

Maija-Liisa Nikki

The implementation of
the Finnish national plan
for foreign language teaching

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

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ABSTRACT

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The present study is based on a two-part research report dealing with foreign language education and its relevance in the Finnish educational system. This review focuses on the national plan for foreign language teaching and its implementation.

In this study, macro- and micro-implementation processes are described, and factors influencing implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching are examined. The national plan is socially relevant because it is based on the needs of society. Target groups, ie. students and parents, have the right, as guaranteed by the legislature, to make language choices. These choices are based on the personal relevance of language education.

The macro-implementation of the national plan for language teaching proved to be successful. All the language programs, beginning from the national level down to the municipal level, are consistent with the national plan. The micro-implementation of the plan is successful only in part. The reasons for the difficulties in the implementation of the municipal language programs are sought by means of questionnaires administered to local educational authorities, comprehensive school and upper secondary school students, and their parents.

The results indicate that students, parents and educational administration authorities do not consider the present language education in comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools as relevant. The motives to choose a language depend on student's plans, their previous experiences of languages and language studies, and on pressures and incentives on them. Parents choose a language starting in the third grade, primarily, on the basis of the child's own wishes. Relevant language education is defined by students, parents and educational administration authorities.

Descriptors: foreign language education, relevance, personal relevance, social relevance, motives, comprehensive schools, upper secondary schools.

PREFACE

The study presented here is a review of two reports which are parts of a wider research project where foreign language education in the Finnish educational system is studied. The impetus for this project originated in my work as a school inspector in Provincial Government of Central Finland. Foreign language education as a whole is in focus in education because of internationalization of our society.

The Finnish Academy has supported the research project financially and has occasionally made it possible for me to concentrate on my research on a full-time basis. Without this support it would have been difficult to complete this study.

My thanks are due to Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research for including my work in their series of publications. I also wish to thank Ms Penny Natos who assisted me with the translation of the text into English and Steven Saletta, B.A. who checked the language of the final manuscript.

I express my warmest gratitude to all those people, whom I have mentioned in the prefaces of those two reports on which this report is based. Their support, constructive criticism, comments and assistance have been of great importance to me.

Jyväskylä, May 1992

Maija-Liisa Nikki

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	9
2	THE EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN FINLAND	10
2.1	The educational administration in Finland	10
2.2	The educational system in Finland	10
3	THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AS A POLICY	14
3.1	Factors influencing drawing up the national plan for foreign language teaching	14
3.2	The contents of the national plan for foreign language teaching	16
4	THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING	18
5	THE NORMATIVE AND PERSONAL ELEMENTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING	21
6	EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING	26
7	CONTENTS OF THE STUDY AND MAIN PROBLEMS	28
8	DATA AND ANALYSES	30

9 RESULTS32
9.1 Macro-implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching32
9.2 Micro-implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching34
10 DISCUSSION41
10.1 An overall assessment of the implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching41
10.2 Conclusion42
YHTEENVETO45
BIBLIOGRAPHY47

1 INTRODUCTION

For educational politics to be successful it is necessary for planners to foresee the changes and international developments within different sectors of society. Therefore, educational planning has grown more and more important (Valtioneuvosto 1990). Internationalization now places specific demands on the planning of educational politics and foreign language teaching in the Finnish educational system. Many important questions arise from this topic such as: What standard of foreign language proficiency does our society demand of people working in different sectors of commercial and industrial life, and to what degree should the individual be proficient in those languages? What type of language education does an individual need during his/her life? The most important question, however, is how the educational system can provide the students with the foreign language education that both society and they themselves consider necessary.

This review is a summary of a two-part research report entitled Foreign language education in the Finnish educational system and its relevance (Part I and Part II)(Nikki 1989, 1992). This two-part study deals with foreign language education in the Finnish educational system but focuses on the national plan for language teaching, and most importantly, on the realization of this plan.

2 THE EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN FINLAND

2.1 The educational administration in Finland

In the Finnish educational system, decisions on the principles of educational policy are made by the Parliament (see Figure 1). The Ministry of Education is the highest authority in educational administration. The National Board of General Education and the National Board of Vocational Education (united in 1991 as The National Board of Education) plan and develop the national core curricula and syllabi. Provincial governments act as regional authorities and handle matters pertaining to general and vocational education. Self-governing municipalities are responsible for local administration. The comprehensive and upper secondary schools are run by the municipalities and the municipal council in turn appoints a school board which manages and supervises municipal schools.

2.2 The educational system in Finland

In the Finnish educational system (see Figure 2) compulsory education is given in a nine-year comprehensive school program divided into a lower and upper level. Preschool is not compulsory. Post-compulsory education comprises general and vocational education. Upper secondary school consists of three years of general education, ending in a matriculation examination. Vocational education is given in vocational institutions and organized in branches. Higher education comprises institutions of higher education and is organized into degree programs.

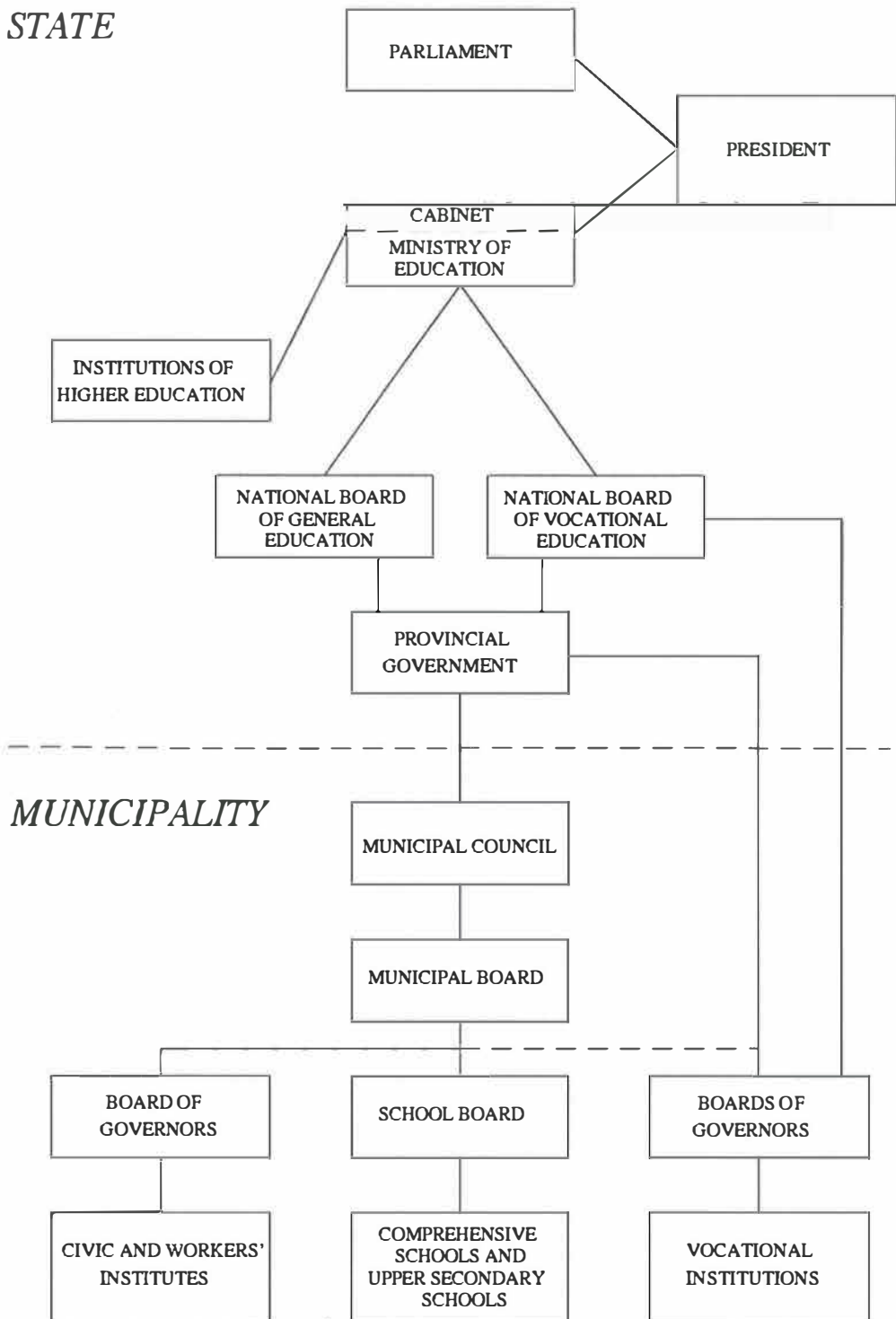
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FIGURE 1. Administrative organization of the Finnish educational system (Provincial government of Central Finland 1987, 6)

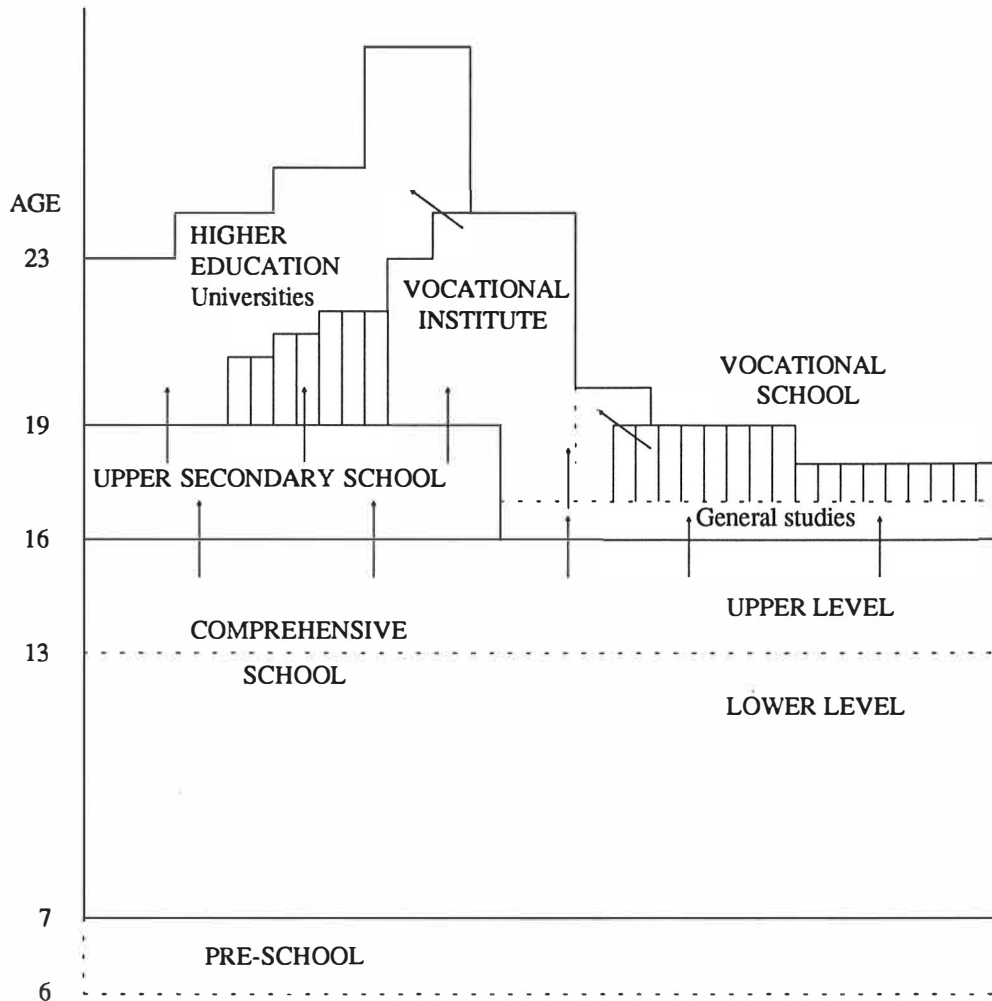


FIGURE 2. The educational system in Finland (Provincial government of Central Finland 1987, 4)

The curriculum of the comprehensive school and upper secondary school is defined by legislation. A degree specifies the compulsory core curriculum. Local education authorities draw up the curricula, which consists of a compulsory core curriculum and a locally designed optional part. The Government also approves the distribution of lesson hours between subjects.

Finland is a bilingual country where two domestic languages, Finnish and Swedish have legal status as official languages. The majority of the population is Finnish-speaking but the rights of the 6 % Swedish-speaking minority are protected by the Constitution.

A variety of foreign languages has always belonged to the curriculum of upper secondary schools in Finland. In the 1960's foreign language

education was also included in the curriculum of primary schools. When the comprehensive school system was introduced in the 1970's it was considered important that all students should learn foreign languages. Since then all comprehensive school students have to study at least one foreign language and the second domestic language in addition to their mother tongue.

Language teaching starts in the third grade and students can choose either the second domestic language or English, French, German or Russian. The first language studied is called the A-language. The second language, the B-language, starts in the seventh grade and is usually Swedish for most of the Finnish-speaking students. The third language, the C-language, starting in the eighth grade, is optional. The upper secondary school students have to study both the A-language and the B-language. The C-language is optional as well as a D-language that begins in upper secondary school.

3 THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AS A POLICY

Language teaching in Finnish comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools has been planned and decreed by many acts (Anon. 1983a, 1983b, 1983c), statutes (1984a, 1984b, 1984c) and Cabinet decisions (Anon. 1985a, 1985b). The Cabinet, by means of the national plan for foreign language teaching (Anon. 1984d), has guided the realization and development of foreign language education in Finland. The national plan for language teaching can be regarded as policy (see Martikainen & Yrjönen 1974; Teittinen 1985). Implementation is the term which refers to the putting into practise of the plan (see Fullan 1981). Studies concerning policy implementation are referred to as implementation studies (see Pressman & Wildavsky 1984; Teittinen 1985).

3.1 Factors influencing drawing up the national plan for foreign language teaching

The increasing effect of internationalization and varied intercultural contacts gave Finland, in the 1970s, the impetus to begin considering the opportunities and skills which Finland and her citizens would need in order to survive in a rapidly changing world. This led to increased political planning concerning foreign language education. Political planning, based on the demands of society, regulated by political power, and drawn up by experts, corresponds to the normative dimension of the social system (see Getzels 1958; Getzels & Cuba 1957; Getzels, Lipman & Campbell 1968).

Language education, which is normatively regulated and planned, is based on decrees and orders of different degrees, and is formulated on the

basis of suggestions by committees and working parties. In analyzing the factors in society which impinge upon language teaching, Stern (1984) uses two models which he adapted and modified from Mackey (1970) and Spolsky, Green and Read (1974). Stern's model can be helpful as an aid in analyzing the factors influencing the planning of Finnish language education.

Stern's model basically states that for students, **the school context and the home environment** are the most significant factors influencing foreign language education (see Burstall 1974; Stern 1984). **The neighbourhood and the region** also have a bearing on language teaching (see Bourhis 1984; Churchill & Smith 1986; Kankainen 1982; Mackey 1984; Shapson & D'Oyley 1984; Stern 1984). For Finnish comprehensive school and upper secondary school students, the neighbourhood is either Finnish speaking, Swedish speaking or bilingual. Because of **the national and international setting**, language education in Finland cannot be planned and organized entirely according to national needs.

Finland's **history**, the wars she has fought, and her situation between two previously dominating countries, continues to have a bearing on language education (see Husen 1985; Koskimies 1978; Reuter 1980). The relationship between language teaching and various **socio-economic and cultural factors** is not self-evident. Different studies on this relationship give contradictory results (see Burstall 1974; Carroll 1975; Kangasniemi 1979; Kankainen 1982; Matilainen 1974; Ritvanen 1971). Geographical factors may also have a bearing on language education (see Carrol 1975) in a country like Finland, which has a long common land boundary with three neighbouring countries.

Linguistic factors must be considered in planning language education in Finland. Both of our official languages, Finnish and Swedish, are languages of small language communities and neither of them is largely spoken outside their linguistic territory. The Finnish language belongs to the Finno-Ugric language family, whereas all foreign languages taught in Finnish comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools belong to the Indo-European language family (see Ahokas 1978; Leiwo 1981).

Economic and technological factors and demands set by commercial and industrial life, are important in the planning of Finnish language education (see Ahonen 1988; Karppinen 1986; Laine 1987; Leiwo 1988; Makkonen 1986; Peltonen 1985). The **educational setting** (hours per week, etc.) influences the goals of foreign language education and the way language teaching is organized in practice.

The framework of language education in Finnish comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools is depicted in Figure 3.

The language program does not cover all the languages taught in comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools (Anon. 1983a, 1983b). The second domestic language (B-language) must be included in the school curriculum. For 94 % of Finnish speaking students, Swedish is their B-lan-

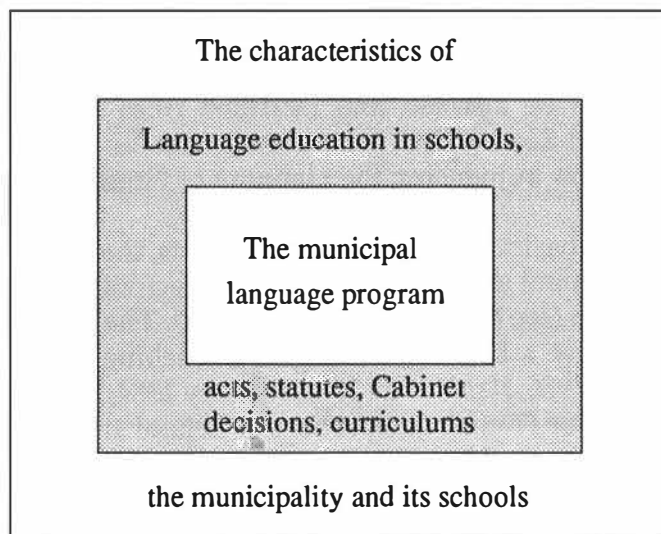


FIGURE 3. Setting of the implementation of language programs on the municipal level

guage. Several acts, statutes, and cabinet decisions concerning the amount of time allocated for different subjects and the curriculums, determine language education in schools. The characteristics of the municipality also have a bearing on language teaching. For example, the number of inhabitants influences the number of languages which must be offered at the primary level.

From the point of view of the student, foreign language studies are a continuum starting in the third grade of the comprehensive school and continuing, not only through compulsory and further education, but, according to the principle of lifelong education, also through the entire life.

3.2 The contents of the national plan for foreign language teaching

The national plan for foreign language teaching (Anon. 1984d) is based on the suggestions made by a committee (Kieliohjelmakomitea 1978) appointed for this purpose. The national plan was approved by the Cabinet defining the general principles for the organization of language teaching and the quantitative objectives of language teaching in Finnish comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools covering the years 1985-1991. According to the national plan for foreign language teaching:

- 1) the proportion of students studying Swedish, German, French and Russian at the primary level (A-language) should be increased;

- 2) at the lower secondary level, the aim should be that at least 35% of eighth-grade students will take a foreign language (C-language) as one of the optional subjects, and that, more often than in 1984, the foreign language should be French or Russian;
- 3) all students who have not taken English at the lower primary level as their compulsory first foreign language should at the lower secondary level, take English as an optional subject; and
- 4) at the upper secondary level the aim should be that at least 95% of students will have studied either a language they started in the eighth grade of comprehensive school (C-language) or in the first grade of upper secondary school (D-language) or both (C- and D-language). The language started in upper secondary school should, more often than in 1984, be French or Russian.

Furthermore, the Cabinet set target numbers of students studying different languages by the autumn of 1991. The Cabinet allowed seven years for the attainment of the target. (Anon. 1984d.) The implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching refers to the realization of the plan (see Barrett & Fudge 1981; Berman 1978; Fullan 1981; Sabatier & Mazmanian 1980; 1983; Van Meter & Van Horn 1975).

4 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

In the national plan for foreign language teaching, the Cabinet also gave instructions for the procedures in which implementation should follow. The ideas of Alexander (1985) and Berman (1978) are adapted and used as the basis in drawing up the scheme for the implementation process (Figure 4). The macro-implementation phase of the national plan for language teaching consisted of all the levels of the state educational administration, the Ministry of Education, the National Board of General Education and provincial governments down to the municipal level. Every administrative level was asked to draw up its own foreign language program, which was based on the previous program, which, in turn, was drawn up by the education authorities one stage higher in the administrative hierarchy. Implementation failure could occur at any level of the hierarchy, but the top-down approach presupposes that the lower levels in the hierarchy behave in compliance with the upper levels (Barrett & Fudge 1981; see also Lane 1983). During the micro-implementation phase, the language programs of the municipalities were implemented in the schools. The local education authorities were responsible for the micro-implementation. Because successful implementation partly depends on individual implementors (see O'Toole 1989), the motivation of the local educational authorities, as well as their commitment (see McLaughlin 1987; O'Toole & Montjoy 1984) to the language program, is of great importance.

The same kind of normative planning, which is based on the needs of society, and has been characteristic of Finnish educational planning, has also been typical of the planning of language education. Several studies have been completed to find out which languages are needed when working in different sectors of commercial and industrial life (see e.g. Berggren 1982; Mehtäläinen 1987). From those studies conclusions have been drawn about

Macroimplementation

Microimplementation

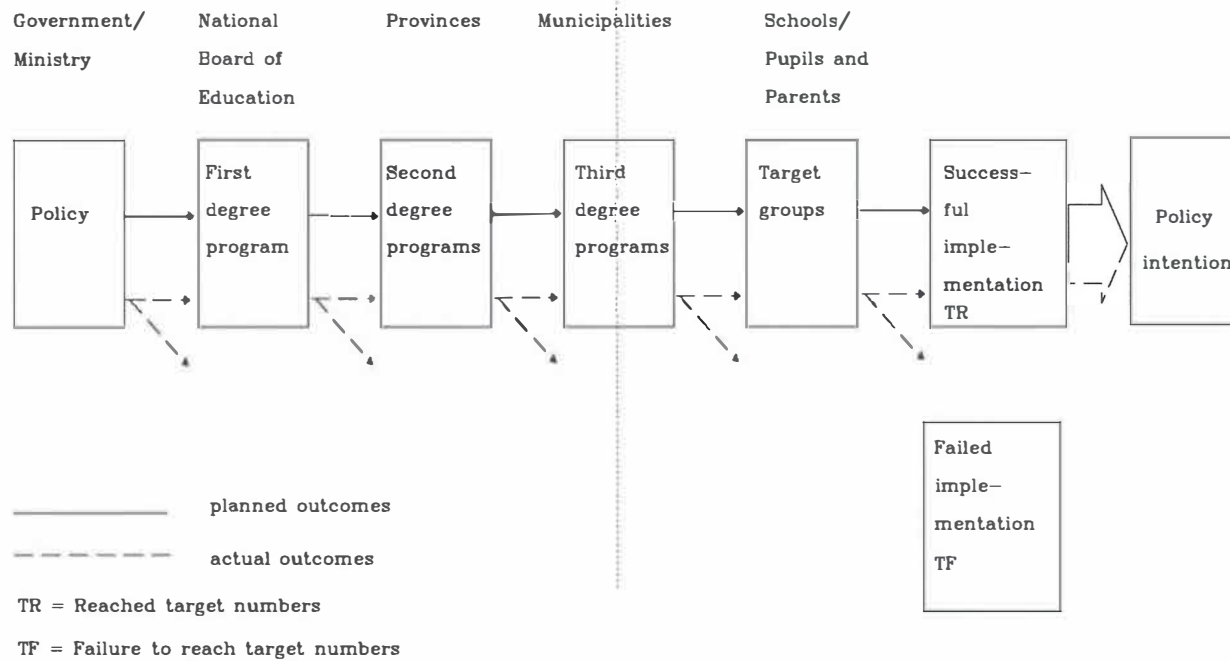


FIGURE 4. The Implementation process of the national plan for foreign language teaching

the languages that should be taught at schools (Kieliohjelmakomitea 1978). Abrahamson (1974) introduces normatively defined educational need and the concept of a subjectively experienced educational need, and relates them to educational supply (Figure 5), which is what is currently being offered by the educational system.

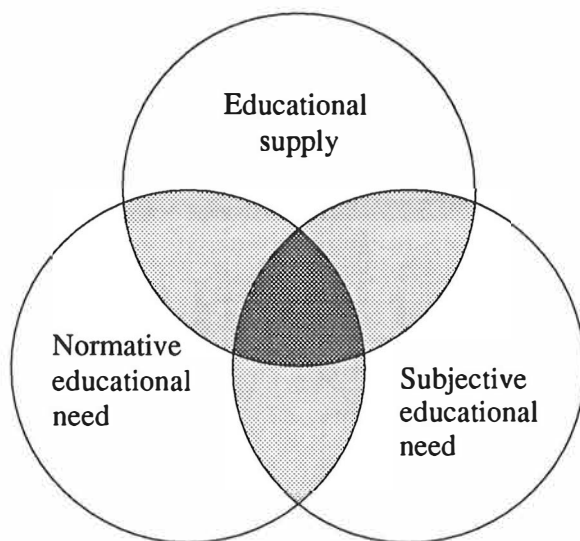


FIGURE 5. The relationship between the educational supply and the normatively defined and subjectively experienced educational needs

Ideas expressed by Ekola and Vaherva (1976) imply that educational planners and organizers are not able to assess the present and future foreign language needs of students from their point of view. It is also unlikely that students, especially if they are very young, are able to express their "real" foreign language needs. Foreign language education in comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools can be expected to be correlated with the normatively defined foreign language needs, because the same educational authorities define these needs and organize current programs. Do the normatively defined foreign language needs and the current foreign language programs also correspond to the foreign language needs that are subjectively experienced by students? If so, to what degree do they correspond? These questions have not been studied previously in Finland. One might ask what kind of foreign language education policies would be adopted if more attention were paid to the subjective needs of the students.

5 THE NORMATIVE AND PERSONAL ELEMENTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Foreign language education could, in practice, be formulated according to two different principles. Foreign language education, which is based on externally defined language needs, corresponds to the normative dimension of the social system represented by the educational system. Individuals are expected to act in accordance with the expectations set by the system (Getzels 1958; Getzels & Cuba 1957; Getzels et al. 1968). The successful implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching presupposes that students and parents choose appropriate languages.

The subjective language needs, which are based on students plans and subjective experiences, correspond to the personal dimension of the social system (Getzels 1958; Getzels & Cuba 1957; Getzels et al. 1968). The educational legislature grants students and parents the right to decide which languages the students will study within the framework of the foreign language program offered by the municipality. However, this subjective point of view has, until now, been totally rejected by the national language education authorities. Target groups have not adequately been subjects of interest in implementation studies (O'Toole 1986) and only a few researchers have even mentioned the target groups and their motives (see Lane 1983; Sabatier & Mazmanian 1983; Smith 1973).

In the normative dimension of the social system, students and parents are expected to act according to certain expectations (Getzels 1958; Getzels & Cuba 1957; Getzels et al. 1968). The right to select a language or not is granted to students and parents by the legislature. This inevitably makes the personal dimension of the social system a part of the implementation

process. Normatively and subjectively defined language education should complement one another, but in practice, the personal dimension is expected to conform to normatively defined language education.

The basis of the subjectively experienced language needs lies in the student, in his life world (Schutz 1970b, 1975). The life world is the world of common sense, unquestioned and taken for granted. The life world is the sphere of everyday experiences and actions through which individuals pursue their interests and affairs, dealing with people, conceiving plans and carrying them out. (Schutz 1975; Schutz & Luckmann 1973; Wagner 1970.) In the life world an individual interprets his past, present and future in terms of the preorganized stock of knowledge which he has at hand at any moment of his existence (Schutz 1976). His biographically determined situation is a sedimentation of all his previous subjective experiences and this biographical situation is given to him alone, he does not share it with anybody (Schutz 1973; see also Gurwitsch 1975). The biographically determined situation is also the source of the individual's systems of relevance. The individual's goals are organized in terms of his systems of relevance. Since the biographically determined situation of every student must vary for different students, these systems of relevance cannot be the same. (Schutz 1975.)

Relevance is defined as the importance ascribed by an individual to selected aspects of specific situations and of his activities and plans (Wagner 1970, 1983). It is also defined as significance (Niinistö 1984) and appropriateness serving different purposes (Olkinuora 1983). A student considers foreign language education to be relevant for him if it can provide him with the kind of language skills and knowledge which he can apply into practice in his life outside school, in his work, and in his spare time (see Olkinuora 1979).

Schutz (1970a, 1975) defines three types of relevance which are concretely experienced as inseparable as an undivided unit. The motivational relevance guides an individual's planning of future conduct and selectivity of his mind. (Schutz 1970a; 1975; see also Aittola & Aittola 1985; Niinistö 1984; Olkinuora 1982.) Relevance might be intrinsic or imposed (Schutz 1970a; 1973). Personally relevant (Bruner 1972) language education, or where relevance is intrinsic (Schutz 1970a; 1975), is based on the student's own interests. It corresponds to his personal needs and is significant for himself. Socially relevant (Bruner 1972) language education, or where relevance is imposed (Schutz 1970a; 1976) on the student, is based on the needs of society and on external demands.

Motivational relevance guides the student's decision in choosing a language. That choice can be understood only by showing the in-order-to and because-of-motives (see Schutz 1978) of the choice. In-order-to motives refer to the future state of affairs, or a project to be attained by subsequent acting. In other words a student chooses a language in order to learn it and use it for certain purposes. Genuine because-of motives explain the project

in terms of the actor's past experience (Schutz 1967, 1970a, 1970b, 1973, 1978). For example, a student does not take an optional language because he has not enjoyed his compulsory language studies. Typical students' because-of motives are imposed pressures and incentives. In-order-to motives refer to student's personal interests and deliberate projecting (Olkinuora 1982).

Attitudes are also relevant for the discussion of factors which have a bearing on language teaching. For Schutz (1970a) attitudes are genuine because-of motives. Attitudes are the result of heterogeneous experiences which have been sedimented in the consciousness of the individual (Schutz 1973). Karvonen (1967, 1970) defines attitudes as a positive - negative response tendency toward a psychological object. Because attitudes, as such, are not measurable, they have to be measured in terms of responses. The most adequate way of describing attitudes is to measure each component separately: the affective, the cognitive, and the action component. The affective component refers to the pleasantness or unpleasantness assigned to an object (Karvonen 1967, 1970), e.g. a student considers French a beautiful language. The cognitive component is based on the importance of the attitude object (Karvonen 1967, 1970), e.g. a student considers German a useful language. The action component is defined as a tendency to overt action disposition (Karvonen 1967, 1970), e.g. a student chooses Russian from a selection of languages.

Also in studies concerning foreign language learning motivation, students' attitudes toward the language studied, or toward the native speakers of that language, are measured. It has been found that attitudes of students have a bearing on motivation, which is related to learning outcomes (e.g. Gardner 1985; Laine 1978, 1986, 1987, 1988).

The implementation of the municipal language programs, which concern target groups, can be depicted by a scheme (Figure 6) which is based on Getzels' theoretizations of normative and personal dimensions of the social system (Getzels 1958; Getzels & Cuba 1957; Getzels et al. 1968) and on Schutz' concept of relevance (1970a, 1970b, 1975).

The policy, ie. the national plan for language teaching, directly influences municipal language programs because of the top-down approach of implementation (Sabatier 1986). The language program is put into practice within the setting of language education. Planned outcomes are defined in language programs, and students and parents are expected to choose their languages in accordance with the program. The language program is drawn up by the local education authorities based on the needs of society and is therefore socially relevant.

The foreign language program, and the setting where it is implemented, influences the language choices that students and parents make. For example, they can only choose those languages which are included in the municipal language program. Whether or not they choose a language, and which one from the selection of languages offered, depends on the

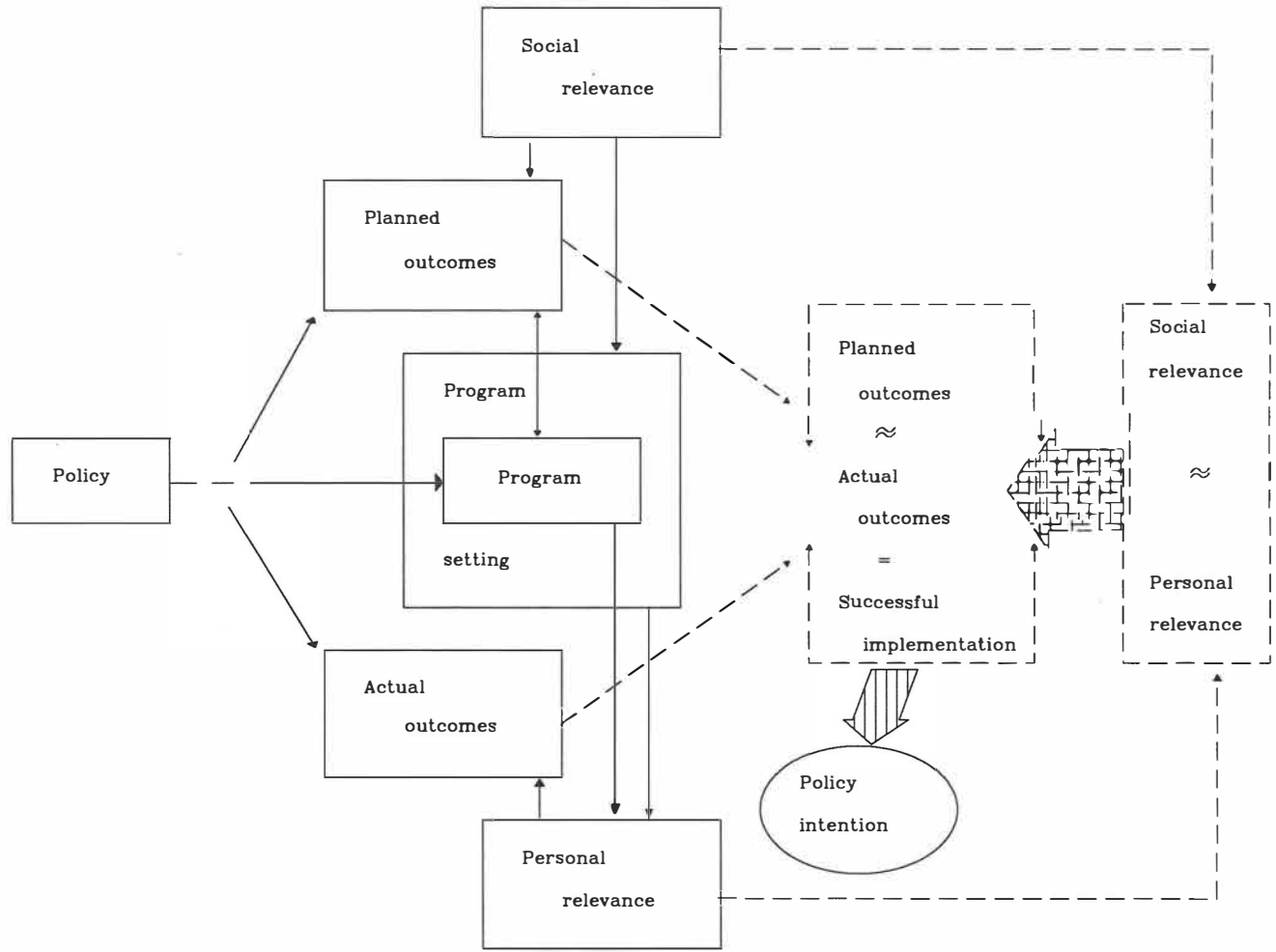


FIGURE 6. The implementation of the municipal language programs

personal relevance of the language. Students and parents cannot know which elements of language education are determined by the language program, which are decreed by acts and statutes, and which depend on the characteristics of the municipality and the school. Therefore, studying the implementation of language programs should also include language education as a whole.

The realization of municipal language programs is conducive to the realization of the national plan for language teaching. This depends on language choices made by students and parents, whose choices, in turn, depend on the personal relevance of offered language education. The situation would be ideal if students and parents could find the offered language education personally relevant so as to make the presupposed language choice. Therefore, the most important presupposition for successful implementation is a correspondence between the social and the personal relevance of language education. From this it follows that the less the personal relevance of language education corresponds to its social relevance, the further away the actual outcomes are from planned outcomes, and the more likely it is that there will be implementation failure. Causes and reasons for this disparity have to be studied in language programs and in the setting of language education.

6 EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

During the implementation process of the national plan for foreign language teaching, evaluation should have been a part of every phase (e.g. Alexander 1985; Dave 1980; Stufflebeam 1975; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield 1985). Quantitative evaluation was carried out and some changes made. For example, statistics showed that those who had not chosen English at the lower primary level as their compulsory first foreign language had not taken English as an optional subject at the lower secondary level. Therefore, those who had not taken English at the lower primary level were allowed to take English as an extra voluntary subject (E-English) from the fifth grade. Because this appeared successful and diversification of the A-language showed progress, acts and statutes were modified accordingly (Anon. 1991a). Researchers (e.g. Hargrove 1975; Stufflebeam & Schinkfield 1985; Wildavsky 1979) think that feedback is needed during the whole implementation process to follow its progress.

The present study was aimed at giving an overall survey of foreign language education in the Finnish educational system and the realization of this education. Since the aim of the study is a survey, information is needed to indicate which elements of the object must be evaluated. The appropriate evaluation model to be applied is Stufflebeam's CIPP (context, input, process, product) approach (Stufflebeam 1975, 1983; Stufflebeam & Schinkfield 1985; see also Norris 1990). This model is applicable also to macro and micro analysis (Niinistö 1984).

The context of foreign language education is evaluated in the implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching. Context evaluation is aimed at examining whether quantitative goals are attuned to meet the needs. The main objectives of context evaluation are in assessing

the needs of both society and students, and how these needs correspond to the objectives set in the policy. It is of great importance also to see whether students are given the opportunity to move from one stage, and type of education, to another without obstacles. The setting of language programs, which consists of the characteristics of the municipalities, as well as acts, statutes and orders, which determine language education, are assessed in context evaluation.

Factors which are used as a means to implement the national plan are assessed in **input** evaluation. Language programs of different levels belong to such factors as well as measures which municipalities have taken to implement their language programs. Guidance given by school counselors and other teachers is an input factor, as well as dissemination of information, and recommendations concerning the range of languages which are offered to students. The allocated resources and other material supplies to be used for language studies also belong to input factors.

The process of implementation and its progress are objects of interest in the **process** evaluation of the national plan. Another objective is to assess the extent to which individual implementors accept, and are able to carry out, their roles. The factors which can facilitate, or which can impede, the implementation of language programs are also assessed in process evaluation. The process factors in the present study are the reasons or causes of language choices which students and parents have made.

The purpose of **product** evaluation is to measure, interpret, and judge the attainments of programs. This is done by comparing actual outcome with policy output, in other words, quantitative objectives with choices made by students and parents. Product evaluation should also be extended to the assessment of long term effects (see Dave 1980). In other words, assessment should be made of students who have been subjected to the planned language education program and who are currently working, in order to establish whether or not the initial policy intentions are achieved. It is not possible, however, in this study to assess long term effects because of the short span of the study and the research design applied.

Product evaluation should also look at intended and unintended effects and positive and negative outcomes. At the level of the individual student, product evaluation should also deal with attainment of the educational purposes of language teaching: e.g. language skills, insight into the culture and civilization of the countries where the language is spoken, and attitudes toward foreign language learning and toward speakers of foreign languages. Attitudes are proven to influence language learning motivation (Gardner 1985; Laine 1978, 1987, 1988; Lalonde & Gardner 1984), which also are expected to have a bearing on language choice.

7 CONTENTS OF THE STUDY AND MAIN PROBLEMS

The study concerning the implementation of the national plan of foreign language teaching is divided into sections. The contents of the study and the main problems are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. The contents of the study and the main problems

FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THE FINNISH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND ITS RELEVANCE

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|---|---|--|
| 1 A Language teaching in the Finnish educational system, its problems, and administrative measures for the implementation of the national plan for language teaching. | 2. The relevance of language education in the Finnish educational system, motives which lead to language choices, and other factors explaining those choices. | 3. Language education which is considered relevant by students, parents, and educational administration authorities. |
| 1 B The language skill required of higher education students. | | |
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(continues)

TABLE 1. (continues)

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| <p>1.1. What are the language programs like that different levels of educational administration have planned and carried out?</p> <p>1.2. What are the municipalities like that have planned and carried out their language programs in accordance with the principles of the national plan?</p> <p>1.3. Which factors have influenced the implementation of the national plan of language teaching?</p> <p>1.4. What measures have municipalities taken to carry out their language programs?</p> <p>1.5. What foreign languages do higher education students have to master in light of study requirements?</p> <p>1.6. What measures are suggested by school administration authorities for the diversification of language skills in Finland?</p> | <p>2.1. How relevant do comprehensive school and upper secondary school students, parents, and educational administration authorities, consider present language education?</p> <p>2.2. What are the motives of language choices?</p> <p>2.3. What are the other factors which explain language choices?</p> | <p>3.1. What kind of language education is considered relevant by students and parents?</p> <p>3.2. What kind of language education is considered relevant by educational administration authorities?</p> |
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8 DATA AND ANALYSES

Data concerning problem 1.1. were collected from all the state level educational administration authorities, and all the municipalities in Finland, by means of a questionnaire on foreign language programs. The data were processed by frequency and percentage distribution.

Data of the municipality level factors (concerning problem 1.2.) were collected from various statistics. The analyses used were cross tabulations, calculation of means and standard deviations, and testing the statistical significance of differences between means.

Data regarding factors influencing the implementation of language programs (problem 1.3.), and the measures taken by municipalities for the implementation of the language programs (problems 1.4. and 1.6.), were collected by means of a questionnaire directly from municipalities selected through sampling (total 123). The questionnaire was constructed on the basis of a pilot inquiry administered to provincial governments and interviews with educational administration authorities and comprehensive school and upper secondary school headmasters. The analyses used were factor analysis, calculation of means and standard deviations, and testing the statistical significance of differences between means, as well as classification and description of data.

For data concerning problem 1.5., a sample was drawn from the syllabuses of higher education institutions. The textbooks, contained in the degree programs of the sample, were collected from the study guides. The data were analysed by frequency and percentage distributions.

Data concerning problems 2.1. - 2.3. and 3.1. - 3.2. were collected directly from students of comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools, from parents, and educational administration authorities, which were selected through sampling, by means of a questionnaire. The sample consisted of 465 comprehensive school students, 481 upper secondary school students, 312 parents, and 138 educational administration auth-

orities. The questionnaires were constructed on a basis of a pilot inquiry administered to students and parents as well as interviews. The analyses used were factor analysis for groupings, cross tabulations, calculation of means and standard deviations, and testing the statistical significance of differences between means, as well as classification and description of data.

9 RESULTS

The success of the implementation of the programs is depicted in Figure 7. As the figure shows, macro-implementation has been successful but micro-implementation has been successful only in part.

9.1 Macro-implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching

The essential aspect in macro-implementation is that educational administration authorities at a higher hierarchical level influence the authorities at a lower level, so that they in turn make authorities at the municipal level construct their programs in accordance with the aims of the national plan. The macro-implementation which was carried out according to the top-down approach (see Sabatier 1986) was successful at every level and in all of the languages concerned. In the evaluation of macro-implementation, actual outcomes were compared with planned outcomes. All language programs, beginning from the national board level down to the municipality level, were consistent with the national plan, disregarding a few minor exceptions. The quantitative objectives were consistent with those defined in the national plan for foreign language teaching.

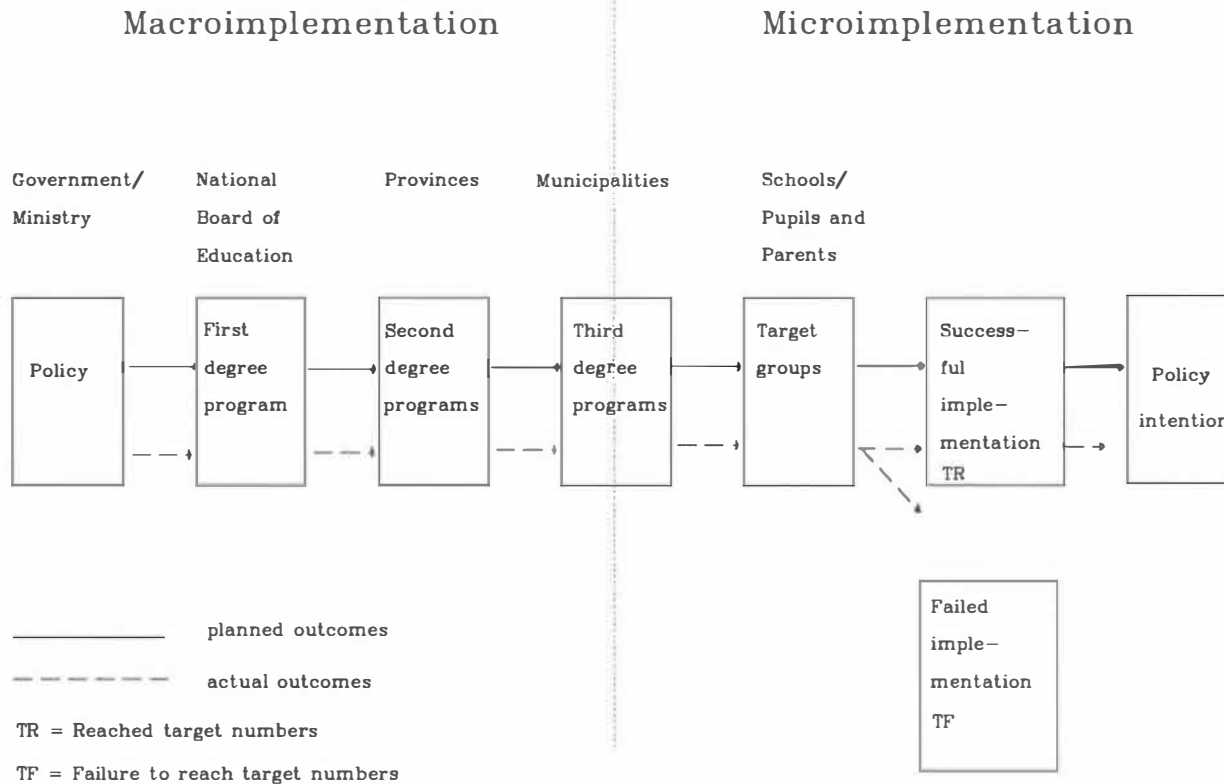


FIGURE 7. Success in implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching

9.2 Micro-implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching

As shown in Figure 7 target numbers were not reached and then micro-implementation was successful only in part. Therefore, it is justifiable to examine this in more detail. The implementation of municipal language programs is dealt with in three sections. The first covers the part of language programs which is concerned by the A-language, the second covers the C-language in comprehensive schools and the third the C-language and D-language in upper secondary schools. The figures show the results of the inquiry of the programs in the school year 1987-1988.

The implementation of the part of the language programs which concerns the A-language is shown in Figure 8.

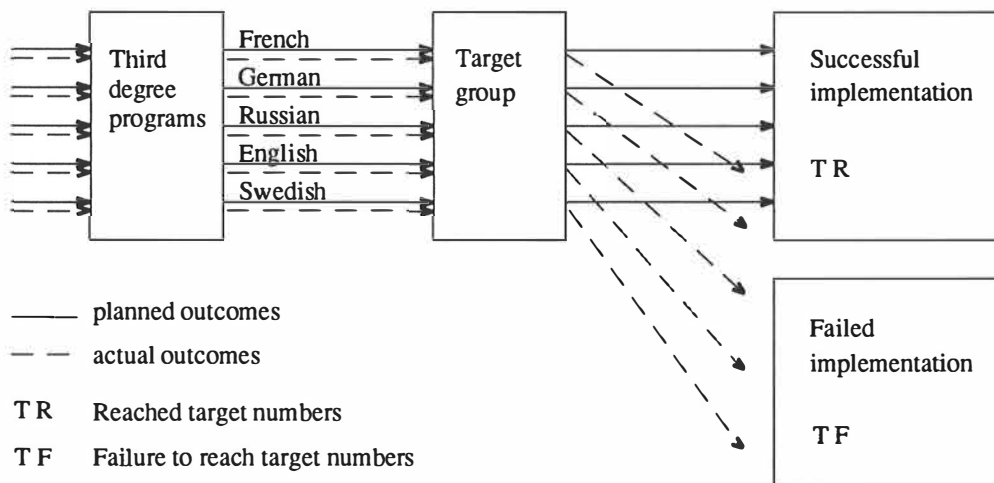


FIGURE 8. Implementation of the language programs for the A-language

The most serious failure in the implementation of language programs occurred in the Swedish language. The latest statistics (Euroopan kansalliskielten 1991) show a slight improvement but the objectives have not been reached.

The implementation of the part of the language programs which concerns the C-language in comprehensive schools has been successful (Figure 9).

Target numbers were reached, even exceeded in 1988, with the exception of Russian. The latest statistics (Euroopan kansalliskielten 1991) show roughly the same situation, even some progress has occurred.

The implementation of the part of the language programs which concerns the C-language and D-language in upper secondary schools,

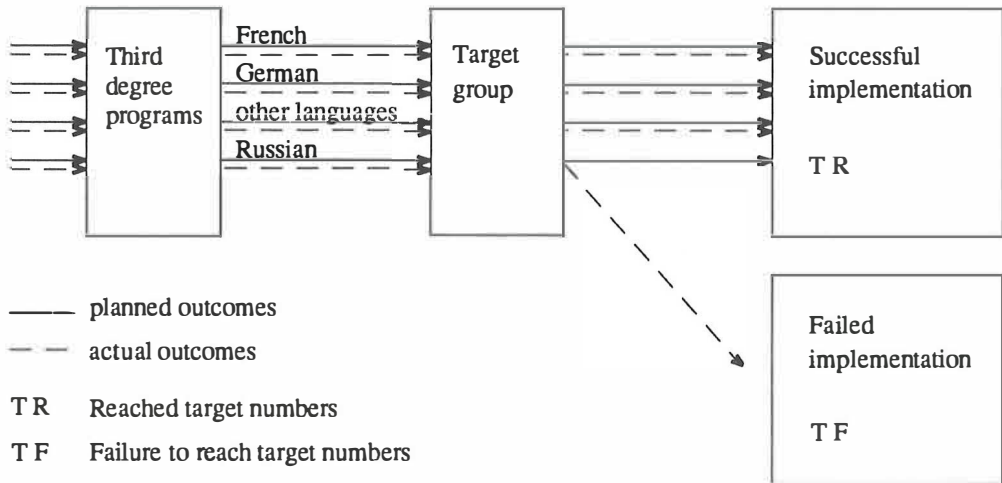


FIGURE 9. Implementation of the language programs for the C-language in comprehensive schools

proved to be a failure (Figure 10).

As a whole, the progress in the C-language and the D-language has been contradictory compared with the situation at the beginning of the implementation of the plan. Both the language program as a whole and the number of language choices are smaller than they were at the beginning of 1984. The latest statistics (Euroopan kansalliskielten 1991) do not show any further progress.

The assessment of the setting of language programs belongs to context evaluation. Municipalities which also offered languages other than English as the A-language were more developed than the other munici-

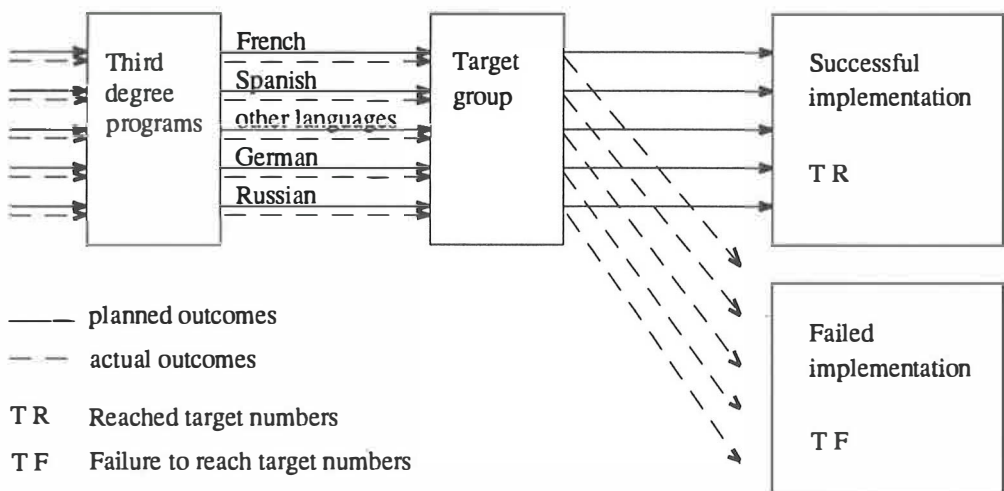


FIGURE 10. Implementation of the language programs for the C-language and the D-language in upper secondary schools

palties, their educational level was higher and their economic structure, to a larger extent, was based on industry. They were more prosperous and had a more solid population base, and more often than the other municipalities, had left-wing political majorities.

Municipalities which had reached the target percentage set for students of the C-language in comprehensive schools had a more solid population base than the others; they were also more prosperous and more highly developed, and had a higher educational level and an economic structure largely based on industry.

The situation is reversed when comparing municipalities that had reached the target percentage set for the C- language and the D-language in the upper secondary school, and those that had not reached it. Compared with the other municipalities with upper secondary schools, the municipalities that had reached the target percentage were sparsely populated, under-developed, less prosperous, and had a lower educational level. The proportion of the population earning their living in agriculture and forestry was considerably higher than in the other municipalities.

These contradictory results may be due to the fact that in upper secondary schools more resources were allocated to small schools. Therefore, these schools had better opportunities to implement the targets in the C-language and the D-language.

Students should not have any obstacles caused by the system when they move from one stage and type of education to another. **No prior language choice is an obstacle**, in theory, for a student to be accepted into vocational education. It has, however, not always been possible to ensure that the student can continue to study the language he has started, and less common language choices may cause future difficulties. Voluntary English, which is now offered nationwide from grade 5 in the comprehensive schools, may help the situation, but there may still be interruptions in language study.

Only one of the 28 **degree programs in higher education**, which are studied for the present thesis, did not include textbooks in English as part of the degree requirements. Textbooks in Swedish were included in the requirements of several degree programs, although its proportion was quite small. Also, German textbooks were included, either as options, or in small quantities in the requirements.

Micro-implementors, i.e. local educational authorities, are responsible for the implementation of the municipal language program. **Education officers assess factors influencing this implementation.** The first group of factors are practical factors which impede the choice of languages other than English. One of these factors is the allocation of time and resources to different school subjects. The next group consists of factors which are connected with the status of the English language and its popularity and position as an international language. The third group consists of factors which ensure that the student has the opportunity to continue to study the

language which he has started. The status of the English language as a language of youth culture works against the diversification of the A-language.

The possibility of increasing the number of students taking the C-language in comprehensive schools seems to depend on the student's work load in the compulsory A- and B-languages. The high proportion of "academic" subject matter at the lower secondary level and the appeal of optional subjects, such as information technology and practical subjects (wood work, home economics, etc.), have a negative effect on the number of students taking the C-language. The important factors influencing the diversification of the C-language are connected with the shortage of competent language teachers, although the most important factor seems to be which language is the most fashionable among young people.

The number of students taking C- and D-languages in upper secondary schools seems to be strongly influenced by the high number of compulsory subjects, and the fact that students who take a more extensive course in mathematics and physics do not have to take a C- or D-language. Furthermore, it is evident on the basis of the present study that the compulsory languages are difficult enough for some students, without the added challenge of an optional language. The shortage of competent language teachers also influences the number of students taking C- and D-languages, especially in small municipalities. The range of C- and D-languages chosen by students is most strongly influenced by the choice of the C-language in the comprehensive school.

Authorities usually try to influence target groups with different measures (see Barrett & Fudge 1981; Caiden 1976, McLaughlin 1987; Van Meter & Van Horn 1975). **Finnish local educational authorities have also, directly and indirectly, influenced students and parents with many measures.** Dissemination of information in various forms is the measure used most frequently by municipalities to expand the range of the languages concerned (A-, C- and D-languages), and to increase the study of the C-language in comprehensive schools, as well as the C- and D-language in upper secondary schools. Many municipalities had expanded the range of the languages offered, and an even greater number were intending to expand it even further. In the lower secondary schools of small municipalities, extra measures were required to find qualified teachers of French and Russian, and municipalities had often resorted to cooperation to overcome the shortage of teachers. Municipalities also took measures to guarantee that the study of the C-language, chosen in the comprehensive school, could be continued in the upper secondary school.

Most measures proposed for the diversification of language skills are concerned with the increasing of resources (time, money, etc.). The scarcity of resources available in upper secondary schools is especially considered a hindrance. Some respondents suggest that the supremacy of English as an A-language should be acknowledged. This means that the diversification

of language skills should take place, first and foremost, in the C-language of the comprehensive schools, but also in the C- and D-languages of the upper secondary schools. Some replies suggest that two compulsory languages should be considered too many, because it is a strain on many students. It was also suggested that Swedish should become a voluntary or optional language, and that the emphasis in language teaching should be shifted over to spoken language. Many education officers also believed in the effectiveness of information dissemination, campaigns and marketing in the diversification of language skills.

Micro-implementors have an important influence on the success of a policy (McLaughlin 1987). Another group affecting the success or failure of implementation are the target groups (see Lane 1983; Sabatier & Mazmanian 1983; Smith 1973). Students and parents, making their language choices, are the vital groups in the implementation of the programs.

As depicted in Figure 6, the actual outcomes of the implementation of the national plan are influenced by the personal relevance ascribed by the target groups to the language program and its implementation setting.

Even if language programs are a fundamental part of language education, they do not include the other domestic language. Thus, the object of the present study is language education as a whole, and the **views** of the students, the parents and the educational administration authorities, **on the relevance of present language education**. When dealing with the concept of relevancy the following questions should also be raised: How, why and to what is something relevant? (Scheffler 1969) The reasons why respondents considered language education relevant were only asked from comprehensive school and upper secondary school students.

Language supply, consisting only of English as the A-language, was not considered very relevant by comprehensive school students, upper secondary school students, parents and education administration authorities even if nowadays, it is the most common. At the moment every student in comprehensive and upper secondary schools must study two languages other than the native language. They did not consider this state of affairs relevant to themselves. The second domestic language of the country, which is Swedish for Finnish speaking students, is compulsory, but neither students, parents, nor education administration authorities, considered this relevant. Voluntary English (E-English) is offered from grade 5 only to those who have not taken English as A-language. Students, parents, and educational administration authorities did not consider it relevant that this offering of a voluntary language is restricted only to those who had taken Swedish, French, German or Russian as their A-language. Students in upper secondary schools, parents, and educational administration authorities did not consider it relevant that all the students in upper secondary schools must study two languages; a foreign language and the second domestic language of the country.

One of the aims of the present study was to examine **why students and**

parents make their language choices the way they do. The most important motives of comprehensive school boys to choose a C-language were instrumental. In other words, they chose a language to make use of the language. Comprehensive school girls had the same kind of motives for choosing the C-language, but they also had motives which were based on their feelings and previous experiences of foreign languages. The French language was primarily chosen on an affective basis because it was considered to be an interesting and beautiful language. German and Russian were chosen for instrumental reasons because students thought that they would benefit from them. Both comprehensive school girls and boys had the same reasons not to take a C-language as an optional subject. They considered two compulsory languages to be adequate because studying those two languages was laborious. They also found the other optional subjects more appealing. Most comprehensive school students were satisfied with their choice from a selection of optional subjects.

For boys and girls in upper secondary schools, the most important motives for choosing the C-language in comprehensive school had been an instrumental motive based on needs which are caused by internationalization, and the affective motive based on the attractiveness of languages. They had not taken the C-language in comprehensive school because of the appeal of other optional subjects. They also felt that two languages were adequate for them. Those who continued their C-language studies in the upper secondary school did this because they wanted to learn more. They felt that the language was interesting and that they could use it in their future studies. Those who did not continue to study the C-language in upper secondary school wanted to concentrate on other subjects. They also considered the C-language that they had studied in comprehensive school difficult, and they were no longer interested in it.

The choice of a D-language by boys in upper secondary school, was primarily based on compulsion because students needed it to have enough courses to fulfil the requirements. The girls chose a D-language because they wanted to learn many languages. French was chosen, in the first place, on an affective basis, and because it was considered an interesting and beautiful language, German for instrumental reasons as there could be future use for it, and Russian was chosen because it was interesting and different from the other languages in the language supply. Students in upper secondary schools did not take a D-language because studies in upper secondary schools would have become too laborious for them, and they had plenty to do with the languages they were already studying. In addition, many of them had taken a C-language earlier. Students who had not studied a D-language would have taken a D-language if there had not been such a high number of compulsory subjects in the upper secondary school. Boys would have taken a D-language if Swedish had not been compulsory for them.

Parents chose English as their child's A-language because it is an

international language which is needed for different careers, and which is understood and spoken in many countries. The child himself also wanted to choose English. The parents would have chosen some other language, if the child had requested it, and if English had not been included in the language supply, or if they had been compelled to take some other language. Parents had chosen Swedish because the child himself had wanted it, and because the child would need it in the future. Other reasons to take Swedish was the fact that Swedish is an official language in Finland, and that parents think Swedish would be easier than English. The most important reasons for choosing French, German or Russian as the child's A-language were the opportunity to start English studies as a voluntary subject, in the fifth grade, and also the child's own will to take the language in question.

Students' and parents' stand on foreign languages offered, which is part of the concept of relevance, were assessed as factors influencing implementation of the national plan. Students and parents arranged different languages in order of priority, according to a criteria of how interesting and useful they considered each language and in what order they had chosen to study them. The results showed that they have ranked as second (after English) the language which they had chosen in practice. English was the first language in all the assessments.

Comprehensive school and upper secondary school students were also asked to evaluate the factors which had influenced their choices when planning their studies. They considered their own interests to be the most important factor for their choices. Their plans for the future and the success in their previous studies in the subject also influenced their choices.

In examining the relevance of the national plan for foreign language teaching and the factors which impeded its implementation, it was necessary to identify the means with which the national plan could be ameliorated for successful implementation to occur (see also Hargrove 1975; Williams 1982).

The language education which is considered relevant by students, parents and education administration authorities was defined on the basis of replies they gave on questionnaires. Both comprehensive school and upper secondary school students as well as their parents were of the opinion that the A-language should be chosen from among many languages. All students in comprehensive schools should study two languages which they could both choose. A fair number of comprehensive school boys would like to study only one language. The Swedish language should be optional or voluntary. All students should have the opportunity to learn a voluntary language from the fifth grade. All the students in upper secondary school should study two languages which they could choose. Swedish should be voluntary or optional also in upper secondary school. Educational administration authorities were of the same opinion as students and parents about relevant language education.

10 DISCUSSION

10.1 An overall assessment of the implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching

The entire implementation process, as the implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching has shown, is a very complex process and it is difficult to explain its achievements and failures (see Cerych & Sabatier 1986). The macro-implementation was successful down to the municipal level. In other words, no great difficulties were met in the realization of the plan at different hierarchical administration levels. Although municipal plans were in accordance with the national plan, the micro-implementation was only partly successful. This supports McLaughlin's (1987) views that it is extremely difficult to make something happen across layers of government and institutions.

The goals of the national plan or the interpretation of those goals (see Cerych & Sabatier 1986; Larson 1980) could not have caused difficulties because the language programs which municipalities had drawn up, were complied with the national plan for language teaching and the objectives were expressed in plain numbers. Local educational authorities reported having taken and planned various measures in order to realize the municipal language programs. Still, they did not consider present language education relevant. The education officers' commitment to the language programs of their own municipality was not investigated, even if this might have a bearing on implementation (see McLaughlin 1987). Local educational authorities consider language programs and language education to involve elements which impede attainment of the major policy goal, which is the diversification of language skills.

The implementation process of the national plan for language teaching

represents, in the end, a mixture of achieved and unachieved goals. Intended and unintended effects, as well as positive and negative results, are usually present (Cerych & Sabatier 1986). For example, the offering of voluntary English (E-English) has resulted in an increase in diversification of the A-language. In the situation where there is movement from one municipality to another, difficulties caused by choosing languages other than English, can be impeded by the E-English. Data showed that many language groups other than English tended to be small. The fact that several A-languages make the language supply increasingly varied (Takala 1988) will cause difficulties in time tabling and extra demands for resources.

The implementation of municipal language programs was successful in comprehensive schools. A total failure occurred in upper secondary schools because the number of students studying the C- and D-language decreased. This failure nullified the success in comprehensive schools and also impeded the success of the national plan for foreign language teaching.

The diversification of language choices proved to be most difficult in Russian. An adequate system of rewards and sanctions had proven efficient in overcoming resistance (see Cerych & Sabatier 1986; McLaughlin 1987; Van Meter & Van Horn 1975). Local educational authorities had, however, neither rewards nor sanctions at their disposal to pressure target groups because legislature has provided students and parents with the right to choose languages. According to students' views, no external factor could strongly influence their study plans which include language choices.

The theoretical schemes of the implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching (Figures 4 and 6), which are designed in the present study, are applicable as a frame of reference when studying implementation of the future national plan (Anon. 1991b; 1991c). The working group appointed by the Ministry of Education (Opetusministeriö 1992) suggests that students in the future will have a wider opportunity to choose optional subjects in comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools. The scheme of the microimplementation (Figure 6) is usable also when studying reasons and causes of choices of optional subjects other than foreign languages in Finnish comprehensive and upper secondary schools. These kinds of studies will facilitate educational planning in municipalities and schools.

10.2 Conclusion

Could it be concluded, from the results of this study, that implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching was a failure, and that no corresponding policy could be implemented successfully? Implementation occurred according to the top-down approach (see Sabatier 1986) but other approaches have been developed to overcome the weaknesses of this

approach. A bottom-up approach (see Barrett & Fudge 1981; Elmore 1979-80), where local education authorities have more freedom to define targets, was established and a combination of these two approaches was developed by Sabatier (1986). If implementation of a new policy would be considered in the future, the implementation approach must also be reconsidered. Since the beginning of the implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching changes and deliberation from the central control has occurred within administration.

In the implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching, micro-implementors, ie. local educational authorities, were important but the target groups were vital. The realization of municipal language programs depended entirely on their choices. Of course, municipal language programs, language supply, and language education as a whole had a bearing on their choices. Most important, however, were the interests and plans of the target groups.

Because macro-implementation was successful, it could also be supposed that micro-implementation could be realized by administrative measures. This presupposes that languages studied in schools could be determined by local educational authorities or by schools. This was the case in previous upper secondary schools in Finland. This kind of imposition by authorities does not seem probable now or in the near future because self-realization and appreciation of individual freedom are tendencies demonstrated by young people, and must be taken into account in future educational planning (Lehtisalo 1991).

The free municipality experiment (Anon. 1988) has given municipalities the impetus to grow more responsible and the freedom to carry out activities and plans based on their own needs, wishes, and decisions. The new system of state grants to municipalities, which is scheduled to come into force in 1993, will provide municipalities with greater liberties than earlier to organize the education program which they are responsible for. An example of an attempt to diminish the central administration's control was the proposal made by the provincial government in North Karelia (Pohjois-Karjala 1990), that would permit the choice of French, German, Russian or Swedish as the second compulsory language in the seventh form of comprehensive school, so that the municipality could decide which language to include in the language supply, based on their own needs. The reasons to support their suggestion, especially concerning Russian, were the frequent, varied contacts with their close neighbour, and the fact that people worked on the other side of the border. Their proposal was, however, not accepted.

On the basis of the administrative reforms mentioned above, municipalities could be more active in the future, participating also in the planning of language education and stressing their own local needs. Municipalities would then prioritize their goals and allocate resources according to their own plans. All this would have a bearing on the diversification of their

language programs because municipalities must deliberate on the allocation of resources in language education. This would influence language supply, and the costs arising from small language groups would be carefully reconsidered.

The comprehensive school system was realized in the 1970's by means of stern central control. Since then, many changes have occurred in comprehensive schools and upper secondary schools. Presently, one of the central reform demands is to open more opportunities for choices and options in the curricula (see Opetusministeriö 1992; Uosukainen 1991; Välijärvi 1988). The proposals to make attendance at the national final exam in mathematics (Matemaattis- 1989) and studying another foreign language in upper secondary schools compulsory (Euroopan 1991) contradict the public demands for wider choice and options.

In evaluating educational accountability, assessments made by the target groups would also be paid attention to (Opetusministeriö 1990). Students could also evaluate the language education which they have received. They would then evaluate their language education on the basis of their own needs and plans. They would also assess whether their language education corresponds to the kind of language education whose purpose, according to the targets set by experts, is to create positive language learning experiences, to arouse interest in the language studied, and in speakers of that language and their culture (Sajavaara, in Siukonen 1988). They will also assess whether their language education provides them with a firm foundation for further language studies, the courage to use the language, and readiness to develop their language skills after they have left school (Takala 1988).

Neither language education nor education and teaching at school in general can be based entirely on the relevance experienced by students (see Olkinuora 1982). It would be most important that a balance could be found so that the needs of both society and students would be considered. From the implementation of the national plan for foreign language teaching, which was based on the needs of society, it can be learned that revising the policy and reforming the setting of its realization so that it better corresponds to the needs and the views of the target groups and micro-implementors would result in more successful implementation of a similar kind of policy. In this study students, parents, and educational administration authorities have expressed their opinions about the kind of alterations and revisions which should be made in the policy and the setting of language programs. The objective should be to draw up a policy which corresponds to the demands set by society but which, as much as possible, corresponds to students' and parents' needs. That kind of policy is inevitably a compromise.

YHTEENVETO

Tämä raportti on tiivistelmä kahdesta tutkimusraportista, joissa käsitellään suomalaisen koulutusjärjestelmän kielikoulutusta ja sen relevanssia. Tarkastelun kohteena on valtakunnallinen kielenopetuksen yleissuunnitelma ja sen toimeenpano. Yleissuunnitelma on valtioneuvoston päättämä, ja sen tavoitteena on kielitaidon monipuolistaminen Suomen peruskouluissa ja lukioissa.

Raportissa kuvataan kielenopetuksen yleissuunnitelman makro- ja mikroimplementaatioprosessia ja niitä tekijöitä, jotka vaikuttavat yleissuunnitelman toimeenpanoon. Koska kielenopetuksen yleissuunnitelma pohjautuu komitean työlle ja se on laadittu yhteiskunnan tarpeitten tyydyttämiseksi, sitä voidaan pitää yhteiskunnallisesti relevanttina. Yleissuunnitelman toimeenpanon kohderyhmillä eli oppilailla ja vanhemmilla on koululainsäädännön takaamat oikeudet päättää, mitä kieliä oppilaat opiskelevat. Tehtyjen kielivalintojen perusteella kuntien kieliohjelmien toimeenpano joko onnistuu tai epäonnistuu. Oppilaat tekevät kielivalintansa sen perusteella, miten relevanttina he pitävät nykyistä kielikoulutusta itselleen.

Kielenopetuksen yleissuunnitelman implementaatioprosessia kuvataan tarkoitusta varten laaditulla kaaviolla. Makroimplementaation onnistumista ja siihen vaikuttavia tekijöitä selvitettiin kyselyin, jotka suunnattiin lääninhallitusten ja kuntien kieliohjelmista vastaaville virkamiehille. Makroimplementaatio on onnistunut hyvin. Kaikkien tasojen, kouluhallituksen, lääninhallitusten ja kuntien, kieliohjelmat ovat sopusoinnussa yleissuunnitelman kanssa.

Mikroimplementaatio sitä vastoin on onnistunut vain osittain. Peruskoulun ala-asteen kielivalintoja on pystytty monipuolistamaan jonkin verran ja yläasteella kielivalinnat ovat sekä lisääntyneet että monipuolistuneet. Sitä vastoin lukiossa yleissuunnitelman toimeenpano on epäonnistunut joka suhteessa: kehitys on ollut päinvastainen tavoitteisiin nähden ja kieli-

valinnat ovat vähentyneet. Kyselyjen avulla saatiin kouluhallintovirkamiesten arviot niistä tekijöistä, jotka heidän mielestään vaikuttavat kieliohjelmien toteuttamiseen.

Kieliohjelmien mikroimplementaatioon vaikuttavien tekijöiden kuvaamiseksi esitetään teoreettinen mikroimplementaation kuvaus. Mikroimplementaation onnistumiseen tai epäonnistumiseen vaikuttaneita tekijöitä selvitettiin peruskoulun ja lukion oppilailta, vanhemmilta ja kuntien kouluhallintovirkamiehiltä kyselyjen avulla. Kuntien kieliohjelmien toteutuminen riippuu tehdyistä kielivalinnoista. Niihin vaikuttaa se, miten relevanttina oppilaat ja vanhemmat pitävät nykyistä kielikoulutusta. Tulosten mukaan eniten oppilaiden kielivalintoihin vaikuttavat heidän omat mieltymyksensä ja suunnitelmansa eikä ulkoisilla tekijöillä voida niihin paljoakaan vaikuttaa.

Peruskoulun ja lukion oppilaat, vanhemmat eivätkä kouluhallintovirkamiehet pidä nykyistä kielikoulutusta kovinkaan relevanttina. Heidän mielestään relevanttissa kieliohjelmassa olisi peruskoulussa laaja A-kielen tarjonta ja yksi tai kaksi pakollista kieltä niin, että oppilas voisi itse valita opiskelemaisensa kielen tai kielet. Kaikille peruskoulun oppilaille olisi tarjolla vapaaehtoinen kieli ala-asteella. Ruotsi olisi vapaaehtoinen tai valinnainen sekä peruskoulussa että lukiossa. Lukiossa olisi kaikkien opiskeltava kahta pakollista kieltä, jotka olisi valittavissa. Lisäksi sekä peruskoulussa että lukiossa olisi hyvät mahdollisuudet opiskella valinnaisia kieliä.

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