



FROM GUIDELINES TO PRACTICE AND TOWARDS FUNCTIONAL MULTILINGUALISM

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UNICA IRO MEETING MAY 6, 2015



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1640-2015

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Academic staff, mother tongue

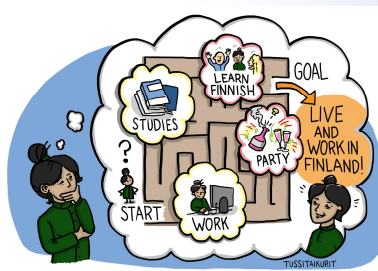
- Finnish 73 %
- Swedish 5 %
- Other 22 %

Students, mother tongue

- Finnish 86 %
- Swedish 7 %
- Other 7 %

Credits earned

- Finnish 84 %
- Swedish 6 %
- English 10 %



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CONTEXT

Languages are a resource for the university community

- Knowing and using languages actively enriches daily operations and life.
- Cultural competences promote creative thinking and community spirit.
- Extensive language and communication skills are part of student's / researcher's professional competence.

The University of Helsinki is bilingual (Finnish and Swedish)

- Position of both languages as languages of teaching and science is safeguarded.

The University is international

- English is the international language for communication, teaching and research.
- Integration of international students and staff into the university community is enhanced by learning Finnish in the workplace and classrooms, every day.



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IMPLEMENTATION

Language use in different situations will be discussed and decided on in the operational units and different communities of the University – no detailed regulations from top down.

Functionality and the needs of the recipient are the guiding principles in communication and interaction: which languages are most suitable for particular communicative situations and in what way. Everything need not be produced in three languages, i.e., Finnish, Swedish and English.



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ENGLISH AS ACADEMIC LINGUA FRANCA

- The provision of education in English supports the University's educational objectives and is not in conflict with the development of the status of the national languages.
- Increasing and developing teaching in English are part of the effort to create an international learning environment. This supports the presence of different values, worldviews and argumentation traditions in teaching.
- The cultural dimension and inter-cultural interaction will be integrated into teaching, supervision and guidance and services.
- A person with no skills in Finnish or Swedish can serve at the University of Helsinki in positions which do not require such competence.



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EVERYDAY OPERATIONS

- Unit coordinators and leadership will address language issues so that all members of the community are aware of the language practices and communications policy followed at the unit.
- Flexible language use in different situations and in parallel.
- Bilingualism can also entail using a teaching language that is different from the language of study.
- International (degree) students / staff members will be offered Finnish and Swedish studies → employability.
- Bilingual degrees or bi- and trilingual master's studies.
- Examples of best practices in units' everyday operations.



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LANGUAGES IN SERVICES

- Services for international students, teachers and researchers will be developed from the perspective of client needs and the appropriateness of the services.
- Support services, e.g. IT support Helpdesk and providers of study guidance and student advice, will ensure that the service is available in Finnish, Swedish and English.
- Information of a fundamental and permanent nature as well as information which relates to the protection of the rights of the students and staff will be made available in Finnish, Swedish and English.
- The University shall ensure sufficient resources for the Language Services unit to enable the language revision of both publications and research funding applications in different languages.



HELP? LANGUAGE TEAM

- Experts on language use as well as on language learning and learning through interaction from different University units (Language Centre, language disciplines, experts in intercultural and speech communication, etc.).
- Discussing language issues together with units, offering examples and templates for best practices, providing suggestions for the development of language activities, supporting the implementation of measures and their monitoring.
- Developed and coordinated by the Language Services unit of the Language Centre.



QUESTIONS?

- Online:

<http://blogs.helsinki.fi/centrumcampus/files/2015/04/kieliperiaatteet.pdf>

Language Services of Language Centre:

<http://www.helsinki.fi/kksc/language.services/english/index.html>



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