moment I thought wait I'm speaking Finnish I had I didn't know at all […] but yeah in that way I do think that I speak [the local dialect] probably also because my well now I

have many of my friends speak really strong [dialect] I think you also just get my- get used to it at some point
[…]

JL: *and I think it's also quite good for for in- integrating yourself if I spoke only standard Finnish* kirjakieltä *all the time that would be weird (.) I think that would also quite ex- exclude me*

KR: *of from*

JL: *from frien- friendship circles or something*

KR: *yeah mmh mmh*

JL: *and I think in the end it's also normal in Germany if you (.) for example if I had moved [elsewhere in Germany] I ha- I would probably also have would have started speaking more standard German*

KR: *mmh (.)*

JL: *but you just accommodate to your environment*

In this excerpt, Julia reflects on the kind of Finnish she speaks. Here and elsewhere in the interview, she emphasises quite strongly that she identifies as a speaker of the variety of Finnish spoken in her town. This is, however, something she was unaware of for a long time. She recounts going to Helsinki for a professional training session, during which she learnt that other people did not perceive her way of speaking as standard Finnish. To Julia, this was a surprising experience since she thought she was speaking "Finnish" all along and was unaware of (all) the dialectal features in her speech. Having now become more aware of her way of speaking, Julia views the formation of her repertoire as very natural: it is simply something that happens to learners living in her town ("[here] you simply start speaking [the local dialect]") and is a consequence of her accommodating to her dialect-speaking friends ("many of my friends speak really strong [dialect] I think you also just get my- get used to it at some point"). She even seems to regard this as a process that does not only apply to second language learners but could have easily happened in her first language as well: she thinks that if she had moved to a different region in Germany, her way of speaking German would have changed, too.

As with Alexander's comment about colloquial Finnish, Julia feels that speaking the local dialect (or colloquial language with dialectal features) is what is necessary in order to fit in, and that speaking standard Finnish (*kirjakieli*) would somehow exclude her from some social circles. Unlike Alexander, she does not, however, draw a clear distinction between colloquial language and dialect. Rather, in her town and in her circle of friends, speaking a locally shaped colloquial variety feels natural and is a way of gaining access. At the same time, Julia's linguistic historical body also affords multiple potential positionings. Within the social context of her town, where her status as a foreigner is frequently highlighted (see also Chapter 7.2.2), speaking like a local can be seen as a means of achieving belonging or, at least, of mitigating this kind of othering. Her account of the experience at the training session in Helsinki, on the other hand, suggests that away from her town she can be perceived as both a foreigner and a local from elsewhere in Finland.

Both similar experiences and markedly different attitudes can be found in the following account that Zuzana gives:

Excerpt 43

ZU: [...] itse niinku käytän aika paljon semmosta ihan niinku yleispuhekieltä jossa on niinku puhekielisii sanoj muttei hirveenä mitään niinku murrevaikutuksia (.) ainakin mä jotenkin ööm ennen kuin olin niinku suomessa vasta niinku vähän aikaa ja tavallaan niinku se kielen oppiminen oli jotenkin paljon intensiivisempää et niinku oppii koko ajan niinku paljon uutta joka päivä nii muhun tarttu niinku hirveän helposti kaikki

KR: mh

ZU mä mä niinku poimin sanoja murrekielisiä niinku sanoja sieltä sun täältä mulla oli silloin aika laaja kaveripiiri joka oli ööh niinku pohjois-suomesta […]

[...]

ZU: [...] se jotenkin tarttu ja sit ihmiset oikeasti luuli aika usein niinku mua jokskin et mä oon niinku sieltä sieltä kotoisin niinku sen perusteella miten mä puhuin (.) mu-

KR: niinku just sieltä [pohjois-suomesta] vaikka vai

ZU: nii-i sieltä

KR: joo

ZU: tai sit jostain muualta jos mä nyt saattoin käyttää jotain sanaa mikä

KR: mmh mmh

ZU: minkä olin oppinut joltain kaverilta ja sit ku enhän mä niinku tienny et tää on niinku murresana

KR: mmh

ZU: mulle se oli uusi sana siinä missä kaikki muutki uudet sanat niin sit mä saatoin ihan niinku helposti käyttää sitä ja en niinku miettinyt et et nyt nyt mä puhun kuin mikäkin savolainen ja tollai (.) mut ööh nyt mä viime aikoina huomasin et se ei enää oo niin et mä en enää poimi yhtä helposti niitä niitä niinku uusia sanoja uusia ilmaisuja ja niinku tämmösii ja et mä olen itse asiassa tietoisesti alkanu niinku olemaan varovainen tai niinku kiinnitän huomiota siihen et niinku minkälaisii sanoja käytän

KR: mhm

ZU: et mä en käytä stadin slangia esimerkiks (.) tai sit niinku muita semmosii niinku vahvasti niinku murresanoja

KR: mhm

ZU: joista niinku tulee oikeasti mieleen koska nykyään jo tietää paremmin et tätä käytetään siellä ja tätä käytetään tuolla ja ja näin niin (.) jotenkin huomasin et mä en niinku halua tavallaan jotenkin leimauttaa niinku itteäni niinku joksikin (.) et jotenki yrittää oikeesti semmosta niinku yleisp- kieltä niinku=

KR: mhm

ZU: =tai puhekieltä puhuu semmosta niinku neutraalia

ZU: [...] myself I use quite a lot of just like general spoken language that has like colloquial words but not terribly any like dialect influences (.) at least I somehow uhm earlier when I had like been in Finland only for a short time and in a way like the language learning was somehow

much more intensive like I would learn all the time like a lot of new things every day and everything would stick like terribly easily

KR: *mh*

ZU *I I like pick up words dialect like words here and there I had quite a large circle of friends back then that was from uh like Northern Finland […]*

[...]

ZU: *[...] it somehow stuck and then people really quite often took me for they thought that I'm like from there like on the basis of how I talked (.) bu-*

KR: *like from there [Northern Finland] for example or*

ZU: *ye-eah from there*

KR: *yes*

ZU: *or then from elsewhere if I happened to use some word that*

KR: *mmh mmh*

ZU: *that I had learnt from some friend and because I didn't like know that this is a dialect word*

KR: *mmh*

ZU: *for me it was a new word just like all the other new words so then I would like easily use it and I wasn't aware that that now now I'm talking as if I were from Savo and so on (.) but uh now I lately I noticed that it's not like that any more that I don't pick up those those like new words new expressions and such as easily any more and that I have actually consciously started to be careful or like pay attention to that like what kinds of words I use*

KR: *mhm*

ZU: *like I don't use Helsinki slang for example (.) or like other such like strongly like dialect words*

KR: *mhm*

ZU: *that like really give the impression because these days I already know better that this is used here and that is used there and and like that (.) somehow I noticed that in a way I like don't want to somehow label myself like as someone (.) that somehow [I] try to really speak this kind of like standard co- language like=*

KR: *mhm*

ZU: *=or to speak this kind of like neutral colloquial language*

Zuzana begins her account by stating that she speaks standard colloquial Finnish, which she perceives as containing colloquialisms that are in widespread use but are not associated with a particular location or dialect. She then explains that her current way of using Finnish is, however, the result of a longer process: at the beginning of her stay in Finland, when "the language learning was somehow much more intensive", she actually learned and used quite a lot of dialect words. Thus, for Zuzana, her use of dialect features belongs to a less advanced stage of her language learning process, when she was still unable to identify whether a new expression was dialect or standard because even a dialect word was "a new word just like all the other new words". She tells me that her use of dialect features then was so convincing that people often thought she was actually from that place. However, Zuzana herself does not seem to think of this as a success, but rather she feels that using features she had simply picked up without being aware of their possible local or social connotations was a symptom of her as yet underdeveloped competence. Thus, for her, truly advanced second language

proficiency seems to entail not only learning and using as many linguistic resources as possible, but also being aware of what they communicate about herself as a speaker and being consistent in their use. She explicitly refers to this more advanced language use when claiming that these days she already knows better: she no longer uses indiscriminately all the new words she picks up, but has become careful and pays attention to what words she wants or does not want to use. This is because she does not want to label herself as anything or anyone in particular and prefers to speak standard (colloquial) language, which she considers to be a neutral variety. When I ask her about why she tries to avoid being labelled, she responds as follows:

Excerpt 44

KR: mistä mistä se johtuu et sä et halua niinku antaa itsellesi sellaista leimaa

ZU: nii mä en oikein tiiä mä oon joskus miettinyt tätä tosi paljon just tätä niinku murrejuttuu (.) et niinku jos mä olen kerran niinku maahanmuuttaja joka on oppinut niinku suomen kielen niinku jostain nii onko mulla niinku oikeutta käyttää niinku jotain murretta jos mä en ole siellä syntynyt tai niinku elänyt merkittävää merkittävän osan niinku elämästä (.) et vai onko se sit semmosta niinku feikkiä tiiätkö

KR: mmh

ZU: jos jos mä vaikka puhun jotain savoo jota en mä oo savolainen=

KR: mmh

ZU: =en mä oo siellä syntyny mun suku ei ole sieltä kotoisin (.) nii

KR: mut sä puhut kuitenkin suomea sä et

ZU: nii

KR: oo myöskään syntynyt täällä

ZU: nii (.) mä en oikein niinku tavallaan päättynyt sit mihinkään koska mä oon joskus ööh joskus tykkäsin tosi paljon niinku etelä-pohjanmaan murteesta ja tavallaan niinku opettelin tai niinku tieto- tietoisesti niinku poimin ja niinku kiinnitin huomiota niihin niinku murteellisiin niinku elementteihin mik- mitkä niinku siinä murteessa on ja välillä käytinkin niitä niinku omassa puheessa mut sit se ei kuitenkaan tuntunu jotenkin niinku oikealta

KR: *mmh*

ZU: et jotenkin jotenkin tuntuu että (.) niinku esittää jotakin mitä ei niinku todelli=

KR: mmh

ZU: =suudessa oo (.) et sen takia mä en haluu niinku stadin slangiakaan tai niitä niitä slangin niinku sanoja käyttää et mä en niinku mä en käy duunissa mulla ei oo niinku broidia=

KR: mheh heh heh

ZU: =mä en käytä fillaria tai niinku tollai et et (.) en tiiä s- jotenkin tuntuu et kuitenkin se yleiskieli on semmonen niinku neutraali

KR: what what is the reason why you don't want to like give yourself this kind of label

ZU: I don't really know I wondered about this a lot at some point exactly this like dialect thing(.) like since I'm like an immigrant who has learnt like Finnish like somewhere do I have like the

right to use like some dialect if I haven't been born there or like lived there for a significant part of like my life (.) or is it somehow fake then you know

KR: *mmh*

ZU: *if if I speak Savo for example which I'm not from Savo=*

KR: *mmh*

ZU: *=I wasn't born there my family's not from there (.) yeah*

KR: *but you do speak Finnish you also*

ZU: *yeah*

KR: *weren't born here*

ZU: *yeah (.) I didn't really reach a conclusion in a way because at some point I uuh at some point I liked the dialect from Southern Ostrobothnia a lot and like learnt or like conscio- consciously like picked up and like paid attention to the like dialect like elements tha- that like exist in that dialect and used them sometimes like in my own speech but then it still somehow didn't feel like right*

KR: **mmh**

ZU: *I somehow somehow feel that (.) that I'm pretending to be something which in like reali=*

KR: *mmh*

ZU: *=ty I'm not (.) that's why I don't want to use like Helsinki slang or those those slang like words like I don't like I don't have a* duuni *[job], I don't have a* broidi *[brother]=*

KR: *mheh heh heh*

ZU: *=I don't use a* fillari *[bike] and things like that (.) I don't know somehow I feel that in the end the standard language is somehow like neutral*

Here, Zuzana admits that she has given this topic a lot of thought. She feels that, since she is a second language speaker of Finnish, she might not have the right to use a Finnish dialect. Her reasoning is that if she spoke, for instance, Savo dialect, it would seem fake because she was not born there, has not spent most of her life there, and does not have her roots in the region. When I point out that she has also become a speaker of (standard) Finnish, even if she was not born in Finland, she admits feeling divided about using dialect: while she used to particularly like the dialect of Southern Ostrobothnia, and tried deliberately to learn and even actively use some features of it, in the end it "still somehow didn't feel like right". Confirming her earlier statement about being afraid to sound fake when speaking dialect, she says that this is because she does not want to pretend she is someone she is not. For the same reason she also avoids using the slang of her current place of residence, the Helsinki region. Crucially, the example she gives ("I don't have a *duuni* [job], I don't have a *broidi* [brother] […] I don't use a *fillari* [bike]") are not simply a list of Helsinki words she does not like to use. Instead, her phrasing ("I don't have", "I don't use") suggests that these words would be a misrepresentation of herself, since she does not want to claim the identity of a true Helsinkian or feel that she has the right to do so.

Reflecting on the commonalities between the two excerpts discussed in this section, it is worth noting that both Julia and Zuzana describe the experience of dialect features sticking with them as learners simply through interaction with other speakers around them. This view ties in well with usage-based perspectives

on language learning, which place emphasis on implicit learning in concrete social and linguistic environments (see Chapter 3.1). However, while Julia sees her current linguistic historical body as a result of this process, Zuzana feels that, with time, she has moved on from this kind of language learning to a more conscious and sociolinguistically informed way of using language. Importantly, both participants also seem to be concerned with being authentic speakers, albeit with different consequences for each of them. In Julia's context (a small town with many dialect speakers in her circle of friends) this means using dialect features in order not to be the odd one out; in Zuzana's context (the Helsinki region) this means avoiding using dialect features from elsewhere (that she herself perceives as fake) and making an effort to use a variety of Finnish that is as neutral as possible, as she sees it. Crucially, both accounts are examples of how participants rationalise the relationship between their linguistic historical bodies and ideological aspects of language. Having become aware of how people elsewhere in Finland perceive her as a user of her town's local dialect, Julia has come to integrate this perspective within her own view of herself. That is, what started out as her simply picking up ways of talking from her environment has led to her actively framing herself as and embracing the identity of a dialect speaker. Zuzana, on the other hand, has used her increased awareness of dialects to eliminate from her speech any expressions with local associations. Her explanation of this is centred around notions of linguistic ownership: she feels that she does not have the right to use a dialect because her roots are not in the region in question, and that it is the ideologically neutral quality of standard colloquial Finnish that to a greater extent allows her to become and to be an authentic speaker of Finnish. Her strong orientation towards dialect-free standard language is thus also directly connected to her (self-perceived) sociolinguistic position as a second language speaker.

Finally, dialectal variation can also afford positionings beyond participants' own language use. Consider, for instance, the following excerpt from the interview with Agnieszka:

Excerpt 45

AG: ja me varmasti molemmatkin naureskellaan jolloin ois vaikkapa ois helsingin tavallaan niik(h)u s(h)uomelle koska se on just niin sellaista erikoista tai se mitä me nyt päästään niinku kuulemaan jossain

KR: joo joo

AG: jossain tv-ohjelmis tai radios

KR: nii just joo heh heh heh heh

AG: niin se on ihan sellaista huh huh mitä toi sanoi no en mä tiiä en=

KR: heh heh heh heh heh

AG: =mäkään (ta- ta- tavallaan) me molemmat sitä ihmetellään

AG: and we will also certainly both laugh when there's for example when there's l(hike) Helsinki F(h)innish because that's just so peculiar or what we will get to hear somewhere

KR: yeah yeah
AG: in a tv programme or on the radio
KR: right yeah heh heh heh heh
AG: so it's really like oh wow what did that person say well I don't know I=
KR: heh heh heh heh heh
AG: =don't [understand] either (in a way) we both marvel at that

In this excerpt, Agnieszka describes how she and her Finnish partner marvel at a person speaking Helsinki Finnish on TV or the radio. Even though Agniszka includes direct speech in her account, this does not seem to describe any particular event, but rather appears as a condensed representation of a typical situation (a vignette, see e.g. Hult 2014). In this typicalised situation, a shift in positioning takes place. At the beginning of her account, Agnieszka constructs Helsinki Finnish as the Other by describing it as "so peculiar", thus implicitly constructing the variety of Finnish that she and her partner use at home as the normal or default. She also frames Helsinki Finnish as something quite remote from their everyday reality, since they only get to hear it 'in a tv programme or on the radio'. This move to create an 'us' by dissociating oneself from a 'them' is, of course, one of the most common strategies of identity construction (cf. Bucholtz & Hall 2005: 598). However, in Agnieska's case, it fulfils a very specific function: the discursive construction of an us (she and her partner as well as, possibly, anyone else who speaks a different variety than Helsinki Finnish) is embedded in an us/them distinction that effectively overrides the native/non-native dichotomy. In other words, the construction of yet another Other (speakers of Helsinki Finnish) enables Agnieszka to position herself within the group of us, together with native speakers (or at least one native speaker, her partner). This is underlined by Agnieszka's emphasising that both of them laugh and marvel at Helsinki Finnish as well as by the dialogue included in her story, which presents both parties as equally clueless ("oh wow what did that person say well I don't know"). Given that at several points in the interview she highlights experiences of being othered as a perpetual foreigner (see Excerpt 10 in Chapter 5.1.4), possibilities for a different kind of positioning, such as the one described here, can be assumed to be significant to her.

Finally, Agnieszka's story is also an example of how positioning oneself as a local cannot only be achieved through speaking like a local but also by displaying non-understanding of a constructed Other. This is somewhat surprising, since receptive language skills are often thought of as second language speakers' most advanced subset of language skills, and the ability to understand a wide range of local and social varieties of a language can be seen as an important part of nativelike competence (cf. Piller 2002). However, in Agnieszka's story it is precisely the display of non-understanding that creates an inclusive positioning by giving her the opportunity to align herself with other locals. This shows that positioning with regard to language is not exclusively achieved in language use but can also emerge from a speaker's relationship to the surrounding language use.

In these sections, I have looked at how my participants position themselves with regard to significant linguistic varieties in the sociolinguistic ecology of Finland. All language users position themselves within a "sociolinguistic matrix" (Jaffe 2009b: 3) through their ways of speaking. As the analysis in this chapter has shown, for second language speakers this can involve particular circumstances and challenges. For instance, as English is widely spoken in Finland, but simultaneously often associated with communication with foreigners, my participants carefully manage situations in which they could be addressed in either Finnish or English (6.2.1). With regard to language forms with social or local connotations, tensions arise between participation through 'speaking like a local' (cf. Pennycook 2012: 89-94) and questions of authenticity and linguistic ownership (6.2.2). In the next section, I explore a particular type of positioning that my participants report on: becoming aware that they are the only second language speaker of Finnish in a particular situation.

6.3 Being 'the only foreigner': positioning beyond language use

In the interview study, being the only foreigner is a topic that was not introduced directly by an interview question but was brought up in the interviews by participants themselves in various contexts. The first example is from the interview with Marie, who tells me about a course she took when studying at the university. Just before this excerpt, she has been talking about situations where she is the only foreign language speaker (*vieraskielinen*), and then she starts her narrative about the course as an example of such a situation. She recalls that there was one Russian-speaking participant but emphasises that, being in different tutorial groups, she had little to do with her. She also stresses that most of the participants were much older than her and many of them had children, leading her to experience her position in the course as that of a twofold outsider: the youngest participant and the only foreign language speaker. The course discussed the Finnish school system and, according to Marie, a large part of the discussion revolved around the participants' own experiences of the system or the experiences they have had as parents of school-aged children. She then goes on to describe her feelings and reaction to this situation:

Excerpt 46

MA: [...] ja siis no mä en oo käyny nii(h) heh suomen koulus- tai siis kouluu suomessa että suomen koulussa ääh kouluu suomessa et heh vielä paitsi et mä tiedän suurin piirtein mitä siel tapahtuu mut mä en yhtään nii en yhtään tai siis (.) okei mä tiedän että on ala yläaste lukio et sit kirjoitetaan ylioppilaskirjoitukset näin ja noin ehkä valitaan joijoitakin niinku pitkät ööh ja lyhyet öh niinku aineet ja whatever mutta ei oo mitään kokemusta en=

KR: mmh

MA: =mä tiiä miten siel- mitä siel tapahtuu ja sit ku ja sit ku ei sit en tiedä miten nii koulut valitaan ja miten siis kaikki mitä niinku vanhemmat jout- miettimään nii lasten ääh

takia ja myös niinku itse ööh oppilaana tietysti jos niinku valitsee lukio mihin mennä ja näin niin hheh ääh siis puhuttiin niinku suomal- suom- suomalaisen koulun ongelmasta ja ongelmista myös nii et ( ) mä istuin siellä mitä mitä mä teen mun täytyy vaan päästä tän

KR: mheh mheh mheh (.) heh heh heh heh

MA: kurssin läpi oikeesti heh (täytyy) istuu ja mä muistan kertoneeni nii sille opettajalle et anteeks et mä en niinku mit(h)enk(h)ää ostallistu mut mä en pysty heh siis mulla ei oo mitään kerrottav(h)aa heh heh heh se oli yks asia sit tietysti myös niinku se kieli [...]

MA: [...] and so well I have not attended heh a Finnish schoo- I mean school in Finland like in a Finnish school uuh school in Finland heh yet except that I know more or less what happens there but I don't [know] at all like not at all or well (.) okay I know that there's primary secondary school high school and then there are the matriculation examinations this and that maybe you choose so- some like long uuh or short uh like curricula and whatever but I don't have any experience I=

KR: mmh

MA: =don't know how- what happens there and then because and then because I don't I don't know how you choose the school and how like everything that like parents have to think about because uuh of the children and also like uuh as a student of course if you choose like a high school to attend and so on hheh uuh so we [they] were talking about like the problem and the problems of Finni- Fin Finnish school also in that way so ( ) I sat there what what am I doing I just have to pass this

KR: mheh mheh mheh (.) heh heh heh heh

MA: course for real heh (I have to) sit and I remember telling the teacher that sorry that I'm not participating like at(h) all(h) but I can't heh like I don't have anything to s(h)ay heh heh heh that was one thing and then of course like the language [...]

In this excerpt, Maries invokes her historical body when talking about her experience, or rather, lack of experience, with the Finnish school system: unlike the other participants in her course, she has neither attended a Finnish school herself nor has she children who attend a Finnish school. She emphasises that she does know the basic facts about the Finnish school system ("I know what there's primary secondary school high school") but contrasts this kind of explicit knowledge with the immediate and embodied knowledge of someone with first-hand experience ("but I don't have any experience I [...] don't know how- what happens there"). In terms of the interaction order, Marie implies that classroom discussion is an important part of the interaction order of the course. In the context of the class, her knowledge about Finnish schools (as well as her proficiency in Finnish) is enough to enable her to follow the conversation, but she feels that she herself has nothing to contribute. Her approaching the teacher about this can be seen as an attempt to make the teacher aware, or remind them, of her background, which in turn serves as a legitimate explanation for why she is not actively participating in the classroom discussion.

In the course of her narrative, Marie strongly forwards the view that choosing to attend this particular course was, however, her own decision and that she therefore has no reason to complain:

Excerpt 47

MA: [...] et ehkä sillo ku on valinnu niinku olla tai siis yksin siinä tai siis et se on=
KR: mmh
MA: =niinku oma valinta että nyt mä oon siellä [oppilaitoksella] tai sitten mä kävin niinku ne [opinnot] eikä sitä [ohjelmaa] mitä on niinku vieraskielille tai jotain nii sit sillo ku se on oma valinta nii sit on vaan hyväksyttävää se että ei oo aina niinku mukava tilanne tai
KR: mmh
MA: äähm ((clicks tongue)) (.) ja sillon se ehkä muuttu vähän niinku epämukavaks n- niinku et et (.) se vieraskielisyys niinku tarkoitan ( )
[...]
MA: [...] mut joo tavallaan et siis sillon kun ei oo muita ääh vieraskielis- tai ulkomaalaistaustaisii ja näin
KR: mmh
MA: ei voi vaatia mitään koska (.) eikä haluu
KR: mmh
MA: tietenkään (.) haluais ehkä pikemmin kieltä itse niinku kehittyy nopeemmin paremmin koska dz::: että pystyis niinku hyvin tekee ja osallistumaan ja näin mutta äähm mm- mut ku se on oma valinta kuten mä sanoin niin että ettei (.) kolkyt ihmistä oikeasti voi m- niinku (.) ei tietenkään nyt vaihtaa kieltä en mä sitä ois niinku tarvinnu mutta ei sitä koko kurssia voi muuttaa sen takia että siinä on se yks pikku niinku ranskalainen s- sitä mä ehkä lähinnä nyt tarkoitan [...]

MA: [...] so maybe when you've chosen like to be or like you alone or it's like=
KR: mmh
MA: =your own choice that now I am here [at the department] or then I did like these [studies] and not the [programme] that is [aimed at] like foreign language speakers or something then when it's your own choice then you just have to accept that it's not always going to be like a pleasant situation or
KR: mmh
MA: uuhm ((clicks tongue)) (.) and then it can get a bit unpleasant l- like (.) as a foreign language speaker I mean ( )
[...]
MA: […] but yeah in a way so when there are no other uuh foreign languag- or people with a foreign background and so on
KR: mmh
MA: you can't demand anything because (.) and you don't want to
KR: mmh
MA: of course (.) you would maybe rather like to develop the language itself faster better because dz::: so you could like do things well and participate and so on but uuhm but if it's your own choice like I said like (.) thirty people can't really like (.) of course not change the language that's not what I would have needed but they can't change the whole course because there's this one tiny French person th- that's maybe mostly what I mean [...]

In this excerpt, Marie explains that because she chose to participate in courses in the regular programme rather than in the programme geared towards foreign students, she just has to accept that she will sometimes be in the uncomfortable position of being the only foreigner. She also feels that, having chosen this position herself, she does not have the right to make demands. This imbalance of power is also reflected in the way in which she contrasts the "thirty people" and

the "whole course" against "this one tiny French person". In the excerpt, first person singular forms are rare: Marie only uses them when describing her current situation ("now I am here [at the department] or then I did like these [studies]") and when commenting on her narrative ("like I said", "that's maybe mostly what I mean"). Instead, impersonal constructions prevail (e.g. "your own choice", "you just have to accept", "you can't demand anything", "you could like do things well"). Although such constructions (*oma valinta, on vaan hyväksyttävää, ei voi vaatia mitään, pystyis niinku hyvin tekee*) are ambiguous in Finnish, referring either to the speaker themselves or to people in general; see ISK §1363), in this narrative, they create a contrast to Marie's earlier account of what happened on the university course (Excerpt 46). This suggests that Marie has moved on from recounting her personal experience to making a more general statement about being the only foreigner in class, and at the end even taking an outside perspective on herself as the one French person in class.

In both of these excerpts, Marie also mentions language. In Excerpt 46, she briefly refers to language as an additional source of unease in the situation of being the only foreigner ("that was one thing and then of course like the language"), connecting being an outsider in terms of her experience (or inexperience) to being an outsider also in terms of linguistic competence. She returns to this in Excerpt 47 when asserting that as the only foreign language speaker one cannot make demands; rather, such situations make her wish that her Finnish skills would improve more quickly so that she could do things well and participate fully. From the perspective of language learning on a very advanced level, Marie's story is thus ambiguous. On the one hand, in her case, frequently being the only non-native speaker appears as a source of motivation for further learning, since such situations serve as a reminder of the kind of linguistic competence she would like to have. On the other hand, Marie's account shows that such situations are also accompanied by feelings of inferiority and exclusion, ultimately making her participate less than she would like to. It is also important to note that she clarifies that the choice of language was not the issue: switching the language of the course (presumably to English) was not what she needed. Although Marie does not in the end specify what it was that she would have needed instead, her story suggests that she could have felt a greater sense of inclusion if either the topic of the class had been closer to her experience or she had had better linguistic resources for participation.

A similar experience is described by Julia. Julia is one of the participants who is taking part in a Finnish-language study programme. In the interview, she tells me what difficulties she encounters in her studies:

Excerpt 48

JL: ich glaub die Lehrer vergessens am allermeisten oder die kann ich auch nich die ganze Zeit dran erinnern dass ich sozusagen langsamer bin und dass es mir schw- bisschen schwieriger fällt und irgendwann hatt ich auch mal probiert sozusagen für mich das so zu organisieren dass ich weniger Kurse belege und halt langsamer das mache aber dann halt ordentlich und das war dann auch nich möglich (.) und ich glaub dass sie

das einfach dass meine Lehrer es einfach nich mitbekommen dass ich aus aus m Ausland bin weil ich halt relativ ich glaub ich bin schon sehr gut integriert dass mans halt nich unbedingt merkt wenn ich nich die ganze Zeit drauf hinweisen würde

KR: mmh (.) also es is genauso wie du davor au- also sie wissens=

JL: ja

KR: =aber sie vergessens irgendwie in praktisch

JL: ja genau

KR: okay

JL: ja und im Endeffekt behandeln sie mich halt genau wie alle andern Finnen auch was in dem Sinne in Ordnung is aber halt in der Schule is es sehr anstrengend für mich und in de- also (.) also manchmal denk ich dass es dass es so n bisschen mehr als (.) wenn dass ich aus Ausland aus m Ausland bin behindert mich in dem Sinne genauso viel wie wenn ich zum Beispiel schwerhörig wäre (.) ich brauch einfach n bisschen mehr Unterstützung meiner Meinung nach [...]

JL: I think the teachers forget it most or with them I can also not remind them all the time that I'm slower so to speak and that everything's a bit more dif- difficult for me and at some point I had also tried to organise things for myself so that I would take fewer courses and do [them] more slowly but properly instead and that wasn't possible either (.) and I think they just that my teachers just don't notice that I'm from abroad because I'm relatively I think I actually am very well integrated so that one wouldn't necessarily notice if I didn't point it out all the time

KR: mmh (.) so it's just like you [said] earlier to- so they know=

JL: yeah

KR: =but in practice they somehow forget it

JL: yeah exactly

KR: okay

JL: yeah and in the end they treat me just like all the other Finns too which is okay in a sense but at school it is really hard for me and in th- I mean (.) I mean sometimes I think that it that it a bit more than (.) when I that I'm from abroad from abroad impairs me in that sense just as much as if I were hard of hearing for example (.) I just need a little more support in my opinion […]

In this excerpt, Julia tells me that one challenge in her studies is that there is a lack of support and accommodation to her situation as a second language speaker of Finnish. She feels that once her teachers realised her language skills were actually quite advanced, they virtually forgot about her language background and treated her just like the Finnish students. This, in turn, makes studying "very exhausting". In her account, Julia refers to her historical body by explaining that being from abroad makes studying more difficult for her in the same way as it would for people hard of hearing. The view of herself that she invokes suggests that her linguistic background turns into a disadvantage only because of a lack of supporting structures: her Finnish skills are good enough for the purpose of her studies, but she does need more support than the Finnish students. She also contrasts her own efforts to seek practical solutions, e.g. drawing up a less demanding course schedule for herself, with the inflexibility of the formal requirements at her school.

In the excerpt, Julia describes herself as being "very well integrated". While we can assume that this is a generally positive statement about the legitimate status she has achieved in the Finnish-speaking community, in the context of her narrative it also points to a certain degree of invisibility in the classroom: her need

for support is frequently overlooked because teachers are unaware of her background. Julia mentions that the teachers treat her "just like all the other Finns too". Given that, elsewhere in the interview, Julia clearly indicates that she does not see herself as a Finn, it is initially surprising that she refers to the other students in class as "the other Finns". However, we can also see this as Julia voicing the supposed perspective of the teachers, who view their students (including Julia) as a linguistically homogeneous group and, thus, as underlining the experience of being invisible. Her comment that she cannot remind her teachers of her linguistic background all the time can be seen as linking back to the interaction order of the classroom analysed in Section 6.1.4: for Julia to behave in legitimate ways in class can sometimes include staying silent and not always drawing attention to her needs.

Later in the interview, Julia elaborates on the kind of support she would or would not need:

Excerpt 49

JL: beziehungsweise es is so dass ich n bisschen mehr also ich brauch nich dass sozusagen zum Beispiel ganz am Anfang als ich angefangen hab zu studieren gabs eine Lehrerin die sozusagen mich noch nich mal aussprechen lassen hat also wenn ich meine Hand gehoben hab kam sie zu mir und ich musste ihr sozusagen meine Frage sagen damit sie dann sozusagen die Frage meiner Klasse stellen kann für mich (.) also sie hat mich sozusagen nich selbst meine Fragen stellen lassen

KR: obwohl du die frage auf Finnisch:

JL: auf Finnish hä- ja

KR: gestellt hast

JL: komplett hätte stellen können (.) äh insofern hat sie in dem Moment mich um einiges zu viel unterstützt aber das ging dann sozusagen als sie dann gemerkt haben die Lehrer okay die kann Finnisch die kann auch auf Finnisch sprechen kann auf Finnisch schreiben und kommt auch so gut auf Finnisch klar da ham sies dann komplett (.) vergessen dass ich deutsch aus Deutschland bin und das is dann schon schwierig und manchmal wenn ich dann einfach denk okay jetzt muss ich einfach fragen ob ich äh ob ich sozusagen ne Arbeit zum Beispiel auch mündlich ablegen kann weil ich einfach mit dem Schreiben in ner gewissen Art in in ner gewissen Zeit nich schaffe wenn sie zum Beispiel sagen okay da hab ich jetzt ne Stunde Zeit und das sind unglaublich viele Fragen oder irgendwas wars ich weiß gar nich mehr was es war (.) ach genau da hatten wir ei- äh ne ne Prüfung äh am ich glaub am Montag war die Prüfung wir hatten das Material am Freitag bekommen und das war riesengroßer Batzen und da musst ich einfach der Lehrerin sagen das schaff ich im Leben nich also selbst wenn ich von morgens bis abends dasitze und probier das auswendig zu lernen das wird im Leben nüscht und dann hat se so ah stimmt ja du (.) Deutschland hab ich aber trotzdem keine e- Besonderhan- also es war dann so na probier einfach (.) okay dann probier ich einfach saß ich dann das ganze Wochenende da und durfte lernen (.) also (.) das is schon schwierig das Studieren auf Finnisch aber ich glaub das hä- hängt auch so dermaßen von Lehrern ab also was für Lehrer man bekommt und (.) und auch wie wie sehr ne Uni an an Ausländer gewöhnt is grad auch an Ausländer die Finnisch sprechen es gibt ja ganz viele Ausländer die auf Englisch studieren und das is dann das is dann das wissen sie dann dass sozusagen die brauchen Unterst- dass die Unterstützung brauchen aber ich glaub grade in [Julias Wohnort] gibts gar nich so viel Ausländer und auch ganz ganz wenig Ausländer die tatsächlich Finnisch können (.)

> und dann noch auf Finnisch studieren ich glaub [Studentin x] und ich sind (.) im Moment die einzigen hab ich das Gefühl und (.) und ja wir mussten einfach beide dann sozusagen akzeptieren dass wir immer schlechte Noten bekommen werden und immer sozusagen die langsamsten sind [...] aber ich glaub da is einfach in Finnland noch die Sache dass es einfach no nich so viele Ausländer gibt (.) dass man einfach noch nich weiß wie man die unterstützen kann oder sollte

> JL: *or rather it's like I [need] a bit more well I don't need that for example at the very beginning when I started studying there was one teacher who didn't even let me talk so when I raised my hand she came to me and I had to ask her my question so that she could ask my class the question for me so to speak (.) I mean she didn't even let me ask my questions myself*
> KR: *even if you asked the question*
> JL: *cou- in Finnish yeah*
> KR: *in Finnish*
> JL: *could have asked it entirely [in Finnish] (.) uh in that sense in that moment she gave me considerably too much support but that was when they realised the teachers okay she knows Finnish she can also speak in Finnish can write in Finnish and is coping well otherwise in Finnish too then they completely (.) forgot that I'm German from Germany and that can be difficult and sometimes when I think okay I just have to ask whether I uh whether I can for example do an exam orally because I just can't get the writing done in a certain way in a certain time when for example they say that okay I have an hour now and there are incredibly many questions or there was something I don't even remember what it was any more (.) oh right we had a- uh an an exam uh I think on Monday was the exam we had got the materials on Friday and it was a huge amount and I just had to tell the teacher I won't for the life of me get that done not even if I sit at home from morning to evening trying to learn everything by heart it's never going to happen and then she was like oh right you (.) Germany but I didn't get special treatm- anyway so it was like just try (.) okay then I'll just try and then I sat at home the whole weekend and had to study (.) so (.) yeah it's difficult studying in Finnish but I think it also de- depends a lot on the teachers like what teachers you get and (.) and also how how much a university is used to foreigners especially to foreigners who speak Finnish there are of course a lot of foreigners who study in English and that is that is that they know that they need supp- that they need support but I believe that especially in [city] there aren't even that many foreigners and also very few foreigners who actually speak Finnish (.) and then also study in Finnish I think that [student x] and I are (.) the only ones at the moment I feel and (.) and yeah we both just had to accept that we are always going to get bad grades and will always be the slowest ones but at the end of the day it's luckily in Finland the grades are not so important but more that you have the degree then (.) I hope (.) let's see heh heh (.) but I think it's just like that in Finland that there are just not so many foreigners (.) that people just don't know yet how you can or should support them*

In the first part of this excerpt, Julia contrasts two levels of support given to her in her studies. She first recounts a situation from the beginning of her studies, when one teacher would not let her ask questions publicly, but would take the question from her one-to-one before passing Julia's question on to the class. Given that, at the time of the event, Julia was enrolled in the regular Finnish-medium study programme and, according to what she herself says, was fully able to ask questions in Finnish, she feels that this was "considerably too much support". On the other hand, Julia feels that once her teachers realised that she was coping well in Finnish, they stopped giving her any extra support at all. She mentions written exams with a narrow time frame and having to read large amounts of material in Finnish in a short time as examples of requirements she

struggles with. Her difficulties are in line with the picture of Julia's linguistic historical body that emerges elsewhere in the interview: while Julia has attended and completed Finnish language courses, she has learnt most of her Finnish at her hands-on job as well as in informal situations with friends. Thus, writing and reading formal Finnish in an academic context is something she has not had the chance to practise very thoroughly.

In the second part of the excerpt, Julia then explains her situation by pointing to the fact that while there are a lot of foreign students who study in English, she and one other student are the only foreigners enrolled in a Finnish-medium programme. She implies that how she is treated in class is essentially a question of the teachers' exposure to and experience with students who speak Finnish as a second language, thus also invoking the teachers' historical bodies in her account. Like Marie in her narrative about her university class, Julia emphasises her unique position in the study programme and, just like Marie, she also expresses the view that this is simply how things are: getting worse grades and being slower than the other students is something she "just had to accept". However, unlike Marie, who stresses the individual responsibiliy that comes with consciously choosing to take part in a Finnish-medium programme, Julia refers to the small number of Finnish-speaking foreigners in her town and her university's lack of experience with such students. With her assertion that people "just don't know yet" how to support these speakers, she also implies that the situation might change at some point.

In her account, Julia thus invokes larger institutional (English- and Finnish-medium programmes) and societal structures (the social and linguistic makeup of her town's population). At the same time, these structures point to a nexus of practice in which discourses, interaction orders and speakers with their historical bodies intersect. For instance, an identity linked to and expected within the nexus of practice of the Finnish language study programme is that of a native speaker of Finnish, while foreigners typically take part in the English-medium programme. As a consequence, teaching practices within the Finnish-medium programme are geared towards native speakers and not towards Finnish speakers of different backgrounds. This also sheds light on Julia's experience of her teachers apparently forgetting that she is not a first language speaker of Finnish. Rather than only being about individuals actually forgetting about her background, her experience can also be understood as a kind of institutional forgetting of speakers like her: by bringing together discourses (e.g. curricula) and teachers' historical bodies (e.g. teaching practices and attitudes) shaped by assumptions of a linguistically homogeneous classroom, students like Julia and their needs can be overlooked. Given that these discourse cycles only change slowly, Julia's margin for action lies within the interaction order. Thus, her best option for improving her chances of success in her studies is reminding the teachers that she is from Germany, although she feels that there are limits to this as well.

Finally, the following excerpt from the interview with Zuzana shows how a Finnish-medium context can also afford a different kind of positioning for

second language speakers of Finnish than that of the only foreigner. Zuzana had been an exchange student in Finland and, after finishing her studies in her home country, moved to Finland permanently. She has held different jobs over the time she has been here, but in her current job she finds herself in the most diverse work environment yet. This is how she describes the work community in the interview:

Excerpt 50

ZU: ja se on siinä on niinku toinen jännä juttu ööh se on niinku ensimmäinen tavallaan paikka tai (.) olosuhteet tai niinku miks sitä sanois jolloin mä en koe olevani outo täällä suomessa tai oikeastaan muutenk(h)in
KR: heh heh heh
ZU: mäh(h)än ol(h)en vähän outo heh
KR: o(h)kei
ZU: mut siis joo mut siis tarkoitan sitä et mä oon niinku aina ollu se ulkomaalainen sä varmaan tiedät varmaan sullakin on niinku ollut samanlaista
KR: siis sun kaveripiirissa vai ihan
ZU: niin tai muutenkin
KR: okei
ZU: niinku töissä
KR: mmh
ZU: tai niinku vaihdossa tai jossakin koska mä tosiaan niinku osasin suomee niin mä kävin kursseja suomalaisten kanssa mut sit mä olin kuitenkin se ulkomaalainen
KR: mmh mmh
ZU: tai sit kaveripiirissä mä olin se niinku maahanmuuttaja tai niinku se tsekkityttö
KR: mmh mmh
ZU: tai niinku tolleen niin töissäkin kun olin postissa niin okei siellä oli yks egyptilainen poika joka ei osannut suomee tai osas niinku todella todella huonosti et se niinku kommunikoi englanniks mut sit hän ja hänen lisäksi minä se ulkomaalainen se=
KR: joo
ZU: =maahanmuuttaja se niinku outo tyyppi tavallaan
KR: mmh
ZU: niin tää nykyinen työpaikka on ensimmäistä kertaa ikinä semmonen jossa ei tuu tämmöstä koska (.) okei mulla ei oo mitään tilasto- niinku tietoa tästä mut mulla on mä vähän epäilen et siellä on melkein niinku oikeesti puolet ja puolet eli puolet on ihan niinku suomalaisia ja toiset puolet on jollaki tavalla osittain tai kokonaan joko maahanmuuttajia tai ka- kaksoiskansalaisia tai merkittävän osan elämästään ulkomailla asuneet jollakin tavalla niinku vähän niinku ulkomaalaisia
KR: mmh
ZU: et meitä on oikeesti tosi monta

ZU: and that is there is like the other interesting thing uuh that is like the first place or (.) circumstances or like how should I say where I don't feel I'm strange here in Finland or really otherw(h)ise too
KR: heh heh heh
ZU: I actuall(h)y (h)am a bit strange heh
KR: o(h)kay
ZU: but okay but what I mean is that I have like always been the foreigner you probably know you've probably [experienced] the same
KR: like in your circle of friends or just

ZU: yeah or otherwise too
KR: okay
ZU: like at work
KR: mmh
ZU: or like on my exchange or somewhere because I did know Finnish I attended courses together with the Finnish [students] but then I was always the foreigner
KR: mmh mmh
ZU: or then in my circle of friends I was <u>the</u> like immigrant or like <u>the</u> Czech girl
KR: mmh mmh
ZU: or like that also at work when I was working for [another employer] well okay there was one Egyptian guy who didn't know Finnish or knew it like really really poorly so he communicated in English but him and apart from him me <u>the</u> foreigner <u>the</u>=
KR: yeah
ZU: =immigrant <u>the</u> like strange person in a way
KR: mmh
ZU: so my current workplace for the first time ever is one where I don't get anything like that because (.) okay I don't have any statistic- like information on that but I have I suspect that there are almost like really half and half so half are like just Finns and the other half are somehow partially or entirely either immigrants or du- dual citizens or have spent a significant part of their lives abroad somehow like a bit like foreigners
KR: mmh
ZU: so there's really a lot of us

Zuzana contrasts her current work community with three contexts in which she has always felt different or exceptional: during her study exchange when, because of her language skills, she attended the same courses as the Finnish students; in her circle of friends which, as she tells me earlier in the interview, is predominantly Finnish; and in her previous job, where she and one co-worker were the only employees who were not Finnish. The feeling of being singled out and the repetitiveness of this experience across situations is reflected on the narrative level in the stressed pronoun *se* ('the', 'that') as well as repetition ("<u>the</u> like immigrant or like <u>the</u> Czech girl"; <u>the</u> foreigner <u>the</u> […] immigrant <u>the</u> like strange person in a way"). In her account, Zuzana uses labels such as immigrant, foreigner or Czech girl interchangeably, indicating that simply being different matters more than the exact way in which others perceive her. By equating being labelled as the foreigner with being labelled as 'that strange person' (cf. Norton 2013: 167), she also gives a rather negative evaluation to being perceived as different, in spite of her lighthearted joke about actually being "a bit strange" at the beginning of the excerpt. Importantly, Zuzana's third person description of herself as that strongly invokes others' perspectives on her.

She describes her current job, on the other hand, as the first context in Finland in which she does not feel an oddity. In the exchange preceding the excerpt, she explains that everybody who works in her position needs to be fluent in Finnish, and that the result of this is a work community where Finnish is used almost without exception among colleagues. Even if working in shifts means working with a lot of different people, and English is very present in the communication with customers, she stresses that she has never felt that it would be easier to use English with any of her colleagues. In the excerpt above, on the other hand, Zuzana explains that the percentage of employees with a foreign background is very

high. As she perceives it, half of her co-workers are "just Finns", while the other half have some sort of foreign backgrond: they are either "partially or entirely either immigrants or dual citizens" or they have "spent a siginificant part of their life abroad" and are therefore "a bit like foreigners". She thus implies that her no longer feeling like a strange person is enabled by the sociolinguistic structure of her workplace, a Finnish-speaking work community where people with a foreign background are strongly represented.

Zuzana's account suggests that at her current workplace she can identify in a positive way with being a foreigner because, rather than being an exception, she now finds that a significant number of the employees have a foreign background. This positive identification is underlined by her shifting from a third person description of herself as "the foreigner" to referring to herself and everyone with some sort of foreign background or experience of living abroad in the first person plural ("there's really a lot of us"). By contrasting those employees who are Finns with those with various foreign backgrounds, her account also implicitly invokes ideologies of what a normal or average Finnish person is like (i.e., someone who has been born in Finland to Finnish parents, has only Finnish citizenship, has lived mostly in Finland, etc.). With regard to language, the work community she describes is, as she strongly emphasises earlier in the interview, a Finnish-speaking community, but one that is not made up primarily of monolingual native speakers.

The accounts discussed in this section show that my participants' positionings are not only constructed in concrete interactions, but also emerge from their relationship with different nexus of practice. For once, their linguistic historical bodies as highly proficient speakers of Finnish allow them to participate in these nexus in the first place, e.g. to study in Finnish-medium programmes at university or to work in a job where a good knowledge of Finnish is required. However, these nexus have trajectories of their own. For instance, Finnish-medium study programmes such as the one described by Julia primarily serve first language speakers of Finnish, while the majority of students in English-medium programmes are foreigners (see Garam 2015: 7). Consequently, the teachers' historical bodies do not yet incorporate practices that could support advanced second language speakers in their Finnish subject studies. At Zuzana's current workplace, on the other hand, the large numbers of bilinguals and second language speakers of Finnish seem to have led to a workplace culture in which Finnish speakers of all backgrounds are 'expected' speakers (cf. Pennycook 2012: 100). Being the only foreigner can also be understood as not being literally correct, since all the participants mention at least one other foreigner (Marie the Russian participant, Julia one other foreign student, and Zuzana her Egyptian co-worker). Instead, in the light of the analysis, being the only foreigner has to be seen as a subjective experience of difference in contexts normatively centred on the needs and abilities of native speakers.

6.4 Discussion

In this chapter, I have looked at how my participants report on experiences involving different positionings. In Section 6.1, I showed that positionings as learners or deficient speakers as opposed to proficient or legitimate speakers are often connected to how language use is or is not highlighted or commented on in the interaction. Drawing attention to gaps in their repertoire is commonly used as a hedging strategy by the participants themselves, while interlocutors need to be sensitive to positioning effects when commenting on my participants' language use. In Section 6.2, I turned to the question of what positionings my participants assume with their use of different linguistic resources in the context of the sociolinguistic ecology of Finland. I showed that English as well as colloquial and regional varieties of Finnish all come with their own sets of ideological associations, and that my participants carefully manage their use of these varieties against the backdrop of notions of belonging, authenticity and linguistic ownership. Finally, in Section 6.3, I discussed how positionings also emerge at the intersection of individuals' trajectories and historical and institutional structures. Because of their advanced proficiency in Finnish, my participants often find themselves in contexts where everyone else is a native speaker, making experiences of being different or exceptional more likely.

The overarching theme emerging from the analysis can be summarised as the tensions involved in attempts to gain linguistic and social legitimacy. A concern with gaining or maintaining a legitimate positioning runs through all the accounts discussed in this chapter. However, these attempts are often in conflict with other goals or are complicated by ideological constraints. For instance, as shown above, opportunities for explicit language learning need to be continually balanced with legitimate participation as already proficient speakers. Especially in situations where other identities (e.g. an equal interlocutor, a motivated student, a capable professional) are important, my participants may avoid admitting to gaps in their competence in order to maintain a legitimate positioning. Another tension concerns the kind of linguistic repertoire my participants experience as useful. They see the ability to use certain varieties of Finnish appropriately (e.g. formal written as well as standard colloquial varieties) as a vital part of advanced competence and of belonging to a community of speakers. At the same time, they also consciously avoid certain linguistic forms or varieties when they feel that they do not have the right to use them or that their use is inauthentic for second language speakers. Finally, tensions can also arise in environments in which native speakers appear as the default setting and second language speakers as unexpected participants.

These insights suggest that learning and using a second language 'in the wild' (e.g. Wagner 2015) is a highly complex process that is interactionally situated as well as embedded in a broader sociolinguistic context. Contexts of formal language teaching generally encourage students to position themselves as learners, offer a simplified picture of sociolinguistic variation in the target language

(see e.g. Matsumoto & Okamoto 2003) and provide a practice environment in which all the participants except the teacher have a comparable level of knowledge. As my participants' accounts show, all of these dimensions pose significant challenges outside the classroom and require careful navigating and negotiating. This also highlights the importance of practices that ensure legitimate positionings in second language learning and use in the real world.

7 FINDING ONE'S PLACE AS AN ADVANCED SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKER OF FINNISH

In this last empirical chapter, I take a closer look at some of the topics that emerged from my analysis of the interview data in the previous two chapters. I do this by focusing on four participants: Sandra, Judit, Veronika and Julia. It is with these four participants that I collected additional data, consisting of informal interviews as well as ethnographic observations and recordings in everyday contexts (an overview is provided in Chapter 4.2.2; see also Appendix 2). Through the collection of these data I was able to learn more about the contexts in which the focus participants lived their everyday lives and be present in situations other than research interviews. Importantly, I was also able to follow up on my focus participants until about a year and a half after the first interview. Indeed, many things had changed for them during that time. This chapter is qualitatively different from the previous two chapters. While Chapters 5 and 6 focused on the analysis of all the topics that emerged from the first-round interviews, this chapter takes a more selective approach: the aim is to show that the topics and phenomena identified through the analysis of the interviews are also present in everyday situations, in which language as such may not always be foregrounded.

Hult (2010: 9) suggests that 'zooming in' on and 'zooming out' of different contexts is a useful way of approaching varied data holistically while also being selective about the analytical focus. The aim of zooming in in this chapter is to show how positionings are achieved in specific interactions and contexts. In the first part of the chapter (7.1), I therefore take a closer look at data collected from two of my German participants, Sandra and Julia. I chose these data for more detailed examination not because of the participants' shared background, but rather because of the quantity and quality of the data I was able to collect from them. However, the data also offer interesting examples of the co-construction of positionings between participants and researcher: being a second language speaker of Finnish with a German background myself, I was often somehow involved in constructing Germanness (and, by implication, Finnishness) in these

interactions. I first analyse a conversation between Sandra and her friends, focusing on how difference and sameness are invoked as resources for positioning (7.1.1), and then analyse data collected at Julia's workplace, focusing on the construction of professional identity and, again, the role that Germanness plays in it (7.1.2). Zooming out, in turn, makes it possible to explore topics across sets of data. In the second part of the chapter (7.2), I thus take a broader perspective on identity construction by analysing data from across contexts and from all four focus participants, i.e. Sandra, Julia, Veronika and Judit. By zooming out of individual interactions I return the focus to the relationship between processes of identity building, possibilities for participation and belonging, and the broader social and language ideological contexts. I focus on such processes from two perspectives: the salience of language (7.2.1) and the salience of identities (7.2.2) in different everyday settings.

7.1 Zooming in: positionings in interaction

7.1.1 'I always eat my porridge with a small spoon': sameness and difference as resources for positioning

The data analysed in this section is from a book club my participant Sandra and her friends organise on a regular basis. I was able to attend two meetings of the bookclub: one in spring 2016 and the other in autumn 2016. Since the second meeting took place in a public setting, only the first meeting was voice recorded. The data analysed in this chapter are therefore mostly from the first meeting, although my observations from the second meeting provided me with more background knowledge about the group. Although Sandra and her friends share a keen interest in literature, Sandra had already told me in our first interview that the book club meetings are very informal and mostly serve as an opportunity for the friends to meet up:

Excerpt 51

SA: und ähm ich muss gleich dazusag(h)en dass wir
KR: mhm
SA: wir sind alles so wir ham alle Kinder und wir sind irgendwie so wir wir sprechen so ungefähr zehn Minuten normalerweise über das Buch
KR: ja
SA: oder manchmal auch fünfzehn und dann reden wir alles mögliche andere heh heh
KR: mhm
SA: weil wir uns halt auch alle sehr gut kennen […]

SA: and uhm I should immediately add(h) that we
KR: mhm
SA: we all are like we all have children and we are somehow like we we usually talk about the book for some ten minutes

KR: yeah
SA: or sometimes fifteen and then we talk about all other possible things heh heh
KR: mhm
SA: because we all just know each other very well […]

Sandra's description is true of the meeting I attend, as well: even though the conversation returns to the book the friends read for the meeting or books in general several times, they mostly discuss other topics, ranging from elderly relatives to politics to Mari Kondo's cleaning philosophy. In the short interview excerpt above, Sandra explains this by the friends knowing each other very well and sharing a similar life situation, i.e. being parents. Indeed, as I get to know later, all the members are highly educated women in their thirties and forties with children. Sandra's position as the only non-native speaker in the group is usually not very prominent. This is illustrated by the following field note from the second meeting of the book club:

Excerpt 52

*At the meeting there is one member of the book club I haven't met before. I introduce myself and tell her briefly about the topic of my research. When I mention that I study 'adult speakers of Finnish as a second language' (*suomea toisena kielenä puhuvat aikuiset*) who speak Finnish at an 'advanced level' (*edistyneellä tasolla*), everybody starts joking about Sandra and her leve' (in the sense that she's already managing 'okay' in Finnish). Sandra herself joins in and adds that she can already count to six in Finnish (*yy kaa koo nee vii kuu *'one two three four five six'). Everybody laughs.*

This note about a brief interaction at the beginning of the meeting shows that none of the friends are used to thinking of Sandra as a second language speaker of Finnish. Sandra's proficiency in Finnish seems to be such a given for the friends that they feel comfortable ironically teasing her about her 'okay' language skills. Sandra jokingly aligns herself with this positioning, stylising the kind of basic language skills beginning learners of Finnish have (cf. Lehtonen 2015) and that, as a teacher of Finnish to immigrants, she is very familiar with. Thus, while Sandra is usually not positioned as a non-native or somehow deficient speaker in the group, a closer analysis of the first meeting of the book club shows that her positionings still vary in subtle but significant ways.

The meeting discussed in this section took place on a weekend morning at the home of one of the members. I met Sandra at the metro station and we walked to her friend's place together. In addition to Sandra and me, four other women attended the meeting. The hostess had prepared breakfast and the other guests had brought along other things to eat. Before the meeting, I had wondered what my role as a researcher in this informal setting would be, but it soon turned out that the conversation between the friends was so lively that I was not expected to participate at all. Most of the time, I was thus simply following the conversation, and I often felt that the friends had even forgotten that I was there.

During the two-hour conversation, Sandra could be found to position herself and to be positioned by her friends in different but somewhat similarly patterned ways. First and most prominently, the friends frequently engaged in constructing a shared identity: as friends who had known each other for a long time, as mothers, as residents of Finland, or as readers of literature. This was often done by casual remarks and sharing small stories (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou 2008). For instance, towards the beginning of the conversation, Sandra remarked on the hostess's new coffee maker, invoking her detailed knowledge of her friend's belongings as well as her trajectory of previous visits. At another point, the conversation turned to the baked goods sold in shops in Finland, which are often made abroad, and the friends shared their knowledge about where different baked goods are made and agreed on the absurdity of importing fresh foods from elsewhere.

The following excerpt is a typical example of how the friends construct common ground and consensus. When the conversation turns to Donald Trump's potential presidency in the United States – a ubiquitous topic in the spring of 2016 – they start discussing what they know about his policy announcements:

Excerpt 53[30]

FA: mmh eiks se oo rakentamassa tota meksikon rajalle sitä=
FB: on
FA: =jotain muuria ja
FC: se on tekemäs kaikenlaista joo se se vaan
FA: kaik- nii
FB: mh
SA: mutta se on oikeasti ihan hyvä kysymys mä melkein toivoisin että se että se et se on se pilailee tai niinku se vain esittää sellaista
FB: en mä usko en mä usko
FA: valitettavasti mä en usko
FC: mä en usko
SA: joo en mäkään usko valitettavasti
FC: mmh
SA: joo
FB: *heh heh heh*
SA: ( )
FB: välillä voi tuudittautua s(h) n(h)iink rupee ahistaa nii se on vaan show
FC: mut onneks siis realiteetit ei se eihä jenkk- ei ei siellä oo mitää rahaa rakentaa mitään muureja mihinkään ja siellä just=
FB: nii nii
FC: =kaikki ne asiat mitä se esittää ei se kerro et miten ne tehdään et se vaan niinku et=
FA: mmh
FC: =tän pitää tehdä ja nyt tehää näin
SA: no se on vähän sama kuin perussuomalaiset=
FB: mmh mmh
SA: =ennen vaaleja eikö niin et kaikkea tällaista tehdään ja sit sit ne ei pysty tekemään

30 In the excerpts used in this section: SA=Sandra; FA, FB, FC, FD = Sandra's friends; KR=researcher.

mitään sellaista
FC: mmh mut siellä on vielä niinku viel- viel megalomaanisempia et ne on viel ( )
SA: joo=joo=joo tietysti
FC: on tietysti jopa megalomaanisempaa

FA: mmh is he not building uh some kind of wall=
FB: yes
FA: =on the Mexican border and
FC: he is doing all sorts of things yeah he he just
FA: all so- yes
FB: mh
SA: but it's actually a good question I would almost hope that he that he that he's he's joking or like just pretending
FB: I don't think so I don't think so
FA: I don't think so unfortunately
FC: I don't think so
SA: yeah I don't think so either unfortunately
FC: mmh
SA: yeah
*FB: *heh heh heh**
SA: ( )
FB: sometimes you can comfort yourself s(h) l(h)ike you get anxious yeah it's just a show
FC: but fortunately the reality is he doesn't in the State- they don't don't have any money to build any walls anywhere and=
FB: yeah yeah
FC: =all the things he proposes he doesn't tell how you get them done he's just like=
FA: mmh
FC: =this needs to be done and now we'll do it
SA: well it's a bit like the True Finns=
FB: mmh mmh
SA: =before an election right like we're going to do all of this and then then they don't manage to do anything like that
FC: mmh but over there it's still like sti- still more megalomaniacal they are still ( )
SA: yeah=yeah=yeah of course
FC: it's of course even more megalomaniacal

In the first few lines of this excerpt, the friends start co-constructing the knowledge they have about Trump by making suggestions (he wants to build a wall and does "all sorts of things") and using affirmative comments. In Sandra's first turn in the excerpt, however, she challenges the idea that Trump is serious about his plans and voices the hope that he is just "pretending". Very quickly the three friends involved in the exchange express disagreement, causing Sandra to backtrack on her statement and create full consensus again. A few turns later, FB reacts to this by admitting that the thought that Trump is simply putting on a "show" can be comforting sometimes, thus attributing some value to Sandra's statement that had been rejected by everyone before. This pattern of seeking consensus and mitigating disagreement continues throughout the entire book club meeting. While being obviously consistent with general observations about a

preference for affirmation and agreement as well as the avoidance of face-threatening responses in conversations (see Heritage 2009: 311), it can also be seen as a way of constructing positionings shared by the whole group of friends.

In the second half of the excerpt, FC continues with her analysis of a possible Trump presidency, declaring that his proposals are empty and unrealistic. It is then Sandra who draws the comparison to the Finnish political context, comparing such empty proposals to the behaviour of Finland's populist party (*perussuomalaiset*, True Finns) before elections. Through this comment, she efficiently positions herself as somebody who is knowledgeable about the details of Finnish politics. This could even be seen as an attempt by Sandra to translate the political phenomenon to the Finnish context, underlining her position as an insider in Finnish society. Even if her friend slightly disagrees with Sandra's view, arguing that pre-election proposals tend to be even more exaggerated in the US, she does not seem to question the position from which Sandra is speaking.

A similar kind of shared positioning in a discussion of the Finnish political context – albeit with more ambiguity with regard to Sandra's positioning – can be found in this next excerpt:

Excerpt 54

FB: mä näin eilen [kaupunginosassa] valtavan katupartiojoukon siis nyt mä oon=
FC: ajaa ei
FB: =nähnyt ne livenä
SA: aah
FB: ai kamala
FA: mitä
FB: niitä oli toistakymmen- to- soldiers of odin kuule [kaupunginosassa]
FC: heh heh heh
FA: uooh uooh
FC: mihin aikaan vuorokaudesta
FB: se oli puolenyön aikaan
FC: okei
FB: niit tosi- niitä oli toistakymmentä siinä
FC: mitä ne teki käviks ne käveli ympärinsä
FB: ne käveli ( )
SA: eihän ne turvapaikanhakijarau(k)at edes saa olla ulkona silloin
FC: tuliko turvallinen olo nytten heh
FB: tuli tosi siis ensimmäinen reaktio et heti niinku mä olin autossa heti niinku katto et eihän niinku missään oo yksinäisen näkösiä=
FC: nii
FB: =ulkomaalaisen näkösiä ihmisiä et otetaan kyytiin
FC: nii niitä on nii joo
FB: herra(jumal-) joo tuli todella turvallinen olo ai kama-
FC: heh heh heh
FB: parilla oli niinku huivi kasvoilla
SA: joo se on oikeasti
FA: hyi
SA: aivan käsittämätöntä on välillä vaikeaa kun kun opiskelijat on niinku onko suomalaiset rasisteja näin mut=

FB: nii
SA: =välillä vaikeaa jotenkin vakuuttaa että ei oo
FA: mut onhan joka paikassa
SA: et ne on vaan hirveän äänekkäitä […]

FB: yesterday in [part of the city] I saw a big street patrol group so now I have=
FC: really oh no
FB: =seen them live
SA: aah
FB: oh that's terrible
FA: what
FB: there were about twent- tw- Soldiers of Odin in [part of the city] I'm telling you
FC: heh heh heh
FA: oouh oouh
FC: what time of day
FB: it was around midnight
FC: okay
FB: there were real- there were about twenty of them there
FC: what did they do did they go they were walking around
FB: they were walking ( )
SA: the poor asylum seekers are not even allowed to be outside at that hour
FC: well did they make you feel safe heh
FB: yes very like my first reaction was instantly like I was in the car and I instantly looked around to see that there weren't any lonely-looking people=
FC: yeah
FB: =foreign-looking people to give them a ride
FC: yeah they exist yeah
FB: Goodnes- yeah I felt really safe oh terrib-
FC: heh heh heh
FB: a couple of them had covered their faces
SA: yeah it's really
FA: ugh
SA: absolutely unbelievable sometimes it's difficult when when my students are like are Finnish people racists but=
FB: yeah
SA: =sometimes it's difficult to somehow assure them that they're not
FA: but everywhere there's
SA: that [these people] are just terribly vocal […]

In this excerpt, FB tells the others that she has seen members of the anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim organisation Soldiers of Odin. The organisation was founded in late 2015 in the context of growing numbers of refugees in Finland (see e.g. Kotonen 2018) and at the time of the recording it was a hot topic of debate because members had begun to patrol the streets. Since at this point, most people were probably only familiar with the organisation through media reports, FB's story caused immediate reactions of shock and disgust among the friends. Through these reactions, they jointly position themselves as liberal citizens who strongly reject anti-immigrant ideologies. FC's ironic question of whether the street patrol made FB feel safe adds an additional layer to this positioning. It humorously references the discourse produced by the Soldiers of Odin themselves, according to which their aim is to protect Finnish people (especially women)

from (male) immigrants. In her response, FB confirms that she falls squarely into this demographic group ("yes very [safe]") but at the same time rejects the idea that it is Finnish women who would need protection (by stating that she was instantly worried about the safety of foreign- looking people).

Sandra's positioning in this story is slightly more complex. At the beginning of the excerpt she expresses spontaneous disgust, just like the others. By talking in a distanced way about "those poor asylum seekers" in her next comment she implies that she herself is not the kind of immigrant the street patrol is after, thus positioning herself somewhat similarly to her friends. Her comment can also be seen as recasting a professional identity: as a teacher of Finnish to immigrants, Sandra is aware of the specific curfew regulations for asylum seekers. She further highlights this identity by telling the others how she sometimes gets asked by her students whether all Finnish people are racists. Here, her positioning can be seen as falling between insider and outsider status: as a Finnish teacher she naturally occupies the position of an independent expert on Finnish culture and society – without being perceived as a Finnish person herself. Thus, what she describes as "difficult" is not the reproach of racism (directed against Finnish people) but having to convince her students that groups like Soldiers of Odin are not representative of Finnish people in general.

Such an intermediate identity as a non-Finnish expert on Finnish language and culture is a second typical positioning that Sandra constructs in the data by frequently mentioning her work as a teacher of Finnish to immigrants. The following excerpt is an example of this. One of the friends has written her Master's thesis on the Finnish language and, inspired by this, the conversation turns to questions of pronunciation:

Excerpt 55

FD: ja sitte maahanmuuttajilla on y ja ä ja=
FB: mmh
FD: =varsinkin y on niinku yllättävän vaikee=
FB: mmh mmh
FC: joo joo joo
FD: =että se on niinku se on varmaa semmonen
SA: joillekin myös ö mmh
FC: mmh
FD: nii
SA: mmh
FD: että ne ehkä sit kans
FB: nii jotkut (ei voi siitä)
SA: ja sit jotkut diftongit on ihan täysin mahdottomia oikeasti kaikki sellaiset yö ja öy ja kaikki sellaiset vaan
FB: yötyö heh heh heh hääyö o aika
FA: no ei ne kyl niinku ((clears throat)) mun mielestä oo mitenkään mahdottomia
SA: no
FB: ei ne mahdottomia ookaa
SA: se riippuu vähän siitä mi- mikä mikä ihmisten äidinkieli on mutta kaikki ne=
FA: niin

SA: =niinku aasialaiset kun niiden kielissä on niin vähän
FC: mmh
SA: vähän erilaisia vokaaleja niille ne on todella tuskallisia
FA: nii aivan okei niinku u- siis oppija ulkomaalaisia
SA: joojoojoojoojoo
FA: nii okei joo joo

FD: and then immigrants have this with y *and* ä *and=*
FB: mmh
FD: =especially y *is like surprisingly difficult=*
FB: mmh mmh
FC: yeah yeah yeah
FD: = that is like it's probably this kind of
SA: for some also ö *mmh*
FC: mmh
FD: yeah
SA: mmh
FD: so those too maybe
FB: yeah some (can't)
SA: and then some diphthongs are completely impossible really all these yö *and* öy *and just all of these*
FB: yötyö *[night work] heh heh heh* hääyö *[wedding night] is quite*
FA: well I don't feel ((clears throat)) that they are in any way impossible
SA: well
FB: they aren't impossible
SA: it depends a bit on wha- what what people's mother tongue is but all=
FA: yeah
SA: =like Asians because their languages have so few
FC: mmh
SA: few different vowels for them they are really torturous
FA: yeah right okay like f- like learner foreigners
SA: yeah=yeah=yeah=yeah=yeah
FA: all right okay yeah yeah

While in the conversation preceding the excerpt the friends have talked about Finnish phonology in general, here FD changes the topic to vowels that are difficult to pronounce for "immigrants" (in this case the Finnish sound *y*). As in Excerpt 54, the "immigrants" (or, towards the end of the excerpt, the "foreigners") are talked about as a third group, not, for instance, one that Sandra herself would belong to. This is reinforced by Sandra, who says that "for some" learners also the Finnish *ö* as well as diphthongs are difficult to pronounce, if not impossible, adding even more specific insights about the role of the mother tongue in second language pronunciation. In doing so, she draws on her pedagogical knowledge of and experience with Finnish language learners without framing herself as a learner or as somebody for whom Finnish pronounciation might have caused difficulties at some point. In the conversation that follows after the excerpt, she admits that it is easy for Germans because German vowels are more similar to Finnish vowels. However, she does not explicitly relate this to her own experience but speaks about Germans in the third person.

Finally, in addition to positioning herself as one of the friends and an insider member of Finnish society as well as an objective expert on Finnish language and culture, Sandra also frequently chooses to highlight her German background in some way. This is mostly done casually, whenever it adds interest to the conversation. The following two short excerpts are examples of this:

Excerpt 56

FB: tossa kyl junassa ku oli kun on ite niin hereillä ja aurinko siis on jo valosaa ja palsiis junassa oli tosi paljon ihmisiä nii ihan niinku unohtu mitä kello on ja en ruenen sentään ruennut soittamaan kavereil laitoin kuitenkin tekstari ja sit kun mä olin lähettäny vasta tajusin että nyt sehä (hältä) se (o) yheksä laua(h)nt(h)ai aamulla voiks tämmöseen aikaan niinku laittaa edes tekstaria
FA: mmhh
SA: mulle käy joskus niinku mä laitan Saksaan päin et mä unohdan et siellä on vielä
FB: mmh
SA: tuntia aikaisemmin

FB: there on the train when it was when you're so awake yourself and the sun like it's already light and a lo- like on the train there are a lot of people so you forget completely what time it is and I didn't at least I didn't call my friends but I sent a text message and then only when I had sent it I realized that now [for him/her] it's nine o'clock on a Sat(h)urd(h)ay morning can you even send a text at that hour
FA: mmhh
SA: I sometimes like I send [a text message] to Germany and forget that there it's still
FB: mmh
SA: an hour earlier

Excerpt 57

[muuta keskustelua taustalla]
FB: kun me lähetään Turkuun sitten pääsiäiseksi ni
SA: me referencetään perjantaina Saksaan höhöhö
FB: eikä olla Helsingissä
SA: lapsilla on on ääm on kaks ylimääräistä päivää pääsiäislomaa [koulussa] ja sit me otettiin niille kaks lisäpäivää vapaata nii just
FB: joo
SA: sit me ollaan viikon koska mun mun veli siis saa toisen lapsen äm pääsiäisen tienoilla=
FB: just niin meette kattomaan mahaa hehehehheh niin aivan heh heh heh heh
SA: =me toivotaan et se on täsmällinen saksalainen lapsi että se on sit jo se on sit jo näkyvissä silloin kun me

[conversation in the background]
FB: because we're going to Turku for Easter so
SA: we're going to Germany on Friday höhöhö
FB: we won't be in Helsinki
SA: the children have have uhm two additional days off [from school] for the Easter holidays and then we took two more days off for them so
FB: yeah
SA: then we'll be there for a whole week because my my brother is having a second child around

uhm Easter=
FB: yeah right so you're going to look at the belly hehehehheh right heh heh heh heh
SA: =we hope that it's a punctual German child that it's already it's already in sight when we're [there]

Excerpt 56 is part of a conversation in which the friends discuss calling or texting friends and relatives at an inappropriately early hour. While this has happened to FB once when waking up on a night train, Sandra claims it happens to her more frequently ("sometimes") due to the time difference of an hour between Finland and Germany. In Excerpt 57 the friends discuss the upcoming Easter holidays. Sandra mentions that she is going to Germany to see her brother's new baby and volunteers a joke about its being a "punctual German child", thus playing on the well-known stereotype of German punctuality. Such mentions of Germany by Sandra are quite frequent in the data and, while explicit uptake by the friends is rare, they can be seen as casual reminders of her background.

At another point in the conversation, the friends discuss what book to read next. Sandra brings up the idea of reading something by Japanese author Haruki Murakami, and after some discussion, FA suggests a particular novel (*Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage*). Since the chosen book should always be available from the library, FC immediately proceeds to check the situation on her phone.

Excerpt 58

FA: […] mä muistan jos oli joku värittömän miehen vaellusvuodet mutta mikä se oli oikeasti
FC: joo katotaan ((avaa puhelimensa))
SA: millä kielellä sen sais kirjastosta=
FC: suomeks
SA: =koska mä en halua lukea sitä suomeks
FB: heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
SA: joo mä en siis=
FC: mä katoin vaan nopeasti et mitä siinä oli
SA: =lue niitä käännöskirjoja mä en lue suomeks mä luen ne aina saksaks
FB: nii sikspä säännöllisin väliajoin suomenkielisii
SA: jos mä en ko- jos mä en pysty jos mä en pysty lukemaan alkuperäiskielellä sitten mä haluan lukea sen saksaksi
FB: heh heh heh heh
FA: sä voit ottaa sen tota e-kirjana esimerkiks

FA: […] I remember maybe it was something like värittömän miehen vaellusvuodet *[Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage] but what was it really*
FC: let's see ((takes her phone out))
SA: in what language can you get it at the library=
FC: in Finnish
SA: =because I don't want to read it in Finnish
FB: heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
SA: yeah I don't=
FC: I was just quickly looking at what they had

SA: *=read these books in translation I don't read them in Finnish I always read them in German*
FB: *that's why [we should read] Finnish books regularly*
SA: *if I don't fe- if I can't if I can't read it in the original language then I want to read it in German*
FB: *heh heh heh heh*
FA: *you can take it as an e-book for example*

As in the previous two short excerpts, it is Sandra herself who brings up the topic of German here. More explicitly than before, she makes her linguistic background visible, explaining her rationale for choosing to read books in the original language and in translation (she had already explained this to me in our first interview; see Ruuska 2016: 368). Moreover, this time making her German background salient is not just a brief remark but is framed in terms of a practical problem that the others comment on and even become involved in solving. First, FB suggests that if Sandra reads books written in other languages in German translation, they should make sure to pick Finnish books regularly, jokingly taking the position of Sandra's language teacher who makes sure she practises her Finnish. FA, then, goes on to find a practical solution to the problem of where Sandra could get the German version of the book from (this discussion continues after the excerpt, including suggestions of where Sandra could order the book from). This excerpt from the conversation shows that sometimes Sandra's practice of mentioning German or Germany also invites comments from the other participants. In this way, her Germanness can also be seen as something that is in fact co-constructed by everybody involved.

Another example of an extensive discussion of Sandra's (and my) Germanness can be found in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 59

[muuta keskustelua taustalla]
FA: tässä on tää (lusikka) puuroa varten
SA: ah okei mä syön aina pienellä lusikalla puuroa
FA: syöt vai
SA: joo
FA: mä syön aina tämmmösellä keskikokoisella lusikalla
SA: mä oon en oo suomalainen mä ((KR huomaa, että hänkin on syönyt pienellä lusikalla, ja näyttää muille lusikkansa.))
SA: heh heh heh heh
KR: heh heh heh heh heh
SA: mä tosi usein mietin et onks tää jotain joku mun juttu vai tekeeks kaikki saksalaiset ni(h)in
FB: ai pienellä lusikalla
SA: [osoittaa KR:n lusikkaa] niin katso heh heh heh heh
FB: hmm
KR: tää on i(h)han ihmeellistä
FC: no niin
SA: joku joku toinen asia oli tänään joo myös joka josta mä mietin et onks tää joku niinku mun juttu vai onks tekeeks kaikki saksalaiset niin
FC: mheheh

KR: heh heh heh
SA: mä en enää muista mikä se oli valitettavasti
FB: niitä aina välillä tulee kyl mä tunnen kuitenkin muutaman saksalaisen tulee sellaiset et aah te kaikki s(h)aks(h)alaiset teette tollee
SA: heh heh heh heh heh niin ja mä annan esimerkiksi mun lapsille myös aina pienet lusikat ja sit mun mies on aina niinku miks sä et anna niille kunnon no niillä on pienet suut
KR: heh heh
FC: heh
FB: joo
SA: niin
FA: mut sit no ei
KR: heh heh heh
SA: (mitämitäva)
FA: se on väärin se on väärin
FB: heh heh heh heh heh heh heh
FC: joku sellainen mutta tää on niinku lämmintä ruokaa lämmintä ruokaa syödään isolla tämmösellä ja jälkiruokia syödään pienellä
FB: heh heh korkeintaan jugurtin voi syödä tämmösellä pienellä
FC: joo joo
FB: meillä on jälkiruokalusi- lusikoita sitten tämmöseks kompromissiks
SA: saanks mä tehdä niin kun mä haluun kiitos
FB: heh heh heh
FA: ei vasta kun sä täytät kaheksankyt sit silloin
SA: joo okei
FB: heh heh heh
FA: nelikymppisten pitäis konformoitua
SA: ja mun pitää niinku te yritätte nyt saada mut suomalaistumaan ihan kokonaan
FC: mmh mmh
SA: mä en usko että se ikinä onnistuu
FA: mut yks mitä siis m-
FB: ei varmaan oo tarkoitus heh heh
[…]
FD: mulla on kanssa sit puolen välin lusikoita must ne on oikeasti
FB: joo joo ne on hyvii
SA: mmh
FA: tää on must ihana koko
FB: joo
FA: tää on mun tämmönen (.) (toi)velusikka
SA: mulla on mulla on oikeasti pieni suu
FA: mmh
SA: et mä luulen et sen sen takia mä en myöskään tykkää niitä

[conversation in the background]
FA: here's a (spoon) for the porridge
SA: oh okay I always eat my porridge with a small spoon
FA: you do
SA: yea
FA: I always eat it with this kind of medium-sized spoon
SA: I am I'm not Finnish I ((KR notices that she has been eating with a small spoon, too, and shows the spoon to the others.))
SA: heh heh heh heh

KR: *heh heh heh heh heh*
SA: *I wonder really often whether this is just my thing or whether all Germans do it like th(h)is*
FB: *you mean with a small spoon*
SA: *((points at KR's spoon)) yeah look heh heh heh heh*
FB: *hmm*
KR: *these is r(h)eally strange*
FC: *alright*
SA: *there was some some other thing today yeah which where I thought is this like my thing or is it do all Germans do it like that*
FC: *mheheh*
KR: *heh heh heh*
SA: *I don't remember what it was unfortunately*
FB: *yeah there's these things once in a while I know a few Germans and there's these aah all of you G(h)erm(h)ans do it this way*
SA: *heh heh heh heh heh yeah and for example I also always give my children small spoons and then my husband is always like why don't you give them proper well because they have small mouths*
KR: *heh heh*
FC: *heh*
FB: *yeah*
SA: *right*
FA: *then then well no*
KR: *heh heh heh*
SA: *(whatwhatwhat)*
FA: *it's wrong it's wrong*
FB: *heh heh heh heh heh heh heh*
FC: *something like this but this is like hot food you eat hot food with a big one like that and desserts with a small one*
FB: *heh heh you can eat yoghurt at most with a small one*
FC: *joo joo*
FB: *we have dessert sp- spoons as a kind of compromise*
SA: *can I please do it however I like thanks*
FB: *heh heh heh*
FA: *no not until you turn eighty then [you can]*
SA: *yeah okay*
FB: *heh heh heh*
FA: *forty-year-olds have to conform*
SA: *and I have to like you are trying to make me completely Finnish now*
FC: *mmh mmh*
SA: *I don't think that is ever going to happen*
FA: *but one thing that like t-*
FB: *I don't think that's the intention heh heh*
[…]
FD: *I also have these medium-sized spoons I think they're really*
FB: *yes yeah they are good*
SA: *mmh*
FA: *this is a great size I think*
FB: *yeah*
FA: *this is kind of my (.) (preferred) spoon*
SA: *I have I really have a small mouth*
FA: *mmh*
SA: *so I think that's that's why I also don't like those*

Unlike in the previous two excerpts, Sandra does not take the initiative to draw attention to her background here. Rather, the conversation starts with her friend pointing out that she is using the wrong kind of spoon to eat her porridge. However, Sandra herself immediately draws a connection between her intuitive choice of spoon and not being Finnish, which in turn makes me realise I have been using the same kind of small spoon as her. Sandra then tells us that she often wonders whether certain habits are just her preference or whether "all Germans do it like that", something that is then taken up by FB, who has also observed certain habits among her German friends. However, in addition to the cultural explanation, Sandra also tries to offer a more rational or logical perspective, arguing that, since her children have small mouths, small spoons are objectively more appropriate.

Sandra's friends then turn to jointly rejecting the idea that small spoons would ever be appropriate for eating porridge ("it's wrong it's wrong"; "you can eat yoghurt at most with such a small one"). Even if they are clearly joking, Sandra seems to feel the need to defend herself by asserting her boundaries ("can I just do what I want thank you"). The framework of cultural differences is then brought up again by FA, who (jokingly) argues that younger people should "assimilate", as well as by Sandra herself, who (also not entirely seriously) responds that her friends are trying to make her entirely Finnish but that they will never succeed. Towards the end of the excerpt, some kind of mitigation seems to take place. In contrast to their earlier statements about the right and wrong kinds of spoons, Sandra's friends finally agree that "medium-sized" spoons are the best spoons for eating porridge, perhaps seeking to rebuild consensus again and soften the disagreement.

This snippet from an everyday conversation is not an example of explicit and consequential practices of othering. However, it shows how difference emerges and is negotiated even in mundane interactions, and how discourses of cultural difference are operationalised in this context. From a nexus analytical perspective, this can be seen as happening at the intersection of discourse cycles. Sandra and I both intuitively choose a small porridge spoon, whereas our host has taken care to provide everyone with larger spoons for this purpose, pointing to a real discrepancy in embodied practice and diverging historical bodies. However, these embodied preferences are made visible only within the setting of the interaction order: it is only when gathering around the same table and sharing a meal that this discrepancy can become visible and salient. Our diverging habits are then turned into explicit discourse which itself draws on larger discourses about cultural differences and assimilation. The focus on historical bodies also perhaps creates a certain degree of vulnerability: following one's embodied habits is not an impression somebody consciously chooses to "give" but rather one that they inadvertently "give off" (Goffman 1959: 2). That is, unlike at other points in the conversation, Sandra does not choose to present herself in a certain way but is caught doing something differently.

So far in this chapter, language has been seemingly backgrounded while issues of positioning and identity have become more prominent. This is, first,

because in comparison to thematic interviews, language use and linguistic practices are rarely explicitly discussed in other situations. However, throughout this thesis I have emphasised the intrinsic relationship between language and identity: how someone is perceived as a speaker is not only based on language use but is also mediated by what information speakers give about themselves as well as the situational and ideological context. The analysis of the conversation in Sandra's book club thus also shows that, in real-life interactions, linguistic identities are often constructed and negotiated through other means than direct references to language, e.g. by invoking culture, nationality or an insider/outsider status.

7.1.2 'I'm Julia I'm from Germany by the way': negotiating professional and linguistic identities

My second German focus participant, Julia, studies in a Finnish-medium study programme at a local educational institution. In my analysis here, however, I focus on data collected from the gym where she works part-time, teaching various different classes. Her work occupies an important place in her life: in our first interview in 2015, Julia already emphasised her passion for her job and claimed that she considered her studies to be only a secondary occupation. When I have the chance to visit Julia at the gym in the autumn of 2016, I take the following notes:

Excerpt 60

I arrive at Julia's workplace, a large gym. We have agreed that she will show me around after her class. I fill out a form at the reception and wait for Julia in the entrance area. The gym is modern and inviting, but very busy. Julia joins me after the class. She seems to be in a good mood and completely in her element. Her whole being radiates belonging, confidence, and maybe even pride. […] We begin our tour of the gym and Julia cheerfully greets both co-workers and customers on the way. She also mentions some of her co-workers' names and work areas or other interesting facts about them. She consistently uses the 'we' form, talks about 'our sports hall', 'our gymnastics room', etc.

In addition to being a place that she clearly identifies with, the gym is also where Julia feels she has been able to develop a lot of her language skills. Before starting to work there, Julia herself attended the gym for a few years, going to the same classes she would later teach. She therefore had already had the chance to make herself familiar with the register used in classes before moving on to actively using it herself. During my visit to the gym, it also became clear to me that her use of Finnish at work is not restricted to teaching classes, but encompasses a wide range of situations: informal conversations with people who attend classes there, time spent with her colleagues in the locker room, monthly staff meetings, events at the gym organised together with other employees, work-related communication on social media, and many more. She also seems to see at least some colleagues in her free time, suggesting that the gym is also an important social environment for her. Thus, while at times struggling with academic Finnish in her

studies, Julia feels generally confident about using informal, spoken Finnish, as well as the professional register used at the gym.

In the remainder of this chapter, I zoom in on a couple of instances where Julia chooses to highlight being German or being a foreigner, while at the same time performing her professional role as a fitness instructor. Highlighting being German is something that Julia claims to do frequently and in various contexts (work, studies, circle of friends, etc.). One such situation that Julia mentions already in our first interview is being on stage at work, i.e., teaching classes. She explains that this is a situation where she takes "advantage also of being a foreigner" and makes "quite a lot of jokes about Germany".[31] During my field visit to Julia's workplace, I indeed observe some situations in which she brings up her German background. The following excerpt is taken from my fieldnotes on a class Julia teaches:

Excerpt 61

The class is about to start, there are about 15 participants in the large room. When Julia begins to prepare for the class, her movements change abruptly, become distinctly athletic and dynamic: Julia becomes a fitness instructor. As soon as she puts on the portable microphone, her voice also changes. She says something like ihanaa iltapäivää, ootteko hereillä *('A wonderful afternoon to you, are you awake?') and her voice sounds deeper and slightly warped through the microphone. […] She introduces me by saying* täällä on tänään toinen saksalainen joka tutkii mua ja mun suomen kieltä *('there's another German here today who is studying me and my Finnish').*

The excerpt is set in the context of typical activities that take place just before the beginning of a class. The participants have already found their spots in the room but might still be chatting to each other. The beginning of the class is marked by Julia greeting the participants through the microphone. However, Julia's body language has already changed a few minutes earlier when she starts gathering the equipment needed for the class, and it remains like this until the end of the class. As soon as she speaks into the microphone, her voice changes: she uses the language of an entertainer on stage, welcoming the audience ("wonderful afternoon") and motivating them to participate ("are you awake?").[32] We have agreed beforehand that Julia, who will be on stage in any case, will briefly explain why I am there and that I will record only her, and not the members of the class. Julia introduces me as a researcher of Finnish (and of herself and her Finnish in particular) and as "another German" in the room. As a speaker of Finnish as a second language who tends not to highlight her own foreign background, I feel slighlty uneasy about being introduced in this way (instead of simply as a researcher, for

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31 *…und äh in dem sinne mach ich mach ichs mir relativ zunutze auch dass ich ausländer bin und mach relativ viele deutschlandwitze* ‚and uh in that sense I take I take advantage also of being a foreigner and make quite a lot of jokes about Germany'.

32 In another class I have the chance to observe, she uses similar motivational phrases like *mitäs meininki?* ('what's up?') and *bileitä keskellä viikolla, koska voin* ('a party in the middle of the week, because I can').

instance). However, upon reflection, Julia's choice of words appears to be an extremely efficient and elegant way of explaining my presence as well as bringing up her own Germanness through using the phrase "another German" (*toinen saksalainen*).

As the class proceeds, I am able to make more observations. The interaction order of the class is constructed largely through the roles of instructor and participants: Julia is the only one who talks, and she demonstrates the moves and the participants follow. This is supported by the physical layout of the room: Julia is on a low, illuminated stage while the participants are distributed across the room and are facing the stage. The interaction order is also structured by the music played in the background. The class follows a choreographical script that Julia has learnt by heart and that is aligned to the songs on the playlist, just as the small breaks in between blocks of similar movements are aligned with the gaps between the songs. Thus, at first sight, the interaction order does not seem to allow for longer breaks, unscheduled repetitions, or questions from the participants. The talk that accompanies the movements, however, is less scripted. While Julia's speech has to be coordinated with the choreography and contains a lot of default expressions for movements (e.g. *ylös* 'up' or *alas* 'down'), it allows some room for variation and improvisation.

With regard to Julia's historical body, her flawless command of the choreography, along with her comparatively more athletic and precise way of moving her body, visibly positions her as a capable, professional instructor. However, her linguistic repertoire also plays an important part in positioning her as a fitness instructor. Based on my observations, Julia is highly competent in the relevant register (in Finnish), giving concise instructions at the appropriate pace. She has also embodied the habitus of a professional instructor and entertainer, displaying confidence on stage and motivating the members of her class also through linguistic means characteristic of the entertainment register (such as exclamations and direct appeals to her customers). Thus, her repertoire as a professional includes not only the necessary technical terms, but also a particular embodied style (see Bucholtz & Hall 2016). Nevertheless, the linguistic part of her job is what Julia still feels rather insecure about. This might be partly due to a rather demanding teaching scheme with regard to language: the design of the classes is bought by the gym from a foreign company and instructors have to learn new programmes from a set of videos every few months. Since the videos are in English, Julia cannot simply learn the linguistic content of a new programme by heart, but has to draw on the Finnish resources in her own (professional) repertoire. Thus, in addition to regularly having to make herself familiar with a new choreography, Julia's job also requires rather independent and flexible linguistic competence.

It is against the backdrop of this rather demanding linguistic situation that Julia chooses to highlight her German background. In the following excerpt from the conversation I recorded between Julia (JL), her good friend (FE) and myself (KR), Julia explains further why she likes mentioning being German before teaching a class:

Excerpt 62

JL: […] mä niinku korostan sitä mä oon muuten saksasta ja sen takia mä oon tämmönen
FF: heh heh heh heh heh heh
KR: heh heh heh
JL: sitä mä oikeasti välillä sanon ennen tuntia kun on tuntuu siltä et se on niin turha et mä sanon et mä oon saksasta mut jotenkin taas myös jos mä sanon taas että anna sun jalkojen olla raskaana se on ihan ookoo että niinku ne tietää miks mä sanon tämmösiä asioita
KR: mmh
JL: tai niinku viimeks mitä yritin san- mä yritin sanoa lepakko mutta mä sanoin että yöleppäkertto- kerttu
[…]
JL: sitten näissä hetkissä mä jotenkin haluan että ne tietää että mä oon että mä en oo suomalainen tai et mun äidinkieli ei oo suomi ja semmoset asiat voi tapahtua
[…]
JL: ja mulla on just aina niinku tunnin alussa se hetki kun mä esittelen tunnin ja mä esittelen itteäni että
KR: aa
JL: sanon oman nimen (.) ja jotenki aina kun se kun mä sanon oman nimen no totta kai mä voisin sen vain jättää siihen ja antaa vain olla jotenkin se aina sen jälkeen mulla on semmonen tarve sanoa että olen saksasta kotoisin
FF: niin semmonen ja sitten (sä sanot) mä oon julia mä oon muuten saksasta kotoisin heh heh heh
JL: nii että jotenkin se se on jotenkin itellä semmonen tarve että mä haluan et ne tietää
KR: mmh
JL: just jos tulee semmosia hetkiä että kokonainen biisi menee siihen että julia etsii omaa suomen kieltä
KR: m(h)m(h)m(h)
FF: heh heh heh
JL: se on ihan hyvä tietää et et ehkä antaa vähän helpommin anteeksi siitä ku se että ne ajattelee et mitä (tota) oikeasti vaivaa

JL: […] like I emphasise that I'm from Germany by the way and that's why I'm like this
FF: heh heh heh heh heh heh
KR: heh heh heh
JL: that's what I actually sometimes say before a class because I've felt that it's so superfluous that I say that I'm from Germany but then again somehow also if I say again that let your legs be raskaana *['pregnant'; cf.* raskas *'heavy'] then it's quite alright that like they know why I say stuff like that*
KR: mmh
JL: or like recently what did I sa- I tried to say lepakko *['bat'] but I said* yöleppäkertto- kerttu *['nightladybird']*
[…]
JL: then in these moments I somehow want them to know that I'm that I'm not Finnish or that my mother tongue is not Finnish and that stuff like that can happen
[…]
JL: and always just before like the class [begins] I have this moment when I introduce the class and I introduce myself and
KR: ah
JL: say my name (.) and somehow always when it when I say my name well of course I could just stop there and leave it at that somehow it always after that I have this need to say that

I'm from Germany
FF: *yeah like that and then (you say) I'm Julia I'm from Germany by the way heh heh heh*
JL: *yeah so somehow I I somehow have this need that I want them to know*
KR: *mmh*
JL: *precisely when there are these moments when Julia is looking for her Finnish for the duration of an entire song*
KR: *m(h)m(h)m(h)*
FF: *heh heh heh*
JL: *it's quite good to know that that [they] maybe forgive [you] a bit more easily than if they think what's wrong with (that one)*

The excerpt shows that Julia's mentioning her German background at the beginning of her classes is indeed not an exception but rather a common practice of hers. Julia's friend instantly starts laughing when Julia talks about emphasising that she is from Germany, suggesting that this is a pattern she is familiar with. She even completes Julia's account by suggesting what Julia would typically say in such a situation, using direct speech ("and then (you say) I'm Julia I'm from Germany by the way"). Based on other evidence from the data, and given that Laura and Julia do not know each other through Julia's work, it seems that highlighting her Germanness is a strategy that Julia employs in her private life as well. However, being on stage at her workplace puts her Finnish literally in the spotlight. She gives two examples of recent incidents where she confused similar Finnish expressions with each other (*raskaana* 'pregnant' vs. *raskas* 'heavy'; *yöleppäkerttu* 'nightladybird' vs. *lepakko* 'bat') while teaching a class. Confusion of similar-looking words is a common occurrence with second language learners (Nassaji 2003: 653; Laufer 2005: 315), especially with words that are less frequently used and therefore less established with the individual learner. Moreover, in the situation under discussion, the scheduled pace of the interaction order during the class provides a particularly short window for thinking about what she wants to say (cf. Jäppinen 2011). Her phrasing "if I say again" implies that this is something that has happened before and will probably happen again, also suggesting that there are parts of her linguistic performance that she might not be able to fully control. Through her strategy of introducing herself as German, she avoids passing for a native speaker with new members of the group and, at the same time, reminds those who have attended her classes before about it. In this way, she aims to pre-empt any possible interpretation of what she says later as unprofessional, strange or inadvertently funny, because her audience will "maybe forgive [such things] a bit more easily".

Julia, however, struggles to find a particularly rational explanation for her practice, saying that when she introduces herself before class she could also simply state her name and "leave it at that". As Julia tells me in our first interview, in many situations of everyday life, just saying her noticeably foreign name is indeed enough to provoke questions about her background. However, because the interaction order of the class does not allow the gym users to ask questions, Julia has to take the initiative and introduce the topic herself. She describes feeling a strong need to say that she is from Germany and to make her class members aware of her linguistic background before the classes begin. This need

is not necessarily the result of conscious reflection at that particular moment, but might rather represent a thoroughly embodied strategy of legitimisation based on how Julia sees herself as a Finnish speaker and a professional, what she assumes about the perceptions of the members of her class, as well as her previous experiences with instances of passing for a native speaker. The imagined voices of the members of her class also feature prominently in her account when she speaks about herself in the third person ("when Julia is looking for her Finnish for the duration of an entire song"), suggesting that she is indeed concerned about how others perceive her.

In the same conversation another aspect of the role Julia's German background plays at work is revealed:

Excerpt 63

KR: oliks se oliks se koskaan mikään ongelma niille että niinku tai siis mä en yhtään tiedä kuinka sujuvasti sun sä puhuit suomea silloin mut
JL: mmh
KR: oliks se koskaan niinku silleen että joku vähän epäili että (.) no meneköhän tää nyt hyvin vai
JL: no varmasti mä en vain tiedä onks se niinku sen takia ku mä olin ulkomaalainen vai sen takia koska tosiaan mulla ei oo kauheasti sitä taustaa mistään että (.) varmasti kaikenlaista on siinä (.) niinku siinä on mukana veikkaisin ja sitten kun oli niinku aika nopeasti mulla tapahtui sitte kuitenkin ihmiset tykkäs mun tunneista ja sitten tavallaan siitä kasvaa se maine että mun piti vaan tulla että mä mä oon se saksalainen joka vetää niitä tunteja ja sit siinä aijaa me me puhuttiin susta ja
KR: mmh
JL: niinku s- tän kautta mä oon oikeasti saa- niinku se auttoi mua sitten että mä olin niin semmonen omalaatuinen vähän erilainen […]

KR: was it was it ever a problem for them that like or I don't know at all how fluently your you spoke Finnish back then but
JL: mmh
KR: was it ever like that someone was a bit suspicious that (.) well will this go well now or
JL: I bet I just don't know whether it is like because I was a foreigner or because I actually didn't really have a background in this so (.) I bet all sorts of things are (.) like play a role in this I would think and because it was quite fast that it happened to me that people liked my classes and then your reputation grows from there in a way and then I just had to go and say I'm I'm that German who runs these classes and then [they were like] oh right we we talked about you and
KR: mmh
JL: like t- through that I really go- like it helped me that I was this peculiar person a bit different […]

Having established her reputation in the gym, Julia now has her own regulars (*Stammkunden*). These are a group of people who come to the gym and who prefer to attend her classes, and Julia seems to think that having the somewhat recognisable label of "that German who runs these classes" has actually helped her attract people. That is, Julia feels that being different has also been an advantage in her workplace. The difference she refers to can be seen as pertaining

to her nationality and language background as well as to being a "peculiar person" in the sense of being a quirky, bubbly and sometimes disorganised person, defying stereotypes about Germans – which is how she repeatedly describes herself in our conversations.

Although Julia does not meet her regulars outside the gym, they tend to have a somewhat closer and more personal relationship with her than others in her classes. Julia tells me that she often chats with participants after the class, and especially with her regulars. The following excerpt from my fieldnotes describes one such interaction:

Excerpt 64

Julia's second class of the day takes place in the same room as the first. […] After the class a small group of four participants waits for her in the space right next to the exit. They are Julia's 'regulars' who have favoured her classes for many years. They greet each other and talk about the class for a moment. Two of them leave quickly, the other two stay on. They seem to know Julia somewhat beyond her role as a fitness instructor. Julia had been away from work for a couple of weeks, so there's some catching up to do, and one of the regulars asks her about a relative of hers who had been ill. They also seem to have heard that Julia is going abroad for an internship soon, but need to be reminded of it. Julia explains that she is still waiting for her passport from Germany and that she can't leave without it. The others seem to need a moment to understand that Julia can't simply get her passport from the local police office. […] Julia says that she has a Finnish ID card but that she can't travel with it because it is a special ID card for foreigners. The others don't seem to know that such an ID card exists. […] Then the conversation turns to fitness again. Julia tells them about some moves she finds difficult, the others ask a question about it and Julia demonstrates the moves. She also talks about the programme for next week and a playlist she has started making. When describing the music she uses the words ysäri *('nineties') and* kasari *('eighties'), as well as* bäkkärit *('Backstreet Boys') and* spaissarit *('Spice Girls'), which catch my attention.*

In contrast to the interaction order of the fitness classes that Julia teaches, the interaction order of this situation is much less structured or regulated: it is an informal conversation between an employee of the gym and two of the people who go there, who also know each other privately to some extent. Thus, various identities are being navigated and negotiated here. First, the relationship between Julia and her regulars is constructed in the way their conversation builds on previous interactions and goes beyond the class itself, also touching upon Julia's private life: one of the regulars inquires about a member of Julia's family whom they seem to have talked about before, and when Julia mentions the internship the others appear to have heard about it already. Second, Julia brings up her foreign citizenship when telling them that she will not be able to leave until her new passport has arrived from Germany. In our interview on the previous day, Julia mentions that people have generally been surprised when she tells this story. According to her, this is because others frequently forget that she is not Finnish. Indeed, even her regulars in the excerpt above are rather surprised by

the passport issue and seem to be unaware of the existence of a special Finnish ID for foreign citizens. Thus, while the delayed passport is a pressing issue for Julia at this moment in time and therefore a quite natural topic to bring up in a conversation about the near future, it is also an explicit yet subtle way of reminding people of her non-Finnish background.

Further on, the conversation comes back to the topic of fitness classes and Julia mentions some new moves she has had to learn. Here, Julia returns to displaying her competence as a fitness instructor: even if she has just described the moves as difficult, she is able to demonstrate them flawlessly to the others, again drawing on her embodied dancing skills. Finally, when talking about an event the following week and the playlist she has made for it, Julia uses a range of colloquial expressions: *ysäri-* and *kasari-*, referring, respectively, to 1990s and 1980s (pop)culture, as well as *bäkkärit* and *spaissarit*, colloquial names for the bands Backstreet Boys and Spice Girls. As discussed in the previous chapter, my participants generally feel that knowing colloquial Finnish is very important and that using standard Finnish in spoken interaction could label them as outsiders. From this perspective, Julia's use of the terms *bäkkärit* and *spaissarit* in particular can be seen as constructing an insider positioning. That is, while these bands were internationally popular and so were probably a part of Julia's childhood in Germany, too, she would not at that time have referred to them with the Finnish terms. However, her use of these terms in the here and now arguably invokes or echoes (Bakhtin 1986: 88) the language and culture of that period in Finland, making her part of something discursively that she factually could not have been part of.

In sum, highlighting her German or generally foreign background at work has a twofold function for Julia. First, it has a legitimising effect, contextualising and framing the kind of Finnish she speaks, to her benefit. Especially in situations where she is (literally) in the spotlight as a professional, i.e., when teaching classes, she does not want to risk being perceived as strange or incompetent. Second, in the wider context of her work at the gym, highlighting her German background or simply emphasising that she is somehow different also helps her stand out among the employees. That is, even if Julia started out with relatively little knowledge of the field and limited linguistic resources, she has been able to quickly build a reputation as an instructor whose Germanness is part of her quirky persona, and who is different from both her Finnish colleagues and stereotypical Germans. Because success in her job is at least partly determined by her popularity as an instructor, her German background (or rather her discursive rendering thereof) has also been a valuable resource for her. Excerpt 63 shows that in building and maintaining a relationship with those who come to her classes, Julia draws on and constructs a variety of identities: she positions herself as a competent instructor, while also maintaining a more personal relationship with her regulars; she explicitly highlights her status as a foreigner, while at the same time positioning herself as a linguistic and cultural insider.

7.2 Zooming out: language, identity and participation across contexts

7.2.1 '…speaking the language is just one thing': participation through language and beyond

So far in this chapter I have zoomed in on specific instances and contexts to show how two of my participants position themselves at the intersection of historial bodies, the interaction order and discourses in place. In the following, I zoom out of individual interactions, looking at data from all four focus participants and focusing again on some broader themes that emerge from the analysis of data from across contexts. In the interviews in the first round of data collection, my participants gave valuable insights into their experiences with language use and different linguistic practices. While the thematic interviews centred on language by default, during the second phase of data collection I was also able to observe many situations in which language was not particularly salient. Rather than discarding such data as irrelevant to the topic of this study, I argue that, from the perspective of second language speakers' participation, it is important to look at how, in everyday life, situations in which language plays a prominent role alternate with situations in which language is backgrounded.

One of the participants whom I had the chance to observe in different contexts is Veronika. Veronika works in a small company and is involved in organising various events and communicating with project partners. She came to work at the company through an internship at a time when the company was aiming to expand their business in Central Europe. Although the company nowadays mostly carries out projects in Finland, Veronika stayed on to become a part-time assistant and is now seeking to become a full-time employee. On an everyday basis, she works with a few colleagues whom she has known for several years, the changing project partners (mostly via email), as well as other people involved in the different events (e.g. at venues). In addition, since the company is located in quite a large space shared with other companies, she also interacts with people outside her own company (e.g. in the staff room or during office events).

Veronika tells me that her main day-to-day working language is Finnish, with English playing a role mostly in international projects and cooperation. Language use is central to all her work tasks, whether it is meetings with her coworkers, email communication, compiling marketing materials or instructions for event participants, or writing texts for the company's newsletter. However, there is a difference in how much weight she gives to good Finnish in these different activities. When visiting her at her workplace, she makes the following remark:

Excerpt 65

VE: no varmaan niinku se kun sähköposti on kuitenkin kahden ihmisen välillä
KR: mmh

VE: et jos se on siellä se on mun nimi sen alla sitten mä uskallan vähän niinku tai tai siis mä kirjoitan sen toki ihan niinku yksinkin jos se menee sitten kun sille yhdelle yhdelle henkilölle toki jos se on joku joka liittyy projektiin eli se on asiakkaalle tehtyä=
KR: mmh mmh
VE: =juttua tai sitten se menee meiän isommalle yleisölle eli uutiskirje
KR: mhm
VE: eli siinä se on niinku koko firma eli kun se on niinku tavallaan sen takana sitten niinku se on aina semmosta että pitää pitää tarkistaa
KR: mmh

VE: well probably like because an email is between two people after all
KR: mmh
VE: so when it's there it's my name at the end then I dare a bit like or or like I write it of course like by myself if it then goes to this one one person of course if it is something related to a project when it's for a customer=
KR: mmh mmh
VE: =or it's intended for our wider audience like the newsletter
KR: mhm
VE: and there is the like the whole company so when it's like behind it then like it is always the case that it needs needs to be checked

Here, Veronika explains that some of the texts she produces are proofread by her Finnish colleagues, for instance texts she contributes to the company's newsletter, while others, such as her email correspondence with project partners, are not. In a sense, this is a question of practicability: Veronika's colleagues would probably not have the time to check every email she writes. More importantly, it is also a question of format and genre, i.e., of the interaction order of texts (see Hult 2010: 12; see also Pietikäinen 2012). Emails, even work emails, are a different type of text from a newsletter, and they are often less carefully crafted and more informal. Different text types are also associated with different expectations about the identity of both the writers and the recipients: emails can usually be attributed to one writer and often have only one addressee, while a company newsletter represents the entire company or brand and usually has a much larger readership. In our first interview, Veronika had already told me that one reason why she feels comfortable writing work emails in Finnish is that she signs them with her own, foreign-sounding name, thus providing readers with a possible interpretational frame for her imperfect language (see also Chapter 5.2.3). This implies that, when representing only herself, such as in emails she sends directly to clients, she and others consider her Finnish good enough (see also Chapter 5.3.1). However, when she writes something that is representing the company, the language needs to be flawless and is therefore checked by her Finnish colleagues. This is not least because the expectation of the readers of the newsletter is probably that a Finnish company will use perfect Finnish in official materials. In our interview at the end of her working day, Veronika makes a similar observation about another kind of situation:

Excerpt 66

VE: mutta mua kauhistuttaa aina tämmöset niinku tilanteet kun mun pitää erityisesti kun se on niinku työhön liittyvä juttu ollaan niinku rinkissä sitten pitää niinku sanoo kuka on ja mistä on ja niinku mitä tekee se on ih- aivan hirvittävää siis mä jotenkin meen lukkoon mutta mä en ole taas sataprosenttisesti varma että liittyykö se tähän niinku kieleen tai enemmän niinku siihen niinku työhön […]
[…]
VE: toisaalta niinku se on jo niinku parempi tai on mennyt parem- parempaan suuntaan mutta on se edelleenkin vähän niinku haastavaa
KR: joo joo
VE: sitten niinku työjutun yhteydessä koska toisaalta siis nyt mä vedin esimerkiks niinku valmennus tai siis koulutus valmentajille ( ) kesällä [aiheesta X] sit mä en tuntenut vaan muutamaa niinku tunsin mutta sit mä en tuntenut mä vähän kysyin tai mistä ne on eli tälleen ja sitte sitte tota mulla oli se asia se kyllä jännitti vähän mutta ei se ollut niinku loppujen lopuksi niin kun mä pääsin semmoseen vauhdilla että se ei ollut=
KR: mmh
VE: =se ei enää haitannut mulle itselle että että nyt se ei ole ihan ihan ehkä niinku täydellinen suomi
KR: joo
VE: tai täydellistä suomea tälleen=
KR: joo
VE: =että niinku sitten osaa heittäytyä paljon paremmin

VE: but I'm always terrified of situations like that when I especially have to when it's a work-related thing we're like in a circle and then you have to like say who you are and where you're from and like what you do that is qu- really terrible like I somehow seize up but again I'm not one hundred percent sure whether it is about like language or more like about like work
[…]
[…]
VE: on the other hand like it is already like better or it is getting bet- better but it is still a bit of a challenge
KR: yeah yeah
VE: like when it's a work thing because on the other hand like now for example I did like some coaching or like some training for sports coaches ( ) in the summer [about topic X] and there I didn't know I only knew like a few of them but the others I didn't know I asked a bit or where they are from like that and then then uhm for me it was I was a bit nervous but it wasn't like in the end like when I got going it was not=
KR: mmh
VE: =it didn't bother me any more that that now it's not quite quite maybe like perfect Finnish
KR: yeah
VE: or perfect Finnish in that way=
KR: yeah
VE: =like you can just throw yourself into it much better

When I visited Veronika at her workplace I was able to observe a lot of informal communication between her and other people in the shared office space, from greetings in the hallways to chatting over lunch in the staff room. In the interview, she also told me that she and her immediate colleagues have a weekly meeting

in which they discuss matters related to ongoing projects, and that she feels comfortable saying what she needs to say in those meetings. She emphasised that she and her colleagues have known each other for a long time and that they all know English, so she can use some words in English and, if she does make a mistake in Finnish, they will simply laugh at it together. The situation that Veronika describes in the excerpt above is different in that it involves a somewhat more formal setting, as well as people she does not yet know. The example is interesting especially from the viewpoint of the interaction order: sitting in a circle and having to introduce yourself puts language in sharp focus, as the attention of all the participants is on one speaker at a time, and the interactional protocol (saying "who you are and where you are from and like what you do") makes participants' turns easily comparable. Indeed, in the interview, she goes on to tell me that her biggest fear in such situations is being the first to speak, because then she cannot model her turn on that of an earlier speaker. This suggests that not only beginning language learners (see e.g. Suni 2008: 211-219) but also very advanced second language speakers still sometimes rely on linguistic resources provided by others.

In the second part of the excerpt, Veronika emphasises that her insecurity does not concern speaking in front of a group or in front of strangers in general. She mentions a training session that she led for sports coaches and how she easily overcame her nervousness once she got going. Once she felt that her "imperfect" Finnish did not matter so much, she could simply "throw herself" into what she was doing. This is in line with what I could observe in another context in which I had the chance to be present: a sports group for children aged 11-13 that she coaches. Here, language use is an integral part of the interaction order. As an instructor, Veronika explains the excercises and gives instructions and feedback while the children ask questions and interact informally with each other during the practice. However, the focus remains firmly on the excercises and all communication is aimed at enabling this joint action (e.g. the children ask clarifying questions if they do not immediately understand the instructions, and Veronika picks up their phrasings in her answers). This can again be seen as a matter of intersecting interaction orders and discourses. While coaching the sports group or training other coaches, Veronika certainly engages in a lot of language use and, as the instructor, she is often the centre of attention. However, from a language ideological point of view, the language use in such situations appears to be mostly instrumental. That is, the function of the verbal instructions is to enable other kinds of action and thus, once common understanding has been established, the focus quickly shifts away from the speaker.

An example of how a focus on language can be mediated also by the historical body can be found in the additional data I collected from Judit. Judit works in health care and describes her job as demanding a great deal of language use in different registers, from talking to patients to negotiating with colleagues, receiving instructions or typing up short reports (also see Seilonen et al. 2016). On the whole, Judit is rather confident about her general and professional Finnish skills, even though she admits that in terms of subtlety and sophistication her Finnish

skills might still fall short of what she is able to do in her first language, Hungarian. On the other hand, she also doubts that linguistic skills in a narrow sense are what matters most:

Excerpt 67

JD: toki siinä ehkä terveysalalla on tämä kieli on vaan yks asia mutta tuo vuorovaikutus ja se että millä tavalla sä kohtelet näitä ihmisiä ja miten puhut heille että miten katsot silmiin ja miten että sekin tekee niin ison vaikutuksen että musta tuntuu että kun mulla on jotenkin tämä on niin semmonen mun vahvuusalue tämä vuorovaikutus että sen takia että mä mun kielitaito vaikka oiskaan o- et että se ei vaikuta
KR: mmh
JD: koska miten toi yks potilas tossa antanut mu- kesällä mulle sellaista palautetta että se on uskomatonta että minä aina hymyilen että miten miten että onko että ja hän sanoi että ku se häntä piristää joka kerta kun mä tuun huoneeseen ja sanoi näin että tämä että minä hymyilen aina ja on tämmönen asenne että se se herättää luottamusta
KR: mmh
JD: että et että tässä työssä näköjään että se on se on ihan että se on vain yks juttu että sä puhut kieltä mutta paljon enemmän on se että millä tavalla käytät sitä ja millä äänensävyllä esimerkiks se on mulle yks semmonen ykkösjuttu ollut alusta asti opetella että mi- millä mi- millaista äänensävyä käytän
KR: mmh
JD: tiettyjen ryhmien kanssa (.) koska se se on kaikki
KR: mmh
JD: että se että mulla sanat menee välillä ei- siinä ei oo väliä mutta jos mä puhun epäystävällisesti tai ylimielisesti tai et (.)

JD: of course in health care maybe the language is just one thing but the interaction and how you treat these people and how you talk to them how you look them in the eye and how this too has such a big impact so I feel that I have somehow this is such a strength of mine this interacting because I even if my language skills weren't it wouldn't matter
KR: mmh
JD: because how this one patient g- in the summer gave me feedback how it is incredible that I always smile and like how how like is it and they said that it cheers them up every time I enter the room and they said that the fact that I always smile and have this attitude it raises trust
KR: mmh
JD: so in this work apparently it's it's like speaking the language is just one thing but a lot more [important] is how you use it and with what tone of voice for example this has been a number one thing for me from the beginning to learn wh- what wh- what kind of tone of voice I use
KR: mmh
JD: with certain groups (.) because that that is everything
KR: mmh
JD: the fact that I sometimes get the words [wrong] doesn't- it doesn't matter but if I speak in an unfriendly or arrogant way or (.)

According to Judit, gaining patients' trust by talking to them is an integral part of their treatment, so language use is squarely in focus in patient interactions. However, she feels that pragmatic skills (such as eye contact or tone of voice) are at least as important as linguistic skills (if not more important) for good patient communication. Importantly, Judit feels that her good interactional skills are an

integral part of her personality and, as she tells me elsewhere, understanding that these skills are perhaps her greatest strength was a crucial insight in the process of becoming a health care professional. She also thinks that her cultural background plays an important role here, since she generally considers Hungarians to be more open and talkative than Finnish people. Thus, when encountering patients at work, it is Judit's historical body that makes flawless language use secondary, even in situations where language use is a central part of the social action.

During the second phase of data collection I also had the chance to observe some contexts in which language seemed to play almost no role at all. For instance, in addition to visiting Veronika at her workplace and at the children's sports group she coaches, I also accompanied her to a sports group for adults in which she is a participant. Here, language use is mostly present through the directions given by the instructor, while the participants display passive understanding by doing the appropriate movements, although they might casually chat during the excercises and in breaks. However, a lot of the interaction seems to be nonverbal. For instance, the warm-up exercises involve some funny movements and participants laugh together without any need for language use. Similarly, when practising moves in pairs later, language use is mostly restricted to the encouragement participants give each other (e.g. Veronika often comments on her training partner's movements by simply saying *hyvä* 'good'). This type of situation, in which the focus is again on other actions than language use, does not require more than receptive language skills, so Veronika's engagement in the given social action seems to depend very little on productive language use.

I encountered a similar context when accompanying Sandra to her choir practice, which has its own routine. After some informal socialising while the choir members arrive, the practice begins with a vocal warm-up led by the conductor before everybody takes a seat in their own vocal section and the actual rehearsal starts. Both during the warm-up and during the rehearsal the singers stand or sit as a group with their gaze directed at the conductor. As in Veronika's sports group, interaction mainly consists of the singers following the conductor's instructions by, e.g., repeating the phrases sung in the warm-up. While language is thus audibly and visibly present and is attended to, e.g. in the conductor's instructions or the lyrics of the songs being rehearsed, competent participation usually does not require more than receptive linguistic skills. Additionally, singers can make use of a range of linguistic affordances (see van Lier 2004: 90-96) for participation, such as sheet music and printed song lyrics, as well as affordances provided by the interaction order, such as repeating a vocal warm-up exercise after the conductor or following what other singers are doing.

However, a story that Sandra tells me when we chat after a rehearsal shows that language can be made salient in surprising situations:

Excerpt 68

SA: ja da hatt ich übrigens auch n sch(h)önes Erlebnis bei unserm Sommerkonzert dass oder bei unserm Frühlingskonzert das plö- bei dem ersten Konzert eben plötzlich da ham doch sie ganz gut geklatscht und so dann hat der Dirigent plötzlich gesagt

so jetzt singen wir ne Zugabe [traditionelles finnisches Lied] okay keine Noten heh nich angekündigt nichts okay
KR: heh heh hast du einfach mal den Mund bewegt oder
SA: ne es sieht ja noch doofer aus
KR: heh ja
SA: weißte wenn ich den Mund falsch aufmache und so ich hab einfach nich gesungen und hab dann hinterher gesagt ich hab des aus Prot(h)est heh heh [traditionelles finnisches Lied] das ging mit der Deutsch(h)en n(h)ich und so
KR: heh heh heh
SA: ne ne (.) ne da hab ich mir die Noten ausgedruckt f(h)ürs ausgedruckt fürs nächste Konzert aber so das können die halt alle auswendig weißte alle
KR: ja
SA: da gabs wirklich irgendwie keinen der der das nich konnte und die andere Deutsche die singt seit weiß nich fünfzehn J(h)ahren in diesem Chor oder so
KR: ja=ja
SA: die konnte das natürlich auch

SA: yeah I had an int(h)eresting experience at our summer concert by the way or at our spring concert that sud- well at the first concert in any case all of a sudden the audience was clapping quite a lot and then the conductor suddenly said that we're going to do an encore now [traditional Finnish song] okay no sheet music heh unannounced nothing okay
KR: heh heh did you just move your mouth or
SA: no that would have looked even sillier
KR: heh yeah
SA: you know when I open my mouth in the wrong place and so on I just didn't sing and afterwards I said that I didn't sing it in prot(h)est heh heh the [traditional Finnish song] didn't sit well with the G(h)erman and so on
KR: heh heh heh
SA: no no (.) well then I printed the sheet music f(h)or the next concert but everybody else knows it by heart you know everybody
KR: yeah
SA: there was really absolutely noone who wouldn't have known it and the other German [choir member] has been singing in this choir for I don't know fifteen y(h)ears
KR: yeah=yeah
SA: she knew it too of course

As I argued above, the choir practice seems to be a context where individual participants' productive language skills are not usually put into focus. Rather, participation largely relies on basic receptive language skills and is additionally aided by a range of linguistic and interactional affordances. Sandra's story about the concert is, however, an example of how such supportive structures can suddenly vanish: unlike the other singers, Sandra cannot draw on her historical body, but participation would have required preparation on her part. While all the other songs performed in the concert have been rehearsed, the encore is something that everybody is simply expected to know by heart. By specifically mentioning the other German choir member, Sandra seems to imply that the song in question is an integral part of the collective historical body of Finnsh people. On the other hand, she also acknowledges that experience, such as having sung in the choir for a long time, plays a role as well, and she intends to prepare for future

events by printing out the sheet music and learning the song by herself. Interestingly, after the concert she seemed to feel the need to comment on her inability to sing along with the others, making this even more explicitly, albeit jokingly, a question of cultural background and intrinsic Germanness.

So far in this chapter, I have described my observations in different everyday contexts and analysed how my participants experience participation in these contexts. I have shown that language can play very different roles in different situations and that the salience of language probably fluctuates throughout my participants' everyday experiences. In some of these situations it seems to be the interaction order that determines how much language is in the spotlight (e.g. Veronika's experience with rounds of introduction as opposed to sports activities where the focus is on other actions), in others it is historical bodies (e.g. Sandra's story about the concert). From this perspective, finding one's place as a legitimate second language speaker of Finnish is not only a question of the individual speaker's level of competence and the language ideologies present in Finish society, but it also takes place in an everyday mosaic of different contexts and situations in which language is salient to different degrees and participation is enabled in different ways. In the following, I take a similar perspective on identity, asking when and how my participants' background is made salient in different circumstances.

7.2.2 '…here it isn't such a big thing that you're a foreigner': participation and the impact of a diverse environment

In Section 7.1.2, I showed how highlighting being German fulfilled different functions for Julia and, in the end, was even part of creating a professional niche for herself at her workplace. I then became interested in whether, where and how my other participants' backgrounds were highlighted. When visiting Veronika at her workplace, I was able to observe and partially record a conversation that took place over lunch in the staff room. The staff room is open to anyone in the shared office and people informally gather there to eat the food they bring along. While it is not always the same group of people (people also come and go while I am there), Veronika seems to know everyone at the table (about 5-7 people at any given time). The conversation topics range from family history to dialects to other people in the office. Veronika actively participates in the conversation and often contributes stories about either her Czech family or her Finnish partner's family. When everybody has heated their food and has started eating, one person comments on Veronika's food in the following way:

Excerpt 69

CA: tsekkiläinenkin on sopeutunut tähän suomalaiseen
VE: mmh
CB: kur- ruokakulttuuriin kuitenkin ja
VE: kyllä aika aika niinku näppärästi
CA: mmh

VE: mmh (.) joo mä tykkään niinku lihapullista todella paljon
CB: mmh
CA: heh heh heh
VE: niinku se on ihan-
CB: j(h)o heh heh
VE: siis se on se niin helppo ruoka aina niinku tehä
CB: mmh
CA: mh
VE: semmosta jos haluaa niinku puolessa tunnissa
CB: mmh
VE: valmistaa ja on tällainen että se on sitten helppo ja sitten se on just tällainen ruoka minulle joka mä mä jaksan syödä sen myös niinku monta päivä peräkkäin

CA: the Czech too has apparently assimilated into this Finnish
VE: mmh
CA: doo- food culture and
VE: yes it's like quite quite handy
CA: mmh
VE: mmh (.) yeah I like meatballs like a lot
CB: mmh
CA: heh heh heh
VE: like it's so-
CB: y(h)eah heh heh
VE: it's such a simple food always to like make
CB: mmh
CA: mh
VE: the kind that you can prepare like in half an hour
CB: mmh
VE: and it's like that and then it's easy and then it's exactly the kind of food for me that I I can eat it like many days in a row

Like Sandra in Excerpt 59 (see Section 7.1.1), Veronika does not choose to draw attention to the food she is eating herself, but the conversation is initiated by someone else at the table. Here, however, the question of cultural background is brought up already in the initial comment. While speaking in the third person, CA addresses Veronika directly as "the Czech", which leads to his suggesting a contrast between Czech and Finnish culture. Veronika, however, does not pick up on the suggestion that meatballs are a particularly Finnish food, but rather explains how they are simply a practical food that is easy to prepare and that she can eat for many days. Just like Sandra, she thus tries to offer a rational explanation for her choice rather than addressing the question of culture. While initially seeming rather banal, interactions like this in which Veronika's background is highlighted are apparently quite common in her everyday work environment, as she tells me in our interview later that day. She says that it is particularly with CA that she often talks about the Czech Republic and Finland, especially with regard to sports (e.g. ice hockey, which is a popular sport in both countries). The above excerpt also shows that explicitly addressing Veronika's Czech background does not have to involve more serious discourses of national or cultural difference, but can simply serve as a conversation opener: it is Veronika who

takes her space in the ensuing interaction, while her colleagues are listening. This is perhaps the reason why Veronika claims she herself often introduces her Czechness into the conversation, as she tells me in the interview:

Excerpt 70

VE: […] just sitä tsekkiläi- tosta niinku mistä me puhuttiin se on kyllä koska mä itse otan se aika paljon esille
KR: mhm
VE: koska koko ajan niinku vertailee sen tois- se toiseen kulttuuriin että minkälaista niinku tsekeissä verrattuna suomeen erityisesti lounastau- tauolla
KR: mmh
VE: lounastauolla mi- milloin niinku jolloin puhutaan semmosia yleisiä juttuja sitten se aina tulee koska aina niinku peilaa sitä niinku omaa kulttuurii ja miten se meni siel mä tuon ite se aika usein esille
[…]
VE: just niinku (tossain) kahden niinku kaks viikkoa sitten puhuttiin sil- t- taas se oli semmonen ruokailu ja sitten ei ketään niinku kysynyt mistä mä olen kotoisin=
KR: mmh
VE: =tai mitään vaikka ne kaikki tiesivät niinku mikä on mun nimi nimi
KR: mmh
VE: etunimi sukunimi heh mut sitten se oli jotain niinku m- mä ja mä käytin siis vertaiskuvana se tsekki ja sit se oli se yksi henkilö siellä (joka joo) mä olin siellä vaihto-oppilaana prahassa ja sit niinku siitä lähti keskustelu että periaatteessa se on niinku myöskin aika hyvä niinku ainakin suomessa tuntuu siltä että se on niinku hyvä
KR: mmh
VE: hyvä juttu (tai vaan) niinku semmmonen s- small talk(h) heh

VE: […] exactly this Czec- like what we were talking about well that is because I bring that up myself quite a lot
KR: mhm
VE: because you like compare it all the time the oth- to the other culture like what it is like in the Czech Republic in comparison to Finland especially during lunch bre- break
KR: mmh
VE: lunch break wh- when we like when we talk about these kinds of generic things then it always comes up because you always like reflect it like onto your own culture and how it was there I bring that up myself quite often
[…]
VE: just (sometime) two like two weeks ago we were talking the- a- again we were eating together and then nobody like asked where I was from=
KR: mmh
VE: =or anything even if everybody knew like what my name name is
KR: mmh
VE: first name last name heh but then there was something like I- I and I used the Czech Republic as a point of comparison and the there was this one person there (who was like) I was there as an exchange student in Prague and the conversation like started from there so in a way it is like also a pretty good like at least in Finland I feel that it is like a good
KR: mmh
VE: a good thing (or just) like this kind of s- small talk(h) heh

According to Veronika, comparing the Czech and Finnish contexts, and thereby also highlighting her own background, is an easy way of making an interesting contribution to the conversation. This is especially true of informal interactions at work, such as lunch, when the typical interaction order involves a lot of "generic" talk. In Chapter 5.2 I showed that my participants often bring up their background in order to avoid passing for a native speaker and to diminish interactional insecurity. Veronika's description of a lunch or dinner event at work in the second half of the excerpt points to a different reason: bringing up her background facilitates interaction with people with whom she does not interact on a daily basis. This is not least because Veronika feels that Finns tend to have a positive image of the Czech Republic and often have personal experiences they can share, which makes it a fruitful yet safe topic for small talk in the work context.[33]

Another reason why Veronika's Czech background is often highlighted may be the social composition of her work environment. As far as she is aware, she is the only foreigner in the entire shared office, making it possible for her background to be operationalised in discourse that highlights her being different. When she first started, her colleagues often introduced her as the company's "Czech support" (*tsekkiläinen vahvistus*), a term which is often used for the Czech players on Finnish ice hockey teams. In the interview she tells me that while she did not mind the term in itself, it did make her think that she should gather more work experience and skills in order to be introduced with reference to her official position in the company, something that is indeed the case now. From a language ideological viewpoint, it is also interesting to think about the impact of such practices over time and across contexts. On the one hand, by frequently highlighting her background Veronika creates opportunities for participating in informal social situations and for introducing her perspectives and experiences in conversations. Moreover, through this practice she makes herself noticeable as a proficient second language speaker of Finnish, thus perhaps even broadening her interlocutors' conceptions about such speakers. On the other hand, she does feel that being labelled as "the Czech" in a professional context somewhat detracted from her image as a competent employee, even if this has changed now.

The experience of being the only foreigner in a certain context is indeed a quite frequent one for my participants. In an informal interview during my visit, Julia describes her place in her social environment in the following way:

Excerpt 71

JL: also ich merk schon dass ich anders bin als die Finnen aber
KR: mmh
JL: im Endeffekt hab ich glaub ich relativ sch- so so meinen Pa- Pl- Platz gefunden wo ich fröhlich deutsch sein kann und
KR: mmh
JL: trotzdem hier zugehöre

33 This is something that Judit mentions as well: talking about Hungary is a good topic of conversation and helps to get to know people, since many Finns have positive associations or personal experiences with Hungarians.

KR: ja
JL: als die Deutsche

JL: I do notice that I'm different from the Finns but
KR: mmh
JL: in the end I quite have f- like like found my pa- pl- place where I can be happily German and
KR: mmh
JL: still belong
KR: yeah
JL: as the German

In the first part of this chapter, I showed that Julia frequently brings up her background and frames herself as "the German", not least because it has helped her build a professional niche at her workplace, where almost all of her colleagues are Finnish. However, Julia's private social circle has recently been broadened through a new relationship. For the first time, she has gained a glimpse into the international community where she lives, which includes many people who do not speak Finnish and have only little contact with Finns. This made her realise how different her own trajectory in Finland has been. This is how she describes her social environment in more detail:

Excerpt 72

JL: na ich glaub ich bin einfach inmitten von Finnen
KR: mmh
JL: und auch Finnen der die auch so nich ausländische Freunde haben oder so also es is irgendwie nich so *moni-* äh wie sagt man viel- wa- vielfältig (.) also kulturell vielfältig […] das is halt schon sehr sehr sehr sehr finnisch was ich so gesehen hab in meinen
KR: mmh
JL: acht Jahren hier
KR: mmh
JL: halt alles mit *sauna* und *mökki* und (.) die ganzen Sachen die gehören halt einfach dazu und *mariskoolit* und
KR: pff:: hah hah hah hah hah hah hah
JL: *hh heh heh was ma halt nur als Finne macht *hh
KR: ja
JL: des is irgendwie so was ich kennengelernt hab

JL: well I think I'm just surrounded by Finns
KR: mmh
JL: and also Finns who also don't have foreign friends or something I mean it's somehow not so moni- *[multi-] uh how do you say di- va- diverse (.) like culturally diverse […] it is all very very very very Finnish what I have seen in my*
KR: mmh
JL: eight years here
KR: mmh
JL: like everything with sauna *and* mökki *[summer cottage] and (.) all these things they are just part of it and* mariskoolit *[designer glass bowls]*
KR: pff:: hah hah hah hah hah hah hah

*JL: *hh heh heh the stuff you only do as a Finn *hh*
KR: yeah
JL: somehow that's what I have got to know

Essentially, what Julia describes in this short excerpt is her context of socialisation in Finland. Not only have most of her social contacts been Finnish people, but she also implies that her environment has been culturally quite homogenous, i.e., her Finnish friends do not tend to know many other foreigners. Elsewhere in the interview she mentions that most of her friends have stayed in their hometown to study and do not travel extensively, making this environment not only Finnish but decidedly local. Julia captures this environment by mentioning three emblematic items of Finnish culture, *sauna*, *mökki* ('summer cottage') and *mariskoolit* (a type of Finnish designer glass bowl), thereby also invoking discourses and stereotypes about what it means to be Finnish.

Such an immersive environment has had its advantages: Julia has gained a high proficiency in Finnish quickly and is thoroughly acquainted with Finnish cultural and social norms. Indeed, when I later ask her about whether she has already found her place in her new, more international social circle, she says that she actually feels quite Finnish in this environment and seems to get along most easily with the Finnish people in the group.[34] On the other hand, having been the only foreigner in this relatively homogeneous environment (see also Chapter 5.3) for a long time has also contributed to her having adopted the identity of "the German" (see Excerpt 71). Like Veronika's experience at her workplace, discussed earlier in this chapter, Julia herself frequently engages in discourses of cultural difference, which she also uses to her own advantage (see Section 7.1.2). However, from an ideological perspective, such discourses are enabled and make sense only in an environment perceived as the cultural default, so to speak, i.e., a homogeneous Finnish environment.

Out of my four focus participants, only Sandra lives in the Greater Helsinki area, while Julia, Judit and Veronika live in other parts of Finland. By chance, both Julia and Judit happened to do an internship in Helsinki about 12 to 18 months after our first interviews, and I had the chance to talk to them both during this time. Judit's training in the health care sector requires her to do a number of internships and, within the last few months, she has worked as an intern in four different placements in different cities in Finland. Since a new workplace always comes with new social contacts, I am interested in how frequently Judit has had to explain her background to her co-workers. She describes her experience as follows:

Excerpt 73

KR: […] sä oot nyt ollu neljässä eri harjoittelupaikassa
JD: voit kuvitella

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34 *[…] ich fühl mich sehr finnisch irgendwie in dessen freundeskreis […] also irgendwie komm ich dann sehr gut mit den finnen klar* '[…] I somehow feel very Finnish in [my new partner's] circle of friends […] somehow I get along really well with the Finns'.

KR: miten heh
JD: ja kaikki ja melkein kaikki kysyy
KR: okei
JD: joka vuorossa joka vuorossa kun tapaan uuden ihmis- täällä helsingissä ei ja tätäällä o- tämä on tuntunut tosi mukavalta ku ja sitte mä huomasin silloin alussa että mitä että tässä ei kukaan halua tietää mitään ja mä hoksasin että nii ku täällä ei oo niin iso juttu että sä oot ulkomaalainen ja sä puhut vaikka suomea aijaa unkarista no nii ehkä tommo- tommonen ollu että tai mä ehkä monesti sitten sanonut et minä sanoin puhuin jostakin ja sen yhteydessä sanoin kyl mä oon tosiaan että sieltä kotoisin ja blablabla ja ei mitään tullu että no aijaa että mistä si- (.) se on ihan totta täällä täällä ei ei se se oo niin iso juttu kun vaikka [muualla suomessa]
KR: tosi jännittävää
JD: nii mutta no kyllä täällä minäkin näen että kuinka paljon ulkomaalaisia täällä on että se ei siis [missä asun] toki kaikkialla on niitä mutta ei voi verrata
KR: mmh
JD: täällä sairaalassakin iha oikeesti että katsot kansliassa vaikka potilaiden nimilistaa ja puolet vähintään on ulkomaalaistaustanen

KR: […] you have now done four different internships
JD: you can imagine
KR: how heh
JD: and everyone and almost everyone asks
KR: okay
JD: in every shift every shift when I meet a new pers- not here in Helsinki and he- here i- this has been really nice because and then in the beginning I noticed that what that here nobody wants to know anything and I realised that yeah like here it isn't such a big thing that you're a foreigner and you also speak Finnish oh from Hungary well maybe som- something like that I've heard or often I have said that I I was talking about something and in that context I did say that I'm actually originally from there and blablabla and no reaction like okay oh where are y- (.) it's true that here here it isn't isn't as big a thing as for example [elsewhere in Finland]
KR: really interesting
JD: yeah but well I can see here how many foreigners there are here it's not [like that] [where I live] of course everywhere there are foreigners but you can't compare it
KR: mmh
JD: in the hospital too seriously you look for example at the patient list at the secretariat and at least half of them have a foreign background

Referring to all the internships she has done, Judit first says that almost all the new people she has met at work have asked her about where she is from. However, in Helsinki "nobody wants to know anything" and when Judit volunteers information about her background there is "no reaction". She explains this by pointing to the much larger number of residents with a foreign background in the capital than where she lives. This is not only Judit's personal impression: in Finland, almost 50% of the population registered as foreign language speakers live in the Greater Helsinki area (Statistics Finland 2020b), making this geographical area by far the most diverse in Finland. Therefore, she says, people in Helsinki are more used to foreigners, especially to foreigners who "also speak Finnish".

Julia's account of her experience at her internship in Helsinki shows some striking similarities:

Excerpt 74

JL: […] ich genieß es im Moment so sehr dass dass [beim Praktikum] sind ja die [Mitarbeiter] aus der ganzen Welt (.) und ich find das so genial dass ich zwischendurch dort Englisch reden kann und Finnisch reden kann und Deutsch reden kann also es sind so viele verschiedene Nationen auf einem Haufen und (.) das is halt so dermaßen international was ich [von meinem Wohnort] überhaupt gar nich mehr kenne und ich genieße das so sehr dass ich sozusagen überhaupt nich exotisch dort bin und mich überhaupt nich erklären muss sondern einfach nur halt da bin und halt aus Deutschland bin und [aus meinem finnischen Wohnort] wahrscheinlich den Finnen muss ich mich am meisten erklären da wei- weil se halt merken dass ich n [lokalen Dialekt] hab
[…]
KR: aber ha- ha- merkst du n Unterschied zwischen zwischen [deinem Wohnort] und und Helsinki
JL: ääh (.) ja ich glaub schon (.) also es gibt einfach mehr mehr Ausländer in Helsinki ma is halt nie niemals sozusagen der einzige und es gibt hier auch so viele schwedischsprechende Finnen dass hier irgendwie so verschiedene Sprachen (.) normaler sind und deswegen ist das glaub ich nich so (.) ich glaub [an meinem Wohnort] bin ich schon immer ne kleine Sensation
KR: hmm
JL: und und hier halt mal nich und das is auch ganz entspannend

JL: […] at the moment I'm really enjoying that that [at my internship] the [employees] are from all over the world (.) and I love it that I can sometimes speak English and speak Finnish and speak German there are so many different nationalities together and (.) it is so thoroughly international which I'm not used to at all any more [where I live] and I enjoy it so much that I'm not exotic at all there so to speak and that I don't have to explain myself at all but that I'm just there and I'm from Germany and [from where I live in Finland] I probably have to explain myself the most to the Finns be- because they can tell I speak [a local Finnish dialect] […]
KR: but ha- ha- can you notice a difference between [where you live] and Helsinki
JL: uuh (.) yeah I do think so (.) there are just more more foreigners in Helsinki you're never the only one so to say and there are also so many Swedish-speaking Finns here so that here different languages are somehow (.) more normal and that's why I think it's not like that (.) I think [where I live] I'm always a small sensation
KR: hmm
JL: and and here I'm not for a change and that is also quite relaxing

Julia is thoroughly enjoying her internship in an international environment, which is a new experience for her in Finland. The environment also reflects Julia's own multilingual repertoire: during the internship, she gets the chance to use English, Finnish and German. Most importantly, however, she feels that she does not have to explain herself – in other words, explain about being a proficient Finnish speaker with a foreign background. This points to the same effect that Judit mentions in Excerpt 73: elsewhere in Finland she constantly has to tell her story, while in Helsinki people do not necessarily expect any explanation. For

Julia, this seems to enable a kind of hybrid identity, as she can be "just there", and her being from both Germany and elsewhere in Finland is not questioned. At most, what is exotic about her is that she speaks a variety of Finnish that is markedly not from Helsinki; neither her German background nor the fact that she is a proficient second language speaker of Finnish is, however, exotic. Thus, in this new environment, Julia has experienced going from being "a small sensation" to being able to relax and just be herself.

While the above suggests that Julia feels that what is different is mostly the more diverse environment, this diverse environment also has consequences for the kind of identity work she engages in. When I ask her how she manages when she tells people about her background during her internship, her response is:

Excerpt 75

JL: aber grade so ja ich glaub wenn ich zum Beispiel mit andern Leuten Englisch rede oder so die jetzt auch Ausländer sind in Finnland dann hab ich irgendwie dieses Gefühl dass ich irgendwie ihnen erzählen möchte dass ich sie im gewissen Weise in gewisser Weise verstehen kann […] ja also da hab ich auch wieder das Gefühl dass ichs irgendwie anbringen möchte

KR: mmh

JL: dass sie einfach wissen dass ich dass dass wir irgendwo also dass wir sozusagen freier vielleicht auch über Finnland reden können

KR: mhm

JL: oder wenn sie sich mal über Finnland aufregen können können sie das bei mir natürlich tun (.) und vielleicht trauen sie es sich nich so sehr bei Finnen (.) und deswegen glaub ich erzähl ichs aber (.) ja ja bei vielen Finnen hab ichs eigentlich nich großartig also grad auch wenn ich irgendwie als als nur im zugucken dabei war und n paar fragen immer mal zwischendurch gestellt hab oder so und da hab ich au nich gesagt übrigens (.) ich bin da aus Deutschland

KR: m(h)heh heh heh heh

JL: heh heh heh (.) sondern hab einfach nur meine Fragen gestellt

KR: mmh

JL: oder so oder ja (.) oder heute zum Beispiel auch ha- war eine die hat sogar nach meinem Namen gefragt und ich hab meinen Namen gesagt den hat sie natürlich nich verstanden hab ich meinen Namen nochmal gesagt und ich hab noch nichmal das Bedürfnis verspürt zu sagen dass er aus Deutschland is

KR: mmh

JL: ich hab einfach nur es so sein lassen ich dachte sie kann fragen wenn sie will (.) vielleicht kam dann so ein bisschen Helsinki in mir über weil ich so dachte es es kann ja auch normal sein es kann ja auch sein dass ich sozusagen ein deutschen ein finnisches Elternteil hab und deswegen […] ich glaub es is irgendwie in Helsinki gibts viel mehr Möglichkeiten von dem also warum du zum Beispiel n andern Namen hast und [an meinem Wohnort] is es so hundertprozentig dass sie dich fragen wer und woher du den Namen hast

JL: but especially with yeah I think that when I talk with others in English for example who are also foreigners in Finland then I somehow feel that I somehow want to tell them that in a way in a way I can understand them […] and then I also feel that I want to tell them [that I'm not Finnish]

KR: mmh

JL: *just so they know that I that we can somehow like that we can maybe also talk more freely about Finland*
KR: *mhm*
JL: *or that when they are annoyed at Finland they can they can do that with me of course (.) and maybe they wouldn't dare that much with Finns (.) and that's why I think I tell them but (.) yeah yeah with many Finns I haven't really like especially when I was there as as just to watch and asked some questions in between and there I also didn't say by the way (.) I'm from Germany*
KR: *m(h)heh heh heh heh*
JL: *heh heh heh (.) but just asked my questions*
KR: *mmh*
JL: *or something like that or yeah (.) or today for example there was someone who asked my name and I said my name and of course she didn't get it then I said my name again and I didn't even feel the urge to say that it's from Germany*
KR: *mmh*
JL: *I just let it be and thought she can ask if she wants to (.) maybe a little bit of Helsinki came over me just then because I just thought it it can also be normal I could also have one Finnish parent and that's why […] I think it somehow is there are many more possibilities in Helsinki in terms of why you have a different name for example and [where I live] it's a one hundred percent chance that they'll ask you who and where you get the name from*

In our first interview, 18 months before the internship, Julia claimed that when meeting new (Finnish) people she always tells them about her German background right away (see Chapter 5.2.3). Back then, she told me that this is because she wants to give a preemptive explanation for possible mistakes or saying something odd. Now, this seems to have changed somewhat. During the internship in Helsinki, Julia feels that she likes to be open about her background especially with other foreigners, who might otherwise mistake her for a Finn, since they can see her speaking Finnish with the Finnish employees. While thus frequently positioning herself as a foreigner, this practice has a different quality from her highlighting being German at home. Instead of trying to frame her proficient yet non-native language use and thus increase her legitimacy as a speaker of Finnish, Julia attempts to align herself with other non-Finns to create a space for solidarity. With her Finnish contacts at work, on the other hand, she does not necessarily feel the urge to introduce herself as German any more. However, rather than being solely a question of her personal development, this seems to be a consequence of her new environment ("a little bit of Helsinki came over me"): Julia does not feel the need to explain her background since "it can also be normal" that she could be a Finnish-speaking person with a foreign-sounding name. This is not least because the uncertainties associated with possibly passing for a native speaker rely on strict ideological boundaries between native and non-native speakers. In a diverse environment, these boundaries can become rather blurred: instead of the clear division between Finns and foreigners, there can be Finns who speak Swedish instead of Finnish as their first language, bilinguals, as well as people born abroad who have grown up in Finland.

The experiences Judit and Julia describe are closely connected to their personal trajectories in Finland. Having become speakers of Finnish in less diverse parts of Finland, they are accustomed to questions about their background and

have developed practices and strategies that correspond to what they feel is their place in their communities. Helsinki, by contrast, offers a different environment that comes with a different set of ideologies and expectations and requires different strategies of identity construction. As Finnish society all over the country is becoming increasingly diverse, these individual and situated experiences may, however, also offer a glimpse of the place that highly proficient adult second language speakers could occupy in the future.

7.3 Discussion

In this chapter I have had a closer look at the additional ethnographic and interview data collected with my four focus participants. In Chapter 7.1 I focused on two participants' positionings in specific situations and contexts. The analysis of a book club meeting shows that my participant, Sandra, positions herself variably as an insider in Finnish society, as a somewhat neutral expert on Finland and Finnish language, or as distinctly German. The analysis of the data collected at and about Julia's work reveals a similar pattern: Julia often highlights being German or a foreigner, while also positioning herself as an insider both at her workplace and in the linguistic and cultural context of Finland. In Chapter 7.2, I took a broader view of my focus participants' everyday experiences. I first discussed the role that language plays in different contexts and showed how situations in which language and therefore speakers are particularly salient alternate in my participants' everyday life with those in which legitimate participation can be achieved through other means as well. Finally, I turned to the effects that linguistically and culturally diverse and less diverse environments have on participation and identity work.

This chapter has further illuminated some of the central themes that emerged from the analysis of the interview data in Chapters 5 and 6. For instance, in Chapter 5.2, I argued that, for second language speakers, practices of avoiding passing for a native speaker by highlighting their backgrounds often serve the purpose of favourably framing their language use, thus raising their legitimacy as speakers. My analysis of Julia's identity work (7.1.2) corroborates this argument, but shows how, for Julia, highlighting being German also has other functions in the complex ecology of her workplace. In Chapter 6.1 I showed that while my participants report that they often comment on their own language use, interlocutors' comments can be experienced as delegitimising. This resonates with the analysis of comments on Sandra's Germanness in this chapter (7.1.1). While Sandra herself frequently highlights her German background, being teased by her friends for using the wrong kind of porridge spoon causes at least some dissonance in the interaction. For a final example, I was able to show how two participants concretely experienced transitioning from a relatively homogenous to a more linguistically and culturally diverse environment, a topic already discussed in Chapter 6.3.

With regard to theoretical insights, this chapter has shown in yet more detail that gaining and maintaining legitimacy as a second language speaker in everyday life is a highly complex process. It can rely on highlighting difference or on unmarked participation; it is connected to emotions and bodily experiences, and can involve productive language skills, but not necessarily so. It can take the form of conscious identity work, but is also always determined by the dynamics of the intersecting trajectories of historical bodies, interaction orders and discourses in place. It is also distributed over time and across contexts, and it takes place in different settings shaped by different language ideologies and posing different expectations regarding language use.

8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this thesis, I have approached the complex relationship between language, identity and ideology from the perspective of the lived reality of highly proficient adult second language speakers of Finnish. By analysing accounts of everyday experiences as well as ethnographic observations and recordings from conversations in different settings, I have identified the intersection of language ideologies and speaker identities as a crucial nexus that conditions how second language speakers can assume legitimate positionings in everyday contexts.

With regard to how highly proficient speakers of Finnish as a second language are perceived, my study demonstrates that language ideologies play an important role in how such speakers are categorised. The common categorisation of such speakers in first encounters as Finland-Swedish, Estonian or early bilinguals is connected to widely held ideas about the difficulty of learning Finnish later in life and underlying ideologies of nativeness. At the same time, the close association of nativelike use of Finnish with Finnishness also sets up the conditions for potential instances of passing for a native speaker. Overall, ideologies of nativeness and related ideas about language feature rather strongly in my participants' accounts, both in the form of attitudes they frequently encounter in interactions with others and as interpretive devices that help them make sense of their experiences as language learners and second language speakers in Finland. My analysis shows that my participants are, however, not passive with regard to language ideologies and the processes of sociolinguistic categorisation mediated by them. Rather, the data suggest that experiences of (mis)categorisation, such as the experience of passing for a native speaker, become inscribed in their historical bodies, preparing them for new encounters and prompting them to develop specific strategies for identity work. In this way, my study counters simplistic discourses that construct highly proficient adult second language speakers of Finnish as successful language learners by showing that nativelike second language use of Finnish actually has to be carefully negotiated in terms of the expectations it raises. Similarly, it shows that ideologies of nativeness, which are usually criticised for setting unreasonable standards for learners in the context of language teaching, can have complex and sometimes almost contradictory effects in real-

life situations. Together, these insights demonstrate that language ideologies are intimately connected to the identities, experiences and practices of second language speakers, even though this dimension has been largely ignored by second language learning research.

The positionings my participants have taken throughout the analysed data are equally complex, varied and contradictory. Highlighting their linguistic background, making visible or hiding gaps in their linguistic repertoire, insisting on communication in Finnish or using English, adopting local and colloquial linguistic varieties or eschewing them: all of these practices are also strategies for constructing identities in interaction, and clearly demonstrate that second language speakers are as much part of the sociolinguistic matrix of their environment as first language speakers. In this thesis I have suggested that, in any given situation, the aim of such positioning strategies is to gain or maintain legitimacy as a speaker and a social actor. In this process, tensions between gaining legitimacy and reaching other goals can emerge. An important result with regard to language learning is that, outside the classroom, second language speakers create the conditions for legitimate participation in social interactions through their positionings, which can sometimes also mean forgoing opportunities for (explicit) language learning. Taking seriously the conditions of second language learning outside classroom contexts must therefore be an important part of any usage-based conceptualisation of language learning.

Finally, taking a broader view on speakerness, I have also argued that issues of linguistic legitimacy can extend beyond language use. In my analysis, I have shown that experiences of difference and exceptionality are not exclusively a consequence of explicit practices of othering, but are equally an effect of societal, cultural and institutional trajectories intersecting with the trajectories of unexpected speakers. This underlines how important a role society and local communities play in (de)legitimising different kinds of speakers. Just as language learning is ultimately not an individual endeavour, so second language speakers' possibilities of participating and belonging are closely linked to the norms and expectations implicit in their environments. In light of the results of my analysis, the linguistic and cultural diversity of social environments, and especially the presence of similar speakers to whom one can relate, is of vital importance to the legitimacy of second language speakers. This is an important finding, particularly with regard to very advanced late learners, who often find themselves competing with first language speakers in educational programmes or the job market.

This study is the first comprehensive investigation of highly proficient adult speakers/late learners of Finnish from a sociolinguistic viewpoint. It thus contributes to both second language research and sociolinguistics especially, but not exclusively, in Finland. More importantly, it has pointed out several ways in which these two fields could be brought into a more engaged dialogue. Sociolinguistics provides a comprehensive perspective on the complex indexical relationship between language, ideologies and processes of identity construction. However, sociolinguistic research has traditionally not concerned itself with advanced

late language learners and their use of dialects, sociolects or styles for constructing linguistic identities. At the same time, individual multilingualism has often been treated as a synchronic phenomenon in sociolinguistics, disregarding speakers' trajectories and the ways in which experiences of becoming a speaker can have a lasting impact on being a speaker. Second language research, on the other hand, is interested in second language variation but has mostly conceptualised it in terms of more or less target-like language use. It is also interested precisely in individual processes and trajectories of language learning. However, it has so far often been unable to thoroughly theorise the broader social and language ideological context of this language learning. Here, highly proficient second language speakers offer important insights. As I have shown, such speakers are in many ways subject to the same sociolinguistic norms and language ideologies (e.g. regarding dialects or sociolects) as first language speakers. At the same time, their experiences and practices are also mediated by ideas about language learning, native speaker ideologies and even discourses about migration or cultural difference. In this study, I have suggested that looking at the nexus of language, identity and ideology can provide a framework in which to address this complex position. This suggestion responds to calls for more holistic approaches in second language research, while also demonstrating that late second language learners can be an insightful topic of sociolinguistic study.

With regard to research design and terminology, my study has also brought together concepts and frameworks from different research traditions in a novel way, combining anthropological, sociolinguistic and sociological perspectives on language ideology, identity and linguistic legitimacy with concepts from nexus analysis. This broad spectrum of perspectives, while theoretically and methodologically challenging at times, was a necessary starting point of the thesis. As I have argued throughout this thesis, second language learning and use are processes of immense complexity, involving cognitive, bodily, experiential, social and ideological dimensions. Studying second language learning and use therefore requires an eclectic approach, even though individual studies can, of course, never address all the relevant dimensions. In this respect, nexus analysis has proven to be a fruitful framework. The notions of historical body, interaction order and discourses in place have been particularly useful for approaching the data purposefully but flexibly. They have enabled me to address the crucial intersection between individual experience, situational factors and the larger sociolinguistic context, where other studies often focus on just one or two of these dimensions. While this has entailed a less detailed analysis than in, for instance, interactional or conversation analytic studies, it has allowed me to explore the dimension of language ideologies, rarely attended to even in socially oriented second language research.

Change inevitably starts taking place from the moment the researcher engages with and navigates a field. With regard to my participants, the interviews not only generated data for this dissertation but also provided them with windows of opportunity for reflecting on everyday experiences as speakers of Finn-

ish as a second language. These topics also often extended into other conversations, which sometimes included my participants' friends or members of their family. From a personal perspective, meeting other highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish and hearing about their experiences also helped me develop a heightened awareness of my own experiences and led me to assess these experiences in new ways. Over the years, my research topic also sparked many informal conversations in and outside the academic community, often revolving around ideas about Finnish as a language (especially the idea of Finnish as an extraordinarily difficult language), immigration and integration policies in Finland, as well as language learning as a process that involves identities and emotions. These conversations hopefully contributed to developing a more thorough understanding of the complex experiences of second language speakers of Finnish.

With regard to broader effects, this dissertation increases awareness of highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish as a growing group of speakers in Finland. As my study has shown, such speakers are still often treated as exceptional. However, linguistic diversity in Finland is increasing in terms of both the diversity of languages and the range of types of proficient second language speakers of Finnish which, in the future, will include more and more very advanced late learners alongside bilingual Finland-Swedes and other early bilinguals, Finns born abroad, or people born in Finland with a migration background. These changes in the sociolinguistic composition of the community of Finnish speakers challenge policies and established structures, such as, for instance, the de facto divide between Finnish-medium study programmes for Finns and English-medium programmes for foreigners (or internationally-minded Finns). They also challenge attitudes and preconceptions regarding second language speakers of Finnish. As I have shown in this thesis, even highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish are often subtly positioned (or have to position themselves) as different in everyday situations. In order to create truly inclusive structures, educators, employers, politicians and public servants need to understand how discourses, cultural norms and language ideologies contribute to this phenomenon.

The results of my study also suggest directions for future research. In my analysis, I have shown that interactional, social and language ideological aspects of second language speakers' environments inform individual experiences, identity work and linguistic practices. Thus, every new or changing context of language use and every new participant can provide more refined insights into the nature of second language learning and use outside a formal learning environment. That said, there are a number of ways in which the topic of this thesis could be explored in more breadth and depth. As one limitation of the present study is its relatively homogeneous set of participants, this could naturally be expanded to include participants with diverse ethnic, socioeconomic or educational backgrounds. Some important aspects of becoming and being a speaker, such as emotions and agency, could also be investigated in more detail. Approaches to emotions in second language learning and use in particular could provide a useful

perspective on how everyday experiences with language use are processed and embodied by participants. With regard to language learning processes, it would also be fruitful to be able to follow participants' development over a longer period of time. As insightful as it has been to focus on already proficient second language speakers, interviewing such speakers meant that, in this study, most language learning experiences were constructed in retrospect. From a usage-based and socially oriented perspective, it would be important to investigate more closely the real-time links between learning opportunities, the development of the linguistic repertoire, and ongoing constructions of speakerness. Such a study would require a research design combining a focus on language development over time, with an analysis of interactional data, as well as a broad ethnographic perspective on contexts of language learning and an investigation of language learners' subjective experience. A particularly interesting group in this respect would be learners of Finnish on an advanced intermediate level, whose journey of becoming (or failing to become) highly proficient or near-native language users could provide important insights into the social factors shaping learners' trajectories. Similarly, the use of ethnographic data could be considerably expanded. Qualitative interview data provide important insights into how second language speakers themselves experience their environments and rationalise their own and others' practices. It is, however, important that such data be complemented by an investigation of what social practices they actually engage in, with what effects, and how these practices connect to other social situations and networks. Everyday interactions in all their variety constitute a messy object of study but are often precisely the contexts in which second language learning and use take place. Observing a wider range of situations would allow for understanding not only where and how language learning potentially occurs, but also, and more importantly, what second language speakers are able and enabled to do with their linguistic repertoires and whether this translates into legitimate participation. This study has already provided important insights into these topics and can therefore serve as a basis for future research.

As the Finnish-speaking community in Finland is quickly becoming more diverse, research into these topics is more relevant than ever. It would be important to investigate, for example, how highly proficient second language speakers of Finnish fare on the job market when competing with first language speakers of Finnish, or how such speakers are integrated into workplaces in which second language speakers of Finnish are still in the minority. These questions are currently being addressed in a research project at the University of Jyväskylä in which I will focus on migrant professionals who aim to enter the workforce quickly.

YHTEENVETO

Oppijasta puhujaksi: Erittäin edistyneen tason suomea toisena kielenä puhuvat aikuiset kielen, identiteetin ja ideologian risteymässä

Tämä tutkimus käsittelee suomea toisena kielenä puhuvia aikuisia ja heidän arkikokemuksiaan kielenkäyttäjinä Suomessa. Tutkimuksen osallistujat ovat suomen kielen vasta aikuisina oppineita ja erittäin korkean kielitaitotason saavuttaneita puhujia. Tällaisia puhujia pidetään edelleen usein poikkeuksellisina, ja tutkimuksen tavoitteena onkin kartoittaa kieltä koskevien käsitysten monisyistä suhdetta toisen kielen puhujien asemaan Suomen kieliyhteisössä.

Tutkimus sijoittuu toisen kielen oppimisen tutkimuksen ja sosiolingvistisen monikielisyystutkimuksen risteyskohtaan. Toisen kielen oppimisen tutkimuksen osalta se ammentaa sosiaalisesti suuntautuneista lähestymistavoista (esim. Duff 2012; Norton 2013): kielen oppiminen ymmärretään tässä tutkimuksessa kokonaisvaltaisesti puhujaksi tulemiseksi eli prosessiksi, johon kiinteästi sisältyy kokemuksia kielenkäyttöympäristöstä ja samalla identiteetin uudelleenneuvottelua. Sosiolingvistiikan osalta taas kielen, identiteetin ja ideologian suhde on keskeisessä asemassa. Nämä ulottuvuudet ymmärretään toisiinsa nivoutuneiksi, ja niitä tarkastellaan neksuksena eli risteymänä (ks. *nexus analysis*, Scollon & Scollon 2004, 2007). Tutkimus nojautuu kolmeen avainkäsitteeseen: kieli-ideologia (*language ideology*; esim. Woolard & Schieffelin 1994; Woolard 1998; Kroskrity 2004), identiteetti/asemointi (*identity/positioning*; esim. Bucholtz & Hall 2005; Harré & van Langenhove 2003a) ja kielellinen legitimiteetti (*linguistic legitimacy*; Bourdieu 1977, 1991). Kieli-ideologioilla tarkoitetaan kulttuurisia käsityksiä kielistä ja puhujista – esimerkiksi siitä, mitä pidetään hyvänä kielenä tai minkälaista kielenkäyttöä erilaisilta puhujilta voidaan odottaa. Identiteetti ymmärretään jatkuvan neuvottelun alaiseksi ilmiöksi, joka liittyy toisaalta siihen, miten puhujat asemoituvat ja tulevat asemoiduiksi vuorovaikutustilanteissa, ja toisaalta laajempiin kulttuurisiin käsityksiin ja yhteiskunnallisiin diskursseihin. Kielellisen legitimiteetin näkökulma taas viittaa siihen, miten eri puhujien sosiaalinen tai ideologinen asema vaikuttaa heidän mahdollisuuksiinsa osallistua tilanteisiin tasavertaisina ja merkittävinä toimijoina.

Tutkimus kohdistuu siihen, (1) miten erittäin edistyneen tason suomi toisena kielenä -puhujia kohdataan arkitilanteissa, miten kieli-ideologiat vaikuttavat näihin tilanteisiin ja miten tällaiset puhujat reagoivat näihin kohtaamisiin ja ideologioihin omilla käytänteillään, sekä siihen, (2) miten erittäin edistyneen tason suomi toisena kielenä -puhujat asemoituvat kielen suhteen ja kielenkäyttönsä kautta, ja miten nämä asemoinnit auttavat heitä puhujina saavuttamaan legitimiteetin.

Tutkimus on toteutettu etnografisella otteella (esim. Blommaert & Dong Jie 2010), ja sen aineistona on laajahko kvalitatiivinen haastatteluaineisto sekä havainnointi- ja vuorovaikutusaineistoa eri arkielämän tilanteista. Tutkimukseen osallistui kaiken kaikkiaan kaksitoista aikuista, jotka olivat kotoisin kuudesta eri maasta (Saksa, Ranska, Tšekki, Unkari, Puola ja Venäjä). Kaikki osallistujat olivat

korkeasti koulutettuja, ja he olivat muuttaneet Suomeen ja oppineet suomen kielen vasta aikuisiässä. Kaikilla osallistujilla oli kokemuksia tilanteista, joissa heitä on pidetty suomea ensikielenään puhuvina henkilöinä (*passing for a native speaker*, ks. Piller 2002). Osallistujista neljä oli mukana myös laajemmassa etnografisessa aineistonkeruussa. Näitä avainosallistujia sekä haastateltiin uudelleen että havainnoitiin eri arjen tilanteissa; osa havainnoiduista tilanteista myös tallennettiin. Aineistoa analysoitiin tutkimuksen avainkäsitteiden näkökulmasta hyödyntämällä etnografisesti suuntautuneen diskurssianalyysin (esim. Blommaert 2005) ja erityisesti neksusanalyysin (Scollon & Scollon 2004) sekä narratiivisen analyysin (esim. De Fina et al. 2006; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou 2008; Depperman 2013b) työkaluja.

Aineiston analyysi osoittaa, että kieli-ideologiat vaikuttavat ratkaisevasti siihen, miten suomi toisena kielenä -puhujia kategorisoidaan, miten he hahmottavat ja rationalisoivat kokemuksiaan ja minkälaisia käytänteitä he kielenkäyttäjinä ovat kehittäneet arjessaan. Analyysista ilmenee, että tutkimuksen osallistujat luokitellaan ensikohtaamisissa usein suomenruotsalaisiksi, virolaisiksi tai varhaisiän kaksikielisiksi. Tämä viittaa yleiseen uskomukseen siitä, että suomen kielen korkean taitotason saavuttaminen aikuisena on vaikeaa ja epätodennäköistä. Toisaalta se, että äidinkielenomainen suomen käyttö assosioidaan vahvasti suomalaisuuteen, tuottaa myös tilanteita, joissa puhuja saatetaan tulkita äidinkieliseksi. Kaiken kaikkiaan äidinkielisyys ja siihen liittyvät kieli-ideologiat tulevat usein esiin tutkimukseen osallistuneiden kertomuksissa; ne ilmenevät sekä asenteina, joihin osallistujat usein törmäävät vuorovaikutustilanteissa, että välineinä, joiden avulla he voivat tulkita kokemuksiaan kielenoppijoina ja toisen kielen puhujina Suomessa. Analyysi osoittaa, että osallistujat reagoivat kieli-ideologioihin tai niiden ehdoilla tapahtuviin sosiolingvistisiin luokitteluprosesseihin omilla käytänteillään, ja (väärin)luokittelukokemukset, kuten esimerkiksi kokemus äidinkieliseksi tulkituksi tulemisesta, jäävät osaksi heidän historiallisia elämäkertojaan (*historical bodies*, Scollon & Scollon 2004). Nämä kokemukset valmistavat heitä uusiin kohtaamisiin ja saavat heidät kehittämään erityisiä strategioita identiteettityöhön.

Tutkimus osoittaa myös, että erittäin korkeatasoinen toisena kielenä opitun suomen kielen käyttö edellyttää tarkkaa neuvottelua sen luomista sosiaalisista odotuksista. Osallistujieni asemoitumiset ovat monitahoisia, vaihtelevia ja keskenään ristiriitaisia, ja identiteettejä rakennetaan vuorovaikutuksessa eri käytänteiden avulla: puhuja voi esimerkiksi tietoisesti korostaa tai olla korostamatta kielitaustaansa, tuoda esiin tai piilotella puutteita kielellisessä repertuaarissaan ja käyttää tai vältellä paikallisia tai puhekielisiä piirteitä kielenkäytössään. Tutkimus osoittaa, että tällaisten asemointistrategioiden tavoitteena on nimenomaan kielellisen legitimiteetin saavuttaminen tai ylläpitäminen, ja tähän prosessiin voi liittyä myös jännitteitä kielellisen legitimiteetin ja muiden tavoitteiden saavuttamisen välillä. Kielen oppimisen tutkimuksen kannalta erityisen merkittävä tutkimustulos on se, että opetuskontekstin ulkopuolella toisen kielen puhujat luovat omalla asemoitumisellaan edellytykset legitiimille osallistumiselleen vuorovai-

kutustilanteisiin, mikä voi ajoittain edellyttää myös (eksplisiittisten) kielenoppimismahdollisuuksien sivuuttamista. Näin voi tapahtua esimerkiksi tilanteissa, joissa oppijaksi asemoituminen vaarantaisi pätevän ammattilaisen identiteetin ylläpitämisen.

Kielelliseen legitimiteettiin liittyvät haasteet voivat ilmetä muuallakin kuin kielenkäytössä. Analyysi osoittaa, etteivät erilaisuuden ja poikkeuksellisuuden kokemukset johdu pelkästään tahallisesta toiseuttamisesta, vaan ne ovat yhtä lailla seurausta yhteiskunnallisista, kulttuurisista ja institutionaalisista rakenteista. Tämä korostaa yhteiskunnan ja paikallisyhteisöjen tärkeää roolia erilaisten puhujien (de)legitimoinnissa: toisen kielen puhujien mahdollisuudet osallistua ja kokea kuuluvansa yhteisöön kietoutuvat heidän ympäristönsä implisiittisiin normeihin ja odotuksiin. Tämän tutkimuksen valossa sosiaalisten ympäristöjen kielellinen ja kulttuurinen monimuotoisuus – ja erityisesti se, että yhteisössä on samankaltaisia puhujia, joiden rooliin puhuja voi identifioitua – ovat keskeisiä toisen kielen puhujien legitimiteetin kannalta. Osa haastateltavista esimerkiksi koki, että pääkaupunkiseudun monikulttuurisessa ja monikielisessä ympäristössä heidän kielellistä taustaansa ei juurikaan ihmetelty – toisin kuin heidän pienemmissä asuinkaupungeissaan, joissa ideologisesti ahtaisiin kategorioihin perustuvat toiseuttavat asenteet ja rakenteet olivat paljon yleisempiä.

Tämä tutkimus on ensimmäinen sosiolingvistinen tutkimus, joka keskittyy erittäin edistyneen tason suomi toisena kielenä -puhujiin, jotka ovat oppineet kieltä aikuisina. Kuten tutkimus osoittaa, nämä puhujat toimivat pitkälti samojen sosiolingvististen normien ja kieli-ideologioiden puitteissa kuin suomea ensikielenä puhuvatkin. Heidän kokemuksiinsa ja käytänteisiinsä vaikuttavat kuitenkin myös käsitykset kielen oppimisesta sekä maahanmuuttoa ja kulttuurista erilaisuutta koskevat diskurssit. Tutkimus tuottaakin merkittävää uutta tietoa toisen kielen oppimisen tutkimuksen ja sosiolingvistiikan aloille sekä Suomessa että kansainvälisesti.

Tutkimus myös lisää tietoisuutta erittäin edistyneellä tasolla suomea toisena kielenä puhuvista aikuisista kasvavana ryhmänä Suomessa. Muutokset Suomen kieliyhteisön sosiolingvistisessa rakenteessa haastavat suomi toisena kielenä -puhujia koskevia vakiintuneita rakenteita, asenteita ja ennakkokäsityksiä. Voidakseen rakentaa aidosti inklusiivisia rakenteita esimerkiksi opettajien, työnantajien, poliitikkojen ja viranomaisten on ymmärrettävä, miten diskurssit, kulttuuriset normit ja kieli-ideologiat vaikuttavat suomea toisena kielenä puhuvien ihmisten asemaan suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa. Kieliyhteisön muutos on kuitenkin jokaisen kielenkäyttäjän käsissä, ja omilla odotuksillaan, asemoinneillaan ja käytänteillään jokainen vaikuttaa myös siihen, miten suomi toisena kielenä -puhujia eri vuorovaikutustilanteissa kohdataan ja miten heihin suhtaudutaan.

Jatkossa tämän tutkimuksen teemoja olisi tärkeää tutkia myös etniseltä, sosiaalis-taloudelliselta ja koulutustaustaltaan erilaisten osallistujien osalta; kaikki tämän tutkimuksen osallistujat olivat korkeasti koulutettuja eurooppalaisia. Samoin tässä tutkimuksessa melko toissijaisiksi jääneitä näkökulmia, kuten tunteita ja toimijuutta, voitaisiin tarkastella jatkotutkimuksessa tähänastista syvemmin.

Olisi myös tärkeää laajentaa tarkastelua niihin puhujiin, jotka ovat edistyneellä keskitasolla ja siis paraikaa lähestymässä hyvin edistynyttä tasoa. Tällaisessa tutkimuksessa kannattaisi seurata osallistujien kehitystä pidemmällä aikavälillä, koska näin voidaan löytää reaaliaikaisia yhteyksiä affordanssien eli oppimismahdollisuuksien, kielellisen repertuaarin kehittymisen sekä puhujuuden jatkuvan rakentumisen välillä. Laajempaa etnografista aineistoa voitaisiin hyödyntää sen selvittämiseksi, millaisia sosiaalisia käytänteitä osallistujat varsinaisesti käyttävät ja millaisin tuloksin sekä mitä yhteyksiä näillä käytänteillä on muihin sosiaalisiin tilanteisiin ja verkostoihin. Havainnoimalla monipuolisesti tilanteita opetuskontekstin ulkopuolella voitaisiin selvittää, missä ja miten kieltä mahdollisesti opitaan, sekä etenkin sitä, miten toisen kielen puhujat hyödyntävät kielellisiä repertuaarejaan ja miten heidän kielenkäyttönsä mahdollistaa legitiimin osallistumisen. Tämä tutkimus on jo avannut näihin teemoihin useita tärkeitä näkökulmia, joihin tulevat tutkimukset voivat pohjautua.

Näiden teemojen tutkiminen on tällä hetkellä erittäin ajankohtaista Suomen kieliyhteisön muuttuessa nopeasti aiempaa moninaisemmaksi. Suomenruotsalaisten ja varhaisten kaksikielisten puhujien ohella suomen kielen aikuisiässä oppineet maahanmuuttajat tulevat olemaan yhä merkittävämpi suomea erittäin edistyneellä tasolla toisena kielenä käyttävä ryhmä. On esimerkiksi tärkeää seurata, millaisia mahdollisuuksia näillä puhujilla on menestyä työmarkkinoilla, joilla he kilpailevat suomea ensikielenä puhuvien työnhakijoiden kanssa, ja miten he integroituvat työyhteisöihin, joissa suomea toisena kielenä puhuvat henkilöt ovat edelleen selkeästi vähemmistössä. Näitä kysymyksiä tarkastellaankin Jyväskylän yliopistossa käynnistyneessä tutkimushankkeessa, jossa itse tulen keskittymään etenkin nopeasti kohti työelämää eteneviin maahanmuuttajataustaisiin ammattilaisiin.

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APPENDIX 1

Transcription conventions (adapted from Jefferson 2014)

<u>and</u>	word emphasis
a:nd	extended sound or syllable
(.)	salient pause
hh	audible exhalation
.hh	audible inhalation
an-	cut-off sound or word
heh	laughter
F(h)inn(h)ish	laughingly uttered word
yeah	quietly uttered or whispered word
=	contiguous units of talk across lines
((clears throat))	transcriber's comment about extralinguistic action
( )	unintelligible word or phrase
(and)	dubious hearing
[…]	omission
[city]	word or phrase replaced to protect participant's identity

APPENDIX 2

Participants and collected data

Semi-structured interviews

Participant	Date	Duration of the interview
Alexander	05/2015	01:05:43
Sandra	05/2015	02:04:54
Sophie	06/2015	01:26:27
Zuzana	06/2015	01:45:03
Marie	07/2015	01:55:04
Bianka	07/2015	01:30:02
Judit	07/2015	02:17:40
Veronika	07/2015	01:52:04
Julia	07/2015	01:38:32
Sergei	03/2016	01:25:26
Emilie	10/2016	00:59:30
Agnieszka	10/2016	01:24:08

Ethnographic data

Participant	Date	Situation	Type of data
Sandra	03/2016	Book club meeting	Recording (01:57:31)
	08/2016	Choir practice	Field notes, informal interviews, recordings (55:33 in total)
	09/2016	Choir practice	Field notes, informal interviews, recordings (19:48)
	10/2016	Meeting with teacher at Sandra's child's kindergarden	Recording (01:03:14)
	12/2016	Book club meeting	Field notes
Judit	10/2016	Informal interview	Recording (01:44:46)
	03/2017	Coffee date with friends	Recording (3:02:26)
Veronika	12/2016	Work place (company)	Field notes, recordings (01:22:29 in total)
		Informal interview	Recording (01:12:52)
	12/2016	Children's sports group	Field notes, recordings (01:15:55 in total)

	12/2016	Sports group for adults	Field notes
Julia	09/2016	Informal interview	Recording (51:35)
	09/2016	Class at Julia's educational institution	Field notes, recording (01:19:16)
	09/2016	Hanging out with a friend	Recording (02:34:24)
	09/2016	Julia's work place (gym)	Field notes, recordings (01:46:15 in total)
	02/2017	Informal interview	Recording (01:55:51)

APPENDIX 3

Interview guide

	Interview questions (Finnish)	Interview questions (translations)
Background	Voisitko aluksi kertoa miten päädyit asumaan Suomeen?	Could you start by telling me how you ended up living in Finland?
	Miten opiskelit suomea? Jos ajattelet ihan tavallista päivää – kenen kanssa ja missä tilanteissa käytät suomea?	How did you learn Finnish? If you think about an ordinary day – with whom and in what kind of situations do you use Finnish?
	Mitä muita kieliä voisit käyttää tavallisena päivänä? Missä tilanteissa ja kenen kanssa?	What other languages do you use on an ordinary day? In what kind of situations and with whom?
Multilingual practices	Onko sellaisia tilanteita, joissa pitää yhtäkkiä vaihtaa kieltä?	Are there any situations in which you have to quickly switch languages?
	Onko joskus sellaisia tilanteita, joissa saatat käyttää kahta tai useampaa kieltä samassa tilanteessa tai saman henkilön kanssa?	Are there any situations in which you might use two or more languages in the same situation or with the same person?
	Käytätkö joskus suomenkielisiä sanoja äidinkieltäsi tai jotain toista kieltä puhuessasi? Miksi/mikset?	Do you sometimes use Finnish words when speaking your native language or another language? Why/why not?
	Käytätkö joskus muunkielisiä sanoja suomea puhuessasi? Miksi/mikset?	Do you sometimes use words from other languages when speaking Finnish? Why/why not?
Speaker identities	Voitko yrittää kuvailla minkälaista suomea käytät?	Could you try to describe what kind of Finnish you use?
	Muistatko, minkälaista oli opiskella suomea alussa ja myöhemmin kun osasit jo paremmin?	Do you remember what it was like when you started learning Finnish and what it was like later when you already spoke better?

	Muistatko, minkälaista oli oppia puhekieltä?	Do you remember what it was like to learn colloquial Finnish?
	Miltä tuntuu suomalaisen kanssa keskusteleminen ja miltä tuntuu suomea puhuvan ulkomaalaisen kanssa keskusteleminen? Miksi tuntuu hyvältä/huonolta/samalta/ erilaiselta?	How do you feel talking to a Finn and how do you feel talking to a foreigner who knows Finnish? Why does it feel good/bad/similar/different?
	Ovatko ihmiset koskaan korjanneet puhettasi? Miltä tämä tuntuu/tuntuisi? Miten reagoit siihen?	Has anybody ever corrected you when you were talking? What did it feel like/what would it feel like? How do you react?
	Muistatko tilanteen, jossa sinulle on puhuttu englantia? Miltä tuntuu? Miten reagoit siihen? Miten vastapuoli reagoi?	Do you remember a situation in which you were addressed in English? What does it feel like? How do you react? How does the other person react?
Passing for a native speaker	Kun tapaat entuudestaan tuntemattoman ihmisen – huomaako hän yleensä, ettet puhu suomea äidinkielenäsi? Jos ei, missä tilanteissa tämä tapahtuu?	When you meet someone for the first time – do they usually realise that you don't speak Finnish as your native language? If not, in what kind of situations does this occur?
	Mistä tunnistat, että he huomaavat/eivät huomaa?	How do you know that they realise/do not realise?
	Mitä luulet, mistä ihmiset päättelevät, ettet puhu suomea äidinkielenäsi?	What do you think, how do people conclude that you don't speak Finnish as your native language?
	Voitko kertoa tarkemmin tilanteesta, jossa sinua pidettiin suomenkielisenä?	Can you tell me more about a situation in which you were taken for a Finnish speaker?
	Miten ihmiset reagoivat, kun käy ilmi, että olet oppinut suomea vasta aikuisena? Mitä vastaat siihen?	How do people react when they hear that you only learnt Finnish as an adult? How do you respond?
	Miltä sinusta tuntuu, kun sinua pidetään suomenkielisenä?	How do you feel when you are taken for a Finnish speaker?