A language socialisation perspective on Swedish immersion in Finland

Students, teachers, and parents as key actors

Siv Björklund[1], Karita Mård-Miettinen[2], & Sanna Pakarinen[1]
[1] Åbo Akademi University | [2] University of Jyväskylä

This retrospective review applies a language socialisation perspective in examining the findings of a four-year research project on Swedish immersion in Finland. Findings from nine sub-studies within the project are reported with a point-of-view from three key actors' (teachers, students, and parents) language socialisation processes. Results show that a special feature of immersion teacher socialisation is its continuous attention toward the additive multilingual nature of immersion education, which requires sustained attention to multilingual language use and development. Students in Swedish immersion are socialised into the use of multiple languages in school and act as socialisation agents also outside school. They bring the immersion language to their homes and influence the family language use. Immersion may thus have a considerable influence on how majority language speakers self-identify as language users. Altogether, the sub-studies demonstrate that the benefits of immersion education extend well beyond learning success of students.

Keywords: language socialisation, Swedish immersion, multilingualism, language majority, immersion students, immersion teachers, immersion parents, bilingual education

1. Introduction

Language immersion, as a model of bilingual education (see, e.g., Baker & Wright, 2021), is firmly anchored in the educational context. Thus, the main focus areas of research are strongly oriented toward learning outcomes (e.g., student academic achievement and language learning), and teaching strategies regarding second language acquisition as well as the integration of content and language learning (for results from the Swedish immersion context, henceforth SI, see Björklund,

https://doi.org/10.1075/jicb.21019.bjo | Published online: 8 August 2022
Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education ISSN 2212-8433 | E-ISSN 2212-8441

2019). However, less attention has been paid to processes of socialisation into the use of two or more languages among three key immersion actors: students, teachers, and parents. The lack of socialisation studies within language immersion may be due to the strong emphasis on the maintenance and development of immersion students' first language and first language identity as well as the fact that the use of the immersion language is often mainly concentrated in the classroom (Swain & Lapkin, 2013). Nevertheless, findings from a recent Swedish immersion research project (see Björklund, 2020) revealed that two or more languages have an influence on three key actors' lives in Swedish beyond the classroom walls and beyond language learning and use in and outside the classroom.

In this article, we retrospectively review the findings of the nine sub-studies that comprised the project by taking a language socialisation entry to the reported results from the point-of-view of the three key actors. Overall, our intention is to explore the sub-studies from a dynamic perspective, with a specific focus on language behaviour, use, and attitudes (e.g., Fishman, 1971) as representing an ongoing process of socialisation into the use of two or more languages. Our ambition is to showcase the relationship between all languages of the key actors as manifestations of the social values attributed to the languages used within SI. Specifically, the role of Swedish as the main immersion language among these languages is examined. We find the relationships between languages intriguing since multilingualism is "not neutral, but rather intrinsically embedded in social processes that inform who and what counts as a legitimate speaker, language, and practice" (Duchêne, 2020, p. 93).

2. Swedish immersion in Finland

Finland is an officially bilingual nation, with Finnish and Swedish as its national languages (Constitution of Finland 731/1999, 1999). Regarding the number of speakers, Finnish is the majority language (86.9%), and Swedish is the minority language (5.2%) leaving all other languages combined at 7.9% (Statistics Finland, 2022). The geographical distribution of the two national languages varies considerably from basically monolingual to highly bilingual (or multilingual) areas. Regardless of the degree of regional bilingualism, education is arranged in separate Finnish-medium and Swedish-medium educational paths from early childhood education to higher education. The bilingual regions are concentrated in the west and south of Finland, where Swedish immersion has been attracting primarily Finnish-speaking families for decades (Mård-Miettinen et al., 2021). SI classes are predominantly situated in the Finnish-medium education path with Finnish as the administrative language of the schools.

SI begins in pre-primary education (age 4–5) and ends after Grade 9 of basic education (age 15) (for the programme structure, see Björklund, 2019). At the pre-primary level, all teaching is conducted through the medium of Swedish then diminished to approximately 90% of the total instructional time in Grade 1 along with the introduction of teaching in Finnish. By Grade 5, teaching in Swedish is diminished to 50% of the total instructional time.

A characteristic feature of SI is the early introduction of foreign languages from Grade 1 or 2 on. It is possible to study up to three languages (1–3 lessons per week for each language) other than Swedish and Finnish within SI. Pedagogically, SI teachers adopt a one person–one language-oriented strategy to ensure that students receive rich, frequent, varied, and content-specific input, which is needed for them to learn to communicate successfully in Swedish and the other languages in the programme. Even though students are encouraged to maximise the use of each language of instruction, crosslinguistic dimensions occur in SI classrooms, since students frequently make use of all their language resources while interacting and communicating with each other (Mård-Miettinen & Björklund, 2019).

The current Finnish national core curriculum for basic education (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2016) defines bilingual education programmes as large-scale or small-scale based on the proportion of the use of the target language as the language of instruction. With its high-intensity use of the immersion language, Swedish, as well as the programmes' length (from pre-primary to Grade 9), SI represents one of the most large-scale bilingual education programmes in Finland alongside large-scale Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programmes. However, neither SI nor large-scale CLIL has significantly expanded in Finland in the last two decades while small-scale programmes have been gaining ground.

3. Language socialisation

The key theoretical concept in this article is language socialisation (henceforth LS). White (1977) understands socialisation as an ongoing process of learning to live in society. The concept of LS incorporates both socialisation *to use* a language and socialisation *through the use* of language (Luykx, 2005). Meier (2018) argues that "educational environments socialise learners into seeing the world in a certain way through everyday practice" (p. 110). In SI, the three chosen key actors (students, teachers, and parents) operate in a context where (second) language learning and use, as well as multilingualism, are emphasised. Hence, it can be assumed that this emphasis impacts LS processes among these actors.

Previous research on LS has traditionally focused on top-down processes, particularly the role of experts in shaping novices' behaviours and practices (Ochs & Schieffeblin, 2017). Since the beginning of the 2000s, socioculturally oriented studies on bilingual and multilingual families have taken a more bottom-up, participatory, and dynamic view of the concept. In these studies, children are considered as having an active role in their own learning processes as well as having agency in shaping the process of LS within their families (e.g., Bergroth & Palviainen, 2017; Fogle, 2012; Luykx, 2005). When the children bring the majority language to their minority language homes, their agentive role may shift from introducing a new language to their parents to initiating a language shift among their family by resisting the use of the minority language in the specific context (Fogle, 2012). At the same time, parents' role as a linguistic authority in the home may be weakened when they have not mastered the language of schooling to the same extent as their children (Luykx, 2005).

There are only a few studies that address LS in a majority language context. Fogle's (2012) study on transnational adoptive families found that the adoptees' interactional agency transformed the (monolingual) US families into a new kind of (multilingual) family. Similarly, as in the case of minority language families, the adopted children had access to linguistic resources not available to their parents, reversing the traditional roles of parent and child in this regard (Fogle, 2012). The same has been found regarding language immersion when majority language parents enrol their children in minority language immersion education to give them access to a language they themselves have not necessarily mastered at all or at least not to the same extent (Björklund & Mård-Miettinen, 2011). Hence, it is surprising that issues related to LS have not been addressed from family and parental perspectives in previous immersion research and have only been scarcely addressed from the student perspective. One of the few researchers taking on this LS perspective is Roy (2010, 2012), who studied how immersion students in the Canadian province of Alberta identify themselves linguistically. Roy (2010) found that the societal discourse in Canada regarding bilingualism as consisting of two separate languages strongly shaped the language socialisation of immersion students, concluding that "students in French immersion do not have a space in Canadian society as bilinguals" (p. 557). Rather, they felt they were not fully bilingual, positioning themselves somewhere between the anglophone and francophone groups (Roy, 2010).

Research on teacher socialisation has addressed how teachers acquire a teaching culture as well as the norms, values, language, and symbols related to the teacher profession and how teachers help shape them (Aspfors et al., 2017). Moreover, Aspfors and colleagues (2017) found that the socialisation processes among two newly graduated teachers in their study of the complexity of the teacher pro-

fession featured several parallel patterns. The study showed that competency-building and enthusiasm were positively connected to the work of teachers inside their classrooms. Aspects of intensification (e.g., a high number of tasks other than teaching and continuous pressure), instability in the form of many parallel and unexpected tasks, and particularity (e.g., groupings) were also related to schoolwork on a whole but associated with challenges and frustration.

Another strand of research has focused on the role of teachers in the language socialisation process of learners. For example, Duffs' (1995, 2007) ethnographic research showed that teachers in dual-language schools in Hungary socialised learners through new methods of lesson participation, resulting in the contestation, transformation, and abandonment of a century-old, traditional national practice. In terms of language immersion, research on teachers and teacher education long ago recognised the need for special training for immersion teachers – within both initial teacher education and professional in-service training. However, findings stemming from this perspective have concentrated on the language competencies and pedagogical skills needed for teachers to successfully integrate content and language in their teaching (see, e.g., Cammarata & Ó Ceallaigh, 2018) instead of emphasising the importance of teacher socialisation in language immersion.

4. Background and data

This article is based upon the results from a four-year research project that we retrospectively review through a lens of the sociology of language. The aim of the project was to identify and describe individual, family, and societal factors and values that underlie the supply and demand of SI and other bilingual education programmes in Finland (Björklund, 2020). In particular, the research focused on the influence of daily multilingual practices in education on the linguistic identity of immersion actors. The project comprised nine independent but interwoven sub-studies featuring students, teachers and parents whose language practices, linguistic identification, and attitudes toward multilingualism are shaped by their involvement in SI. Table 1 summarises the project and its data, methods, and participants. We refer to children and young people in SI as *students* due to the several school levels discussed.

The project data were generated using multiple methods, including online questionnaires, individual and focus group interviews and discussions, drawings and photo elicitation, and ethnographic classroom observations on documented repertoires in use (e.g., observations, photos) or reported repertoires (e.g., questionnaires, interviews, discussions, drawings). Various types of thematic and dis-

Table 1. Data, methods, and participants in the sub-studies

	Key actors	Data	Methods
STUDENTS			
Björklund et al., (2015)	Grades 7–9, *n* = 225	Questionnaires (203 students), group interviews (22 students)	Thematic analysis
Pakarinen & Björklund (2018)	Grade 5, *n* = 3	Photographs, focus group discussion	Thematic analysis
Mård-Miettinen & Björklund (2019)	Grades 5, 8, *n* = 10	Photographs, individual photo-elicitation interviews	Domain analysis, discourse analysis
Pakarinen (2020)*	Grades 5, 7 and 8, *n* = 6	Photographs, pair interviews, individual photo-elicitation interviews, drawings	Critical discourse analysis, thematic analysis
Rydenvald et al. (a yet unpublished study)**	(Upper)-secondar, *n* = 7	Questionnaires, self-recordings, individual and group interviews	Thematic analysis
(STUDENT) TEACHERS			
Peltoniemi (2017)	Student teachers, *n* = 35, teachers Grades 1–6, *n* = 29	Questionnaire	Thematic analysis
Peltoniemi & Bergroth (2020)	Teachers Grades 1–6, *n* = 8	Audio-recorded group discussions	Thematic analysis
PARENTS			
Pakarinen et al. (a yet unpublished study)	Parents, *n* = 182	Electronic questionnaire	Thematic analysis
Mård-Miettinen et al. (a yet unpublished study)	Parents, *n* = 6, children, *n* = 7	Interviews	Nexus analysis

* A comparative study on SI and all-Irish education in Ireland comprising six students in each country.

** A comparative study on students in secondary and upper-secondary schools (aged 16–17 and 18–19) in SI and in the Swedish-language section of the European School in Belgium comprising seven students in Finland and nine students in Belgium.

cursive analyses were completed in these mostly ethnographically oriented case studies to highlight individual, family-based, and societal values and ideologies that interact with the documented and reported language practices.

The five sub-studies on students explored multiple language use and linguistic identity in and beyond school. In addition, visual multilingualism, and students' views on linguistic landscapes of schools (e.g., *schoolscapes*, see Brown, 2012) were examined (Pakarinen, 2020; Pakarinen & Björklund, 2018). The two sub-studies on teachers focused on aspects of working as a (student) teacher in SI and (student) teachers' linguistic and professional identity. Furthermore, the two sub-studies on parents focused on enrolment in immersion and majority language speaking parents' views on SI.

The project set out to investigate SI using visual data (see above) to complement the interview and questionnaire-based data (Mård-Miettinen & Björklund, 2019; Pakarinen, 2020). Studies of schoolscapes were included to examine the underlying language policies in SI (Pakarinen, 2020; Pakarinen & Björklund, 2018). Group discussions with a researcher present were recorded to study the teachers (Peltoniemi & Bergroth, 2020), while the students were asked to self-record their language use throughout the day in and outside school (Rydenvald et al., yet unpublished). Altogether, the project consisted of data from 258 students, 72 teachers and student teachers, and 188 parents.

Next, we retrospectively review the sub-studies from an LS point of view. We have not conducted new analyses of the data, instead, we review the reported findings and explore major processes of LS in SI from the student, teacher, and parental perspectives. The retrospective review includes both the two sub-studies by Peltoniemi and Bergroth (2020) and Mård-Miettinen et al. (yet unpublished) that explicitly addressed issues of LS as well as the seven sub-studies that originally addressed other issues.

5. The interface of language socialisation and immersion experience

Three major processes of LS were identified in the nine aforementioned sub-studies: socialisation into multiple language use, socialisation into taking a minority perspective, and socialisation into language-related planning. Next, we discuss these processes using data extracts (all names are pseudonyms) and discuss how the processes relate to LS.

5.1 Socialisation into multiple language use

A unique feature of SI is its multilingual orientation where multiple languages are present in the daily life of SI students for at least nine years since they are taught through several languages each school day from pre-primary education until Grade 9 (see Section 2). Accordingly, they are socialised into using these lan-

guages. In our sub-studies, the students not only discuss their daily language use but also comment on their attitudes towards it, as Minea, a student in Grade 8 in Mård-Miettinen and Björklund (2019), demonstrates:

Excerpt 1. "I can function in many languages completely normally." (p. 248)

The quote above summarises the attitude most of the students throughout all the sub-studies had: the use of multiple languages represented a normal life for them. Students' socialisation into the use of multiple languages was also noted by the parents, as shown in Mård-Miettinen et al. study (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 2. "It [the Swedish language] is very natural for them."

It is often argued that immersion students in majority-language programmes often primarily use the immersion language in class (Swain & Lapkin, 2013) but the quote above by an immersion parent indicates that Swedish is also used outside the school by students in SI.

Immersion education that pursues language separation into verbal and visual communication categories (see Section 2) socialises students into frequently changing their language of communication as well as the visual scenery for learning. In SI, visual communication, particularly of the languages within the linguistic landscapes of these schools, is an indicator of language separation equal to that of teachers using only one language with their students in the class (Pakarinen, 2020; Pakarinen & Björklund, 2018). Displaying multiple languages in the linguistic landscape of SI is not only a practice of showcasing the students' written works for parents and other students but a practice that also increases awareness of the different languages taught as a specific subject or those spoken by students at a particular school. This concept was specifically noted by students in Pakarinen (2020), with Ellen, a Grade 7 student, stating:

Excerpt 3. "And at least in our old school building [an immersion primary school], all immersion classes were located on one floor, so you knew that at least in there all the signage would be in Swedish." (p. 141)

In terms of socialisation into multilingual interaction, students in SI become acclimated in the same way as children in multilingual families (e.g., Bergroth & Palviainen, 2017; Fogle, 2012; Luykx, 2005) to choosing their language of communication-based on their current interlocutor (e.g., a teacher teaching through Swedish, Finnish, or a foreign language) and setting (e.g., a classroom where the students are taught in Swedish, Finnish, or a foreign language). This was reflected in the three sub-studies (Mård-Miettinen & Björklund, 2019; Pakarinen, 2020; Rydenvald et al., yet unpublished), with students specifically

discussing their language use at school and in their spare time, including Milla, an upper-secondary student in Rydenvald et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 4. "In school, it [language used] depends on what lessons we have, that is, Finnish, English, or Swedish. If I am at my dad's, his girlfriend has usually come home, and then I speak English with her."

Even though one of the core characteristics of majority-language immersion is "to maintain separate instructional spaces for both program languages" (e.g., Tedick & Lyster, 2020, p. 60), crosslinguistic practices are used in immersion classrooms (see Section 2). This socialisation into the dynamic use of multiple languages is manifested through students readily using their multilingual repertoires outside of school, as explained by Anton, a student in Grade 8, in Mård-Miettinen and Björklund (2019):

Excerpt 5. "I sometimes talk to a Norwegian […] sometimes, s/he speaks Norwegian, and I speak Swedish and we understand each other because the languages are so alike and sometimes in English if we don't understand each other." (p. 244)

In the above quote, Anton shows that he has become accustomed to interlocutors using different languages of communication with each other, a characteristic practice of immersion classrooms (Björklund & Mård-Miettinen, 2011; Lyster, 2007; Tedick & Lyster, 2020). The quote also illustrates an openness and growing sensitivity to languages, a recurring feature in the project's sub-studies focusing on students.

In Excerpt 5 above, Anton also describes a situation when he did not understand an interlocutor and opted for another language to overcome this challenge.

In immersion, studying school subjects in different languages socialises students in that being multilingual means possessing a partial competence in the languages in one's repertoire, as highlighted by Eeva, a student in Grade 7, in Mård-Miettinen et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 6. "From time to time, there are words connected to the school that I do not remember in Finnish."

The fact that immersion students do not necessarily know the relevant subject vocabulary in their first language is even reflected in their language use at home. Various types of dynamic language practices were reported in the sub-studies – not only for the students at school but in their homes as well, specifically in relation to homework. In SI, homework can be given in multiple languages, and, when parents help their children with their homework, this can socialise

even originally monolingual parents into multilingual interaction, as explained by Liisa, a student in Grade 4, in Mård-Miettinen et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 7. "If my mother has helped me with homework, then she can say, for example, some numbers in Swedish at home, although she wouldn't normally do that."

Hence, despite it being strongly stressed that the role of immersion parents is to support the development of their child's first language (e.g., Björklund & Mård-Miettinen, 2011), students also bring the immersion language home – at least to some extent as illustrated by a parent in Mård-Miettinen et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 8. "I noticed last week that they [my immersion children] spoke Swedish with a friend, and we, [the] parents, [spoke] Finnish."

This is a phenomenon opposite of that discussed in Fogle's (2012) study (see Section 3). The presently described phenomenon means that, in the case of immersion, majority language students bring the minority language to their homes.

Regarding immersion teachers, they are socialised to take on the dual role of a teacher of content and a teacher of a (second) language (e.g., the immersion language) and related literacy (Peltoniemi, 2017; Peltoniemi, & Bergroth, 2020; see Section 3). This dual role means that teachers need to systematically counterbalance the integration of content and language in their teaching (Lyster, 2007; Tedick & Lyster, 2020) and develop what Morton (2017) calls common and specialised language knowledge that is essential in content teaching in the second language of the learners. This was highlighted by one of the teachers in Peltoniemi and Bergroth (2020):

Excerpt 9. "When I started to work as an immersion teacher, I thought it would be to just start teaching in Swedish. Well, it didn't take long before I had to take a step back and think, 'Okay, maybe I'll start teaching through the language instead.'" (p. 6)

In addition, the dual role of teachers is manifested in student teachers and teachers emphasising the importance of being a language model for students and possessing good language competencies (Peltoniemi, 2017), i.e., in shaping the learners' LS as found by Duff (1995, 2007; see Section 3). However, immersion teachers are strongly socialised into bilingual interaction, as SI students most often have Finnish-speaking backgrounds (see Section 2). This means that a teacher who teaches students in Swedish is expected to communicate in Finnish with the students' parents. For some teachers, this is a novel experience, as indicated in one teacher's comment in Peltoniemi and Bergroth (2020):

Excerpt 10. "I was a bit nervous about the parental contacts. I had good grades and I was good in Finnish verb forms but not so used to talking in Finnish, but I just thought that I'll have to laugh at my own expense, and I will learn. When we had parental meetings, I had written precise notes of what I wanted to say, but, when I wanted to joke a bit, it went as it went. Then, I remember that the parents sat there and nodded supportively, and I tried to look at them, and thought, 'This will work just fine.'" (p.7)

Hence, not only are the students socialised into communicating in multiple languages in the context of immersion, but the teachers and parents are as well.

5.2 Socialisation into taking a minority perspective

In a second language immersion context like that of Finland, the immersion language is a minority language in the overall nation, which adds an additional dimension to the LS process (see Section 2). Specifically, the process extends beyond mere language use and highlights the key actors' advocacy for the Swedish language as well as their dynamic identification as a part of a minority language group.

Moreover, the teachers may act as advocates not only for the Swedish language but also for SI specifically. Socialising of the teachers into taking a minority perspective is realised when they feel the need to fight against the negative discourse on the Swedish language in Finnish society or when defending SI as an established but sometimes overlooked programme, as one of the participants in Peltoniemi and Bergroth (2020) explained:

Excerpt 11. "The municipality should invest in the level of marketing and promote it [SI] to put emphasis on the fact that this is an important thing. It has never, not even at the state level, been stated clearly. They only say that one should learn different languages earlier on and then they have forgotten altogether to tell, and then they talk about this obligatory Swedish, they talk only about the obligation: No one says that there are thousands of families in Finland who voluntarily choose the language immersion route." (p.7)

Regardless of the documented success of SI, the programme is still minoritised within the wider Finnish educational space. Besides the day-to-day teaching of language and content to immersion students in the Swedish language, immersion teachers feel obligated to advocate for the sustainability of the programme.

Being surrounded daily by multiple languages foregrounded in the visual and oral landscape at school has led immersion students to become observant of their linguistic environment in a way typical of individuals belonging to a linguistic

minority. In several of the project's sub-studies (Mård-Miettinen & Björklund, 2019; Mård-Miettinen et al., yet unpublished; Pakarinen, 2020; Pakarinen & Björklund, 2018; Rydenvald et al., yet unpublished), the students reported that they pay attention to written and spoken languages and show sensitivity to their communication partners when selecting their language of communication. Furthermore, the students' socialisation into taking a minority language perspective was observed by their families, as mentioned by a parent in Mård-Miettinen et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 12. "If someone speaks Swedish to him/her, s/he will answer in Swedish."

In a dual-track immersion school where Finnish is the administrative language and mainstream classes comprise the majority of classes, sometimes Finnish-speaking immersion students actively take on the role of a minority language speaker. This can be expressed by them referring to immersion classes as *Swedish-speaking classes* or by referring to themselves as *Swedish speakers* (Pakarinen, 2020). In the sub-studies, minority language speaker identification was only expressed in the school context when the students described differences between the SI and mainstream (Finnish) education groups at their schools. In these cases, being a Swedish speaker refers mainly to being taught through Swedish.

Identification as a Swedish speaker can even occur when immersion students encounter Swedish-speaking persons or when engaging in a Swedish-speaking space outside of school. An example of such a situation is described by Maria, an upper-secondary student, in Rydenvald et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 13. "It [if you identify as bi- or multilingual] maybe sometimes depends on the company. If you only are with Swedish speakers, then you are like, 'Yeah, I am one of them', but at least I don't normally assume like I would be bilingual."

Context-dependent identification as a Swedish speaker may occur when immersion students engage in interaction with an interlocutor with the minority language as their first language (Lee & Anderson, 2009). This contrasts with what Roy (2010) found in Canada where French immersion students often feel they do not have a space in society as bilinguals. In Finland, SI students seem to have such space.

Even though the sub-studies reviewed in this paper demonstrate evidence of immersion students occasionally taking on a minority language perspective or identification, a significant difference can be seen between Finnish-speaking students in SI and English-speaking students in Irish immersion in Ireland, as shown in the sub-study by Pakarinen (2020). The majority language students' enrolment in SI seems to result in their socialisation into taking on a minority language per-

spective on a personal level, and they seldom discuss the role of the Swedish language or SI in Finnish society (see immersion teachers in Peltoniemi & Bergroth, 2020). Findings from Pakarinen's (2020) study indicates that students in Irish immersion pay attention to the minority and immersion language of Irish to a greater extent when compared to the Finnish context, as demonstrated by Séamus, a Grade 5 student:

Excerpt 14. "I think it is good because it [Irish] is our national language, and more people should be able to learn it, and, like, if we know it, we then could teach our kids and they could teach their kids." (p. 186)

This quote from a majority language (English) speaker illustrates a concern for the immersion language (Irish) and its future at the societal level, with the individual referring to intergenerational language transmission in the context of Irish immersion families. In relation to the political landscape of Ireland and Irish being an endangered language, immersion schools for both first and second language speakers of Irish have a vital role in the revitalisation process of language (See Ó Duibhir, 2018). Even though students in SI or their families may have connections to the Swedish language and Swedish-speaking Finns (Pakarinen et al., yet unpublished), the advocacy of promoting intergenerational language transmission in the context of immersion education for majority language speakers, as presented in the quote above, was not found among the SI students in the sub-studies.

5.3 Socialisation into language-related planning

The third and final major socialisation process identified in the sub-studies covers the key actors' socialisation into explicit language-related planning through participation in SI. Regarding teachers, socialisation into language-related planning signifies possessing specific (language) aims related to immersion, as explained by a teacher with a few years of experience in SI in Peltoniemi and Bergroth (2020):

Excerpt 15. "I have indeed noticed that it takes careful planning and meaningful planning when you work in immersion so that you know what the aims are […] it is not meaningful if you just enter a classroom and start to teach, you need to think some in advance and plan." (p. 6)

While the teacher above discusses aims and criteria on a more general level, the requirements of immersion teaching were elaborated in greater detail by a teacher in Peltoniemi (2017), who emphasised the following two language-related aspects in teaching for an immersion teacher:

Excerpt 16. "The integration of language and content and the knowledge of second language learning [are the most important features of immersion teaching]." (p.164)

The excerpt shows that SI teachers have not only acquired a teaching culture that is related to general teacher professionalism (see Aspfors et al., 2017) but also internalised features underscored in immersion research literature. For example, it is crucial that the immersion teacher is familiar with the process of students acquiring a new language (the immersion language) when simultaneously learning new subject-specific content (Tedick & Lyster, 2020).

In most cases, SI is implemented in dual-track schools, where students in the immersion track are socialised into being the most skilled ones in the Swedish language at their school in comparison with mainstream students who learn Swedish as a language subject. This socialisation can be manifested in our studies through the students' conscious plans to use the languages in one's repertoire. Especially the immersion language, Swedish, can have specific purposes, as explained by Silja, an upper-secondary student, in Rydenvald et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 17. "Like, with Seela, we always speak Swedish if we speak ill of somebody."

The deliberate strategy of speaking Swedish in the presence of a person without knowledge of the language not only indicates an individual's planned use of his or her expertise but also his or her pride in using the immersion language outside the classroom and school. It also shows similar agency toward the use of a certain language reported for example by Fogle (2012; see Section 3).

As described in Section 2, SI has an additive orientation toward learning and use of the immersion language, and the sub-studies on immersion parents indicate that they are also socialised into this. For example, parents exercise explicit language planning (Fogle, 2012) in relation to the immersion language when proposing a preferred modus operandi for interacting with their children enrolled in SI, as illustrated by a parent in Mård-Miettinen et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 18. "I have told all Swedish speakers [to] please speak Swedish [to my child]."

Hence, the parent above demonstrates an agentive behaviour in response to his or her child's linguistic environment to reinforce the child's contact with the immersion language. As mentioned in Section 2, SI has a multilingualism orientation evidenced by the varied languages other than Swedish introduced early on which distinguishes it from most mainstream programmes. The learning of additional languages and the development of multilingual repertoires is hence regarded as beneficial for students in immersion. The parental sub-studies specifically showed

that parents are strongly socialised into additive multilingualism when planning for their children's futures, as exemplified by the excerpt below from Pakarinen et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 19. "The higher the number of languages you know, the better it [your opportunities later in life] will be."

This quote demonstrates that enrolment in SI is seen by the parent as beneficial for the child's future, but the added value of the immersion programme is its multilingual orientation. Even students are socialised into additive multilingualism, as pointed out by Eeva, a student in Grade 7 in Mård-Miettinen et al. (yet unpublished):

Excerpt 20. "It is good to have language knowledge, and it makes it easier to learn additional languages."

This section has illustrated how the key actors in SI – students, teachers, and parents –are being socialised through immersion into multiple language use, taking a minority perspective, and language-related planning. In the final section, we conclude by discussing the significance of our findings.

6. Discussion and conclusions

The retrospective review on nine sub-studies in SI reported in this article provides a nuanced picture of the role of the immersion experience of majority language speaking students enrolled in the programme, their families, and their teachers from the perspective of LS. The review underscores the complexity of the socialisation into multilingualism embedded in the perspectives of the three key actors, foregrounding that the benefits of immersion education clearly extend beyond the effects of more conventional language education programmes.

Overall, the immersion experience has a considerable influence on how these majority language speaking parents and their children position themselves as language users as well as how they are socialised into the use of multiple languages within the multilingual programme and the wider society in which they reside. Moreover, the findings also highlight the complex relationships between ideologies and practices in SI, with the unifying feature of all the key actors being that they hold a positive stance regarding multilingualism and the Swedish language as well as deliberately take on a minority language perspective.

Regarding SI students, they are socialised into daily use of multiple languages in SI and are thus being fostered to living a multilingual life even outside of school. Contrary to Roy's (2010) findings in Canada, where immersion students

do not often feel as legitimate bilingual speakers, SI students in Finland are socialised into using Swedish as well as other languages in their repertoire both in school and in the wider society. SI students also act as socialisation agents, bringing the immersion language into their homes and thus influencing the language use of their families. Hence, they are as agentive as the adoptive children in Fogle's (2012) study, i.e., they transform their own majority language family into a new multilingual family – at least while the children are enrolled in the programme. This finding offers a novel perspective to immersion families since earlier research has mainly focussed on the parents' agentive role in supporting their children's first language and identity (Björklund & Mård-Miettinen, 2011; Swain & Lapkin, 2013).

Parents in SI are socialised into multilingualism and language-related planning. They acknowledge the current and future benefits their children gain by being enrolled in SI with its multilingual approach. Socialisation into language planning is realised by parents' agentive behaviour toward their child's development of Swedish by ensuring contacts with first language Swedish speakers outside school and by requesting Swedish-only interaction in these situations (for other immersion contexts, see e.g., Ó Duibhir, 2018).

SI socialises teachers into a teaching culture where they need to be agentive in students' LS and pay continuous attention to language use and multilingual development in their classrooms. SI socialises teachers to bilingual interaction and demands multilingual language competence for them to be both Swedish language models to students and to interact with parents in Finnish. This also highlights the necessity of specialised language knowledge in the students' second language (see Morton, 2017) to balance and explicitly plan for the integration of content and language teaching. These findings underline both the importance of specialised training for immersion teachers and require continuous maintenance of the teachers' own language repertoires.

This retrospective review of findings of the nine sub-studies describes some LS processes among majority language speakers in SI, but there is still a need for examining socialisation processes in more detail both within SI and in other language immersion contexts. A crucial point is for example, to examine how closely the LS processes among the key actors are tied to periods of active engagement in SI or immersion programmes in general, and how LS processes into two or more languages influence for example the views of the students, teachers, and parents in the mainstream programmes in schools with language immersion groups. A further point to investigate is to what extent factors such as national language policies and attitudes towards languages in society influence the LS processes among the three key actors.

Funding

Research funded by Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland to Siv Björklund, by Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland to Karita Mård-Miettinen and by Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland to Sanna Pakarinen.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (SLS) for funding the project Interplay between language practices, multilingual identity, and language ideologies (2016–2022) reviewed retrospectively in this article.

References

Aspfors, J., Bendtsen, M., & Hansén, S-E. (2017). Nya lärare möter skola och klassrum [Newly graduated teachers meeting school and classroom]. In S-E. Hansén, & L. Forsman (Eds.), *Allmändidaktik – Vetenskap för lärare* (pp. 319–340). Studentlitteratur.

Baker, C., & Wright, W.E. (2021). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (7th ed.). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/BAKER9899

Bergroth, M., & Palviainen, Å. (2017). Bilingual children as policy agents: Language policy and education policy in minority language medium early childhood education and care. *Multilingua: Journal of Cross-Cultural and Interlanguage Communication*, *36*(4), 375–399. https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2016-0026

Björklund, S. (2019). Research Trends and Future Challenges in Swedish Immersion. In M. Haneda, & H. Nassaji (Eds.), *Perspectives on Language as Action. Festschrift in Honour of Merrill Swain* (pp. 45–60). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781788922944-006

Björklund, S. (2020). *Final Project Report*. The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland. https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe20200422221088

Björklund, S., & Mård-Miettinen, K. (2011). Integration of Multiple Languages in Immersion: Swedish Immersion in Finland. In D.J. Tedick, D. Christian, & T. Williams Fortune (Eds.), *Immersion Education: Practices, Policies, Possibilities* (pp. 13–35). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847694041-005

Björklund, S., Pakarinen, S., & Mård-Miettinen, K. (2015). Är jag flerspråkig? Språkbadselevers uppfattningar om flerspråkighet [Am I multilingual? Immersion students' beliefs on multilingualism]. In J. Kalliokoski, K. Mård-Miettinen, & T. Nikula (Eds.), *Kieli koulutuksen resurssina: vieraalla tai toisella kielellä oppimisen ja opetuksen näkökulmia* (pp. 153–167). AFinLA-e: Soveltavan kielitieteen tutkimuksia 8. http://ojs.tsv.fi/index.php/afinla/article/view/53777/16874

Brown, K.D. (2012). The linguistic landscape of educational spaces: Language revitalization and schools in Southeastern Estonia. In D. Gorter, H.F. Marten, & L. Van Mensel (Eds.), *Minority languages in the linguistic landscape* (pp. 281–298). Palgrave MacMillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230360235_16

Cammarata, L., & Ó Ceallaigh, T. J. (2018). Teacher education and professional development for immersion and content-based instruction. Research on programs, practices, and teacher educators. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education*, *6*(2), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1075/jicb.00004.cam

Duchêne, A. (2020). Multilingualism: An insufficient answer to sociolinguistic inequalities. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *263*, 91–97. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2020-2087

Duff, P. A. (1995). An ethnography of communication in immersion classrooms in Hungary. *TESOL Quarterly*, *29*(3), 505–537. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588073

Duff, P. A. (2007). Second language socialization as sociocultural theory: Insights and issues. *Language Teaching*, *40*, 309–319. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444807004508

Finnish National Agency for Education (2016). *The Finnish national core curriculum for basic education.*

Fishman, J. A. (1971). The sociology of language: An interdisciplinary social science approach to language in society. In J. A. Fishman (Ed.), *Basic concepts, theories and problems: Alternative approaches* (pp. 217–404). Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111417509

Fogle, L. W. (2012). *Second language socialization and learner agency: adoptive family talk.* Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847697868

Lee, J. S., & Anderson, K. (2009). Negotiating linguistic and cultural identities: Theorizing and constructing opportunities and risks. *Review of Research in Education*, *33*, 181–211. https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X08327090

Luykx, A. (2005). Children as socializing agents: Family language policy in situations of language shift. In J. Cohen, K. T. McAlister, K. Rolstad, & J. MacSwan (Eds.), *ISB4: Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism* (pp. 1407–1414). Cascadilla Press.

Lyster, R. (2007). *Learning and teaching language through content: A counterbalanced Approach.* John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/lllt.18

Meier, G. (2018). Multilingual socialisation in education: Introducing the M-SOC approach. Language Education and Multilingualism. *The Landscape Journal*, *11*, 103–125. https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/handle/18452/19672

Morton, T. (2017). Reconceptualizing and describing teachers' knowledge of language for Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *21*(3), 275–286. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2017.1383352

Mård-Miettinen, K., & Björklund, S. (2019). "In one sentence there can easily be three languages". *A Glimpse into the Use of Languages Among Immersion Students.* In A. Huhta, G. Erickson, & N. Figueras (Eds.), *Developments in Language Education a Memorial Volume in Honour of Sauli Takala*, (pp. 239–249). EALTA & University of Jyväskylä. http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-39-7748-1

Mård-Miettinen, K., Arnott, S., & Vignola, M-J. (2021). Early immersion in minority language context: Canada and Finland. In M. Schwartz (Ed.), *Handbook of Early Language Education* (pp. 347–371). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-47073-9_12-1

Ochs, E., & Schieffelin, B. B. (2017). Language socialization: An historical overview. In A. Duranti, E. Ochs, & B. B. Schieffelin (Eds.), *The handbook of language socialization* (3rd ed.) (pp. 1–21). Wiley-Blackwell.

Ó Duibhir, P. (2018). *Immersion education: Lessons from a minority language context.* Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/ODUIBH9832

Pakarinen, S. (2020). Språkbadselevskap i Finland och på Irland: En studie om språkpolicy och två- och flerspråkighet i skollandskap och hos elever i tidigt fullständigt svenskt och iriskt språkbad. [Being an immersion student in Finland and in Ireland: A study of language policy and multilingualism in schoolscapes and among pupils in early total Swedish and Irish immersion]. JYU dissertations, *304*. University of Jyväskylä. http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-39-8347-5

Pakarinen, S., & Björklund, S. (2018). Multiple language signage in linguistic landscapes and students' language practices: A case study from a language immersion setting. *Linguistics and Education*, *44*, 4–11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2017.10.005

Peltoniemi, A. (2017). Lärarstudenters och verksamma lärares åsikter om vad som är viktigt i utbildningen till språkbadsklasslärare. [Student teachers' and graduated teachers' views on what is important in immersion teacher education]. In N. Keng, A. Nuopponen, & D. Rellstab (Eds.), *Ääniä, Röster, Voices, Stimmen. VAKKI-symposium XXXVII 9.-10.2.2017* (pp. 157–168). VAKKI.

Peltoniemi, A., & Bergroth, M. (2020). Developing language-aware immersion teacher education: identifying characteristics through a study of immersion teacher socialisation. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *25*(4), 1324–1335. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2020.1757613

Roy, S. (2010). Not truly, not entirely… Pas comme les Francophones. *Canadian Journal of Education*, *33*(3), 541–563. https://doi.org/10.2307/canajeducrevucan.33.3.541

Roy, S. (2012). Qui décide du meilleur français? Représentations des variétés linguistiques du français en immersion. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *15*(1), 1–19.

Statistics Finland (2022). *Language according to age and sex by region, 1990–2020*. Retrieved 1.2.2022. https://pxnet2.stat.fi/PXWeb/pxweb/en/StatFin/StatFin__vrm__vaerak/statfin_vaerak_pxt_11rl.px/

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2013). A Vygotskian sociocultural perspective on immersion education. The L1/L2 debate. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education*, *1*(1), 101–129. https://doi.org/10.1075/jicb.1.1.05swa

Tedick, D.J., & Lyster, R. (2020). *Scaffolding language development in immersion and dual language classrooms*. Routledge.

White, G. (1977). *Socialisation*. Longman.

Address for correspondence

Sanna Pakarinen
Åbo Akademi University
PO Box 311
FI-65101 Vaasa
Finland

sanna.pakarinen@abo.fi
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5810-6807

Co-author information

Siv Björklund
Åbo Akademi University
siv.bjorklund@abo.fi

Karita Mård-Miettinen
University of Jyväskylä
karita.mard-miettinen@jyu.fi

Publication history

Date received: 1 October 2021
Date accepted: 20 July 2022
Published online: 8 August 2022