Pluricentrity, Multilingualism and Heterogeneity of the Learners' Groups

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ABSTRACT

Multilingualism, superdiversity, and the abundance of language contacts place new demands on language teachers, who must consider each student's linguistic biography, family language policies, and cultural practices in order to keep up with their growth in a specific school vs. university subject. Many more languages are becoming pluricentric as they continue to be used in migrating populations. So, they decline or flourish in diaspora and introduce heritage language learners as people with special needs into regular classrooms. Using Russian as an example, the paper suggests methods for organizing language instruction of varied speakers and learners in a heterogeneous integrated university classroom.

Keywords: language learning in higher education, heterogeneous classroom, heritage language speaker, Russian as a pluricentric language, Russian language learners

Superdiversity

The massive character of multilingualism has led to a superdiversity and to unique constellations of languages that have never before been documented on such a scale (Arnaut et al. 2016, Creese & Blackledge, 2010, Duarte & Gogolin, 2013, Toivanen & Saarikivi, 2016). While most people still speak with a distinct regional flavor, the new mobility of speakers in recently industrialized and postindustrial cultures, as well as the efflorescence of communication technology, cannot be overlooked, including multilingual education issues (Auer & Schmidt, 2010; Liang, 2015; Liddicoat & Taylor-Leech, 2015). This has prompted a rethinking of the relationship between geographical place and cultural space, along with the essential connection between language and a spatially restricted region.

Until now, researchers have found that the factors affecting the knowledge of languages include socio-economic status of all family members in various generations (their education, knowledge of languages, occupations, quantity of the family members and generations living together), length of exposure to any language, age in which the exposure started, quantity and quality of exposure, identities (e.g., cultural, ethnic, religious views) and attitudes towards multilingualism and language use (e.g., Eisenchlas & Schalley, 2020, Rokita-Jaśkow & Ellis, 2014). As Lee Isaac Chung, the director of the ground-breaking film "Minari" about the Korean immigration in the U.S.A. puts it in an interview for "Time", he didn't like Korean food growing up, and his sister threw away lunches that their mother made for her because other children laughed at her, but nowadays, the only food he eats is Korean, somehow tied to his identity: "I do feel as though this is the food that nourished my ancestors and made this body" (Chow, 2021). Another story is told by Viet Thanh Nguyen who was born in Vietnam, raised in America, and whose self-consciousness has been shaped by three wars: one against France, one civil war, and one against the United States. For him, asking the child if he has eaten rice today means far more in Vietnamese than in English, because there is a tradition behind them that tells about the true love that parents have for their children. Thanksgiving dinner is the only time they eat non-Vietnamese food purchased from a supermarket, and he still speaks Vietnamese, which, while imperfect, links him to the Vietnamese diaspora all around the world. These are examples of how language, attitudes, and culture are intertwined (Nguyen, 2018).

Russian-speaking individuals on the teritory of the Russian Federation with only a slight knowledge of an Indigenous language (only a few tag words) sometimes still refer to the Indigenous language as their mother tongue because of their ethnic background or for economic reasons (e.g., in Russia, some Indigenous peoples, like the Nanai people, are given the right to catch certain kinds of fish normally forbidden to others). Thus, ethnicity, the home language, and the order of acquisition often contradict the reality. These are complex processes related to identity, socio-political, and economic factors, among others, and are not always directly related to one's language proficiency.

Language attitudes and beliefs pervade people's everyday lives in what concerns their competency, intelligence, friendliness, trustworthiness, social position, group memberships, and other characteristics which depend on how they communicate (Garrett, 2010). Peterson outlines how ideas of what makes "excellent" vs. "poor" language have been established, demonstrating that these principles are founded on social considerations rather than linguistic ones that have some real-world ramifications of these perceptions (Peterson, 2020). It is usually presupposed that the first language is acquired easily, yet the prerequisites are many: multifaceted purposes and a high frequency of use, a large spectrum of speakers and functions, a habit to receive information about the world through and in the language (the primary socialization and verbally mediated cognitive development), shaping of behavior through this means of communication. Other languages may come through technically mediated resources as well. Thus, teachers cannot always be aware of their language ideologies, which underlie their language views and school practices and ignore their pupils' bilingualism (Gkaintartzi et al. 2015, Newman & Trenchs-Parera, 2015, Young, 2014).

Nevertheless, under the influence of environment, the immigrant languages change, and after two or three generations most languages are lost. This process starts with child's refuse to speak a non-dominant language or to study literacy in this language. The fast shift to the dominant language is enhanced by the state, school, and the family language policy. In general, large immigrant communities may support bilingualism or impede the integration into the majority. The language itself might not play an important role in the life of the immigrants, it is so to say a natural means of communication. Yet, the discussion around the language maintenance happens all the time. The role and prestige of the country where the language is spoken remain significant, this is a sort of competition between a sense of belonging and a feeling of detachment. Some diasporans demand faithfulness and allegiance to their previous homeland, while others want to assert double loyalty and fidelity, and a third group declares rejection of previous connections. Increasingly, countries have adopted measures to ease the transition to the dominant language (like in Estonia, Latvia, Turkmenistan for the local populations and many countries for the new immigrants),

whereas many countries (like Croatia, Finland, Lithuania, and Turkey) provide language support to emigrants and residents abroad. Countries can adopt measures to ease the transition to the national dominant language and at the same time, provide support for the heritage language. An example: Portugal as a host country favors the learning of Portuguese for the incoming migrants and simultaneously fosters the learning of Portuguese as a heritage language for the Portuguese abroad.

The efforts undertaken by countries with high socioeconomic statuses do not necessary produce better integration results as the efforts by smaller countries with low socioeconomic statuses to influence the adherence to the ethnic and cultural heritage. Usually, individuals decide and/ or continuously negotiate their own ethnic, political, and linguistic identities, but this process requires time and can reverse. The power of the dominant language may be supported by its status, as is the case with English, but this is not true in all cases. E.g., the value of Armenian, even on symbolic level, is so high that it is taught in Georgia, Russia, and in the U.S.A. as a heritage language. The analogical processes happen throughout the world, independent of the language's status worldwide.

Pluricentricity and the Heritage Language Speakers

The conception of the pluricentricity (also polycentricity or pluriareality) of languages as reformulated by Michael G. Clyne (1992, 1995) and later by Muhr (Muhr et al. 2015; Muhr & Thomas, 2020) provides theoretical background for many sociolinguistic studies of variation. First, most work in the field has been largely concerned with the description of linguistic structural variations, such as phonological, morphological, or lexical diversity between varieties, and this is increasingly being supplemented by other views, such as pragmatics and interaction (e.g., Norrby et al. 2020, Schneider & Barron, 2008; Walsh, 2020). Today, Russian develops as a pluricentric language with multiple centres of contact with languages of environment all over the world. There are different lines of textbooks available, those for learners of the L1 (for monolingual mother tongue speakers in the countries where they live and for the bilingual speakers abroad), L2 (minorities and immigrants in Russia) and for the foreign language learners (starting at

different levels). There are textbooks published in Russia and abroad. The communities of the speakers of Russian outside Russia may include all types of speakers or be organized for one type only. In the countries with large Russian-speaking communities, there are media and educational institutions in Russian, because as the research shows the speakers of Russian value the education in Russian and maintain the Russian culture on material (food, shops, books, etc.) and spiritual levels (Mustajoki et al. 2021, Protassova & Yelenevskaya, 2020, Protassova & Yelenevskaya, 2021, Yelenevskaya & Protassova, 2021).

Due to specific history of the Russian-speaking expansion and emigration, every country having a community of the Russian speakers has formed its policy toward this language and culture. Usually, such communities are heterogenous and embrace ethnically diverse population of all waves of emigration, initially from Old Believers, comprising White émigrés, displaced persons (after the WWII), spouses, dissidents of the Soviet time, repatriates, in the latest times – those coming to work, to study or to spend money earned in Russia. Russian is one of the world languages having hundreds of millions of speakers, and the representation of the Russian World abroad is also formally conducted through the structures sponsored by the Russian government. For the oldest and the newest waves, the religion may be important tie within the community and / or with Russia (because there are also such confessional groups whose religion is prohibited in Russia) (Kureev, 2015).

The political incongruencies among the members of the community do negatively affect the attitudes towards language maintenance and do not allow to join efforts. Conversely, having different centres of codification and normalization for various countries and regions, not only in Moscow and St. Petersburg, although the main teaching follows the old school rules, a reader would normally assume that perhaps the Moscow Academy would be the sole centre of codification that says what is 'correct' Russian. The current policy of Russia is to centralise and regulate the sphere of the language, whereas authorities in other countries often impose their own agendas. Pluricentricity presupposes that any country can develop its own distinctive orthography, grammar, and lexis for a language used on its territory. Often, in the view of the autochthon (originating from this place) native speakers, those who speak a different variety speak a 'wrong' language. Speakers are sensitive to critique; they rarely want to hear that they make mistakes or show that they

are not fully competent. In the case of the Russian diaspora, some pronunciation styles become more prestigious than others, which is why parents sometimes do not want their children to be taught by teachers with a 'wrong' pronunciation. This intolerance toward language variants and errors impedes language acquisition in the next generations of speakers. Therefore, this kind of purism should be abandoned. Fortunately, other centers or authorities with such power are emerging in the post-Soviet space. In these cases, a commission decides what kind of particularities discern 'our' Russian from 'their' Russian.

Some voices arise who argue that every country should have its own variety of the Russian language, which must be taught as such on the local level. In such case, a commission should decide what kind of particularities discern 'our' Russian from 'their' Russian. The policy of Russia is to centralize and to regulate in the sphere of language, whereas the authorities in other countries try to ignore or to impose their own agenda. The pluricentricity presupposes that any country might develop special orthography, grammar and lexis for a language used on its territory. Often, in the view of the autochthon native speakers, those who speak a different variety, speak a wrong language. Speakers are sensitive to critique; they usually do not want to hear that they make mistakes or to show that they are not fully competent (Giles & Watson, 2013). In the situation of diaspora, speakers of Russian are subject to two types of variation: the one – imported from the place they are coming from (dialect, regional variety), the second – the result of the local influence (standard and substandard varieties). E.g., some of pronunciation styles are more prestigious than others, that is why parents sometimes do not want to have teachers with a 'wrong' style of pronunciation for their children. The intolerance toward variants and errors impedes the language acquisition in the next generations of speakers. This purism should be abandoned. The additional curriculum in the first / heritage language should acknowledge the co-existence of the two languages in the speaker, and flexibility of the teacher's attitude and translanguaging are present in the classroom.

To maintain and develop a language, a synergy of many people is needed. The results overcome the barely linguistic scope: they outreach the community, the global diversity tendences, rightist and leftist political movements. The home contexts are completed by the community encounters, the influence of the environment, as well as compulsory and

private educational systems' efforts. These formal and informal use of the language stimulates listening to different speakers of language, repetition with variation, combination and application of language units and linguistic means. The research shows that the acquisition of this maybe abridged language variety follows the same stages as the learning of a language in a monolingual environment. A comparison of the contexts of the heritage language acquisition might reveal the true nature of language nurture: what helps elaborate a fully-fledged linguistic competence (cf. Meir and Polinsky, 2021). On the other hand, the age of the children and the exposure to the language determinate the volume of acquired language.

The quality of the home language may vary, but the heritage speakers may expose such a level of linguistic competence, which is never or just rarely met by the learners with a non-native background (Doerr, 2009, Gazzola & Wickström, 2017, Slavkov et al. 2021). Still, the heritage speakers have some gaps in the acquisition because it is often impossible to reproduce the whole situation and structure of the first language acquisition. The fact that a language was learned first should signify that its quality is that of a native speaker. Nevertheless, this criterion is evidently not sufficient. The term 'heritage language' was previously used to determine the language that was present in the legacy, e.g., the one of multiple ethnicities immanent to any personality like that of maternal or paternal ancestors. It was opposed to the 'home language' really used in the family. The home language differing from that of the environment can be an immigrant, an expat, a minority, a foreign or any other acquired or learned language. Nowadays, the term 'heritage language' is usually applied to name the language first applied in the family and later fossilized, attired or forgotten by the person although it was still used at home. Usually, the research does not discern between children growing up in bilingual or monolingual homes, it means that the fact of having one, two or more first languages is not important when dealing with bilingual outcomes. However, this is the central question for the essence of bilingual abilities, especially when acknowledging the issues of identity and self-representation. In the literature dealing with heritage languages many questions concern the linguistic skills in the firstly acquired language (Kagan et al. 2017, Minkov et al. 2019).

It is almost unbelievable how easily the first language can be lost if the person loses ties to its speakers, especially if the person is still a child and has not studied literacy. The researchers claim that it can be mentally dangerous to cease to communicate in the first language, but the cases of adopted children witness that it is not always the case. It can be even more sad for the previous generations, for parents and grandparents that they cannot transmit their intellectual treasures to the children. It can be valuable to understand what indeed happens when the language remains more or less safe and corresponds to the developmental level of the agemates in the monolingual environments. The answer may be found in the family language policy. It is widely known that the volume of the first language in some monolingual speakers may be several times bigger than in others. This means that anyway, some bilinguals may have larger linguistic inventory than some monolinguals. The difference between monolingual and bilingual proficiency is still in the process of exploration. Some parents invest a lot of energy and time into the development of the home language proficiency, others wish that the shift to the dominant language happens as quickly as possible. This determines the variety of the first language proficiency (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2018).

Although most Russian speakers abroad, starting from the second generation, integrate into the dominant society, some families have maintained their language for centuries, like the Pogrebov family in Finland, whose ancestors settled here down at the beginning of the 19th century[1]. The Russian language is heavily related to the historical and contemporary political context (Lähteenmäki & Pöyhönen, 2014, Mustajoki & Protassova, 2015, Viimaranta et al. 2017).

Communities of Russian speakers outside Russia can either include all types of speakers or be organized by one type only. The Russian language abroad does not form a monolith, is not in a stable situation of some sort, but changes under multiple influences. Nevertheless, it must not be lost in a diasporic society. In countries with large Russian-speaking communities, the existing infrastructure supports the use of language. The family context forms via in-group encounters, the influence of the environment, as well as efforts by compulsory and private educational systems. Both formal and informal use of the

language develops by listening to different speakers of the language and through repetition with variation, combination and application of language units, and linguistic means.

Parents often discuss whether it is better to teach languages separately, in different institutions outside school hours, or in a bilingual pre-primary and primary school. Both directions have their partisans. Under such conditions, bilingual proficiency can become salient and celebrated. If the language is taught, it may be assessed, but in absence of the respective linguistic environment, when the language does not dominate, the learners should be assessed differently according to their individual paths into the language. Many second and third generation bilinguals would like to maintain their Russian, which offers them more mobility opportunities in education, job searches, and professional choices, but they frequently fail to do so. Children who arrived in the U.S. at an advanced age tend to be more connected to their L1 and actively use it; those who arrived before six years of age are less motivated. Less than half of those students intended to study or work in Russia, and about half planned to read Russian classics in Russian. One-third liked the Russian way of life. These results were obtained in Colorado and differed from those in California (Kagan, 2005). In a later publication, Kagan noted that most of the survey respondents reported having double identities (Kagan, 2014), while others reported triple identities or more complicated cases. In a study by Isurin, Russian-speaking immigrants reported suffering from labelling and having strong feelings associated with their self-esteem (Isurin, 2014). Gapova found that Russian women who came to the U.S. during the latest wave of immigration (with their husbands with IT jobs) consider language transmission a primary goal (Gapova, 2004).

Meng and Protassova performed a 25-year case study of family integration, self-designations, and community consciousness within four generations of Russian-German immigrants to Germany, with particular emphasis on the younger representatives (Protassova, 2009, Protassova, 2013, Protassova, 2016). Protassova introduced the differences in the identities of Russian speakers belonging to varying ethnolinguistic backgrounds (Protassova, 2017). Koneva and Tikhomirova completed a survey with Russian speakers in Germany, which concluded that, in this ethnically heterogeneous group, the common Russian cultural, linguistic, and historical roots remain strong; they

still need "harmonization of identity" within their new country of residence. They concluded that German and European mass media informational channels in Russian would significantly contribute to the formation of a new identity (Koneva & Tikhomirova, 2016).

To be economically successful and socially integrated, one has to learn the language of the country. According to Remennick (2004), the overall advanced age of the Russian immigrants at the time of emigration to Israel led to a high level of ethnolinguistic retention, and the Russian community lives somewhat autonomously with their own services, networks, and labour market. Children are usually vehicles of their parents' integration into Israeli society via involvement in local events and cultural products. Young and mobile immigrants have better Hebrew skills and tend toward additive bilingualism and reshaping the identity and formation of the Russian Israeli. As they spend more time in their host country, more communicative areas may necessitate Hebrew, although Russian remains the language at home (Remennick, 2004).

The research in heritage languages shows that these bilingual speakers are competent to a certain degree in the language of environment (that of the formal education) and in the home language (which can also be a language of formal education). In the modern world, the oral proficiency is usually doubled with the written language proficiency. Yet not all parents are aware of the fact that oral language should be necessary supported by the literacy. In this case, divergency of the current variety from the so-called norm grows. The role of the parents is crucial. The knowledge of the essence of bilingualism must be transferred to them. The levels of the so-called native speakers might be inadequate for them. Self-assessment, internal and external assessment of the heritage speakers can show different results. Their learning trajectory does not coincide in time with that of the 'monolinguals' who frequent the school in the country where this language is a majority language.

Heterogeneity

In the present study, we analyze different backgrounds of the learners of Russian in a heterogeneous classroom (cf. Bergmann & Böhmer 2020, Lucero & Scalante-Morales 2018).

Cultural sensitivity and social network are the strongest determinants of L2 growth, whereas additional markers include personality, intercultural sensitivity, amount of second language use, gender, and age (Baker-Smemoe et al. 2014). Ingenuity and resources provided by the teachers are critical to students' satisfaction with their results, as well as several flexible strategies for autonomous learning for a variety of languages (Popesku et al. 2020, Richards & Rodgers, 2014, Protassova, 2021). A live communication is especially useful when allowing for intercultural communication frameworks (Cranmer 2017) and other interactive activities (Davitti & Braun 2020), e.g., translating and interpreting (Pöchhacker & Liu, 2014). Any methodology should take into account at least learner needs, program analysis, syllabus design, teaching materials, criterions, and tasks positioned (Long, 2015). The descriptors of the assessment vary in the United States (ACTFL, 2012) and in Europe (CEFR, 2011), but they do not have specific methods for assessing bilinguals or heritage speakers.

One of the factors distinguishing the first language from the second language is the way the language is introduced, in the family or outside of the home. The foreign language is usually taught / learned in the class in pre-primary or primary education, or even later. A second language may be acquired, like the first one, or learned in the classroom setting, like a foreign language. An individual can have more than one first, second, or foreign language. Every language is acquired through the process of communication; for the first language, it is the basis of, and sometimes the only way to achieve, linguistic proficiency. The second and foreign languages may not have this trajectory. Yet, all languages are often taught using a textbook, and these textbooks for first, second, and foreign languages are usually organised differently. This is another factor that differentiates heritage speakers from first-language speakers. A second language can be acquired like the first language, at home, or learned in a classroom setting like a foreign language.

The complexity of some language structures makes them more challenging than the baseline language. It depends on the previous linguistic repertoires of the speakers/learners. Muysken claims that transfer does take place and that the bilingual acquisition shows better results (Muysken, 2020) than the research reported in Polinsky and Scontras (Polinsky & Scontras, 2020). In such cases, the child's language diverges from the so-called norm, and

the parents are not aware of it, and they lose the opportunity to obtain a high, native-speaker language level, maybe they are not interested in it. In assessing their language skills, the purpose of the assessment dictates its tools, scope, and results. Heritage speakers should be tested integratively, every skill evaluated separately, although students assured that their listening and reading were sufficiently good. Kagan and Kudyma surmised that, like with all learners, although curriculums can be built upon existing proficiencies, heritage speakers must be trained in all skills, and they need an individual approach (Kagan & Kudyma, 2012, Kagan & Kudyma, 2019). For example, their level of understanding is not sufficient, although it is usually claimed that this capability is developed higher than in the foreign language learners.

Today, we meet heritage learners who were fluent speakers of Russian but learned to properly read and write at a later age, if at all. Their peers learning Russian as a foreign language commit less errors in the written Russian, but never could attain the level of their oral expression. When assessing such learners, the goals can be different, from socio- and psycholinguistic to very practical. The purpose of assessment dictates the tools and the scope of assessment. Here, I offer some of the life stories of the heterogeneous Russian learners in a diverse university classroom in Finland. These self-reflection stories aid comprehension of the various levels of their proficiency.

Ex. 1. *I've always been interested in different languages. I exclusively talked Russian with my mother and Finnish with my father when I was a child. My mother stopped speaking Russian after my brothers and sisters were born, and as a result, I don't remember many words. When I started first grade, I was enrolled in a Russian language class for children from Russia. It was unquestionably too difficult for me, and I soon became bored with Russian. I began learning French in the second grade and English in the fourth. When I started high school, I opted to learn Russian again, as well as Spanish and a little Arabic. We had a school tour to Moscow, and it was also my first trip to Russia. I enjoyed the city, particularly the metro and the school where we were staying with the group. I am overjoyed and pleased to have been admitted to the university. I'm terrified to speak Russian right now, and I don't think I'll ever be able to speak, write, or read it well, but I'm hoping to ameliorate that soon!*

Ex. 2. *I've studied a variety of languages throughout my life, but my favorites are Russian and Swedish. Aside from my mother tongue Finnish, I am fluent in Swedish, and my relatives speak Swedish as their first language. I've been learning Swedish for almost 15 years. I'm now studying it at university, along with Russian. I consider myself to be nearly bilingual. I enjoy reading Swedish mystery books and occasionally speak Swedish at work. I probably like Swedish because I've been hearing it since I was a toddler. It's tough to say if it's difficult or easy. When it comes to the Russian language, I never utilize it at the moment. Of course, I'd like to see this change. I occasionally read/watch Russian news. Almost everything in Russian is difficult. Funny, but I don't think Russian grammar is all that difficult. I visited St. Petersburg, Russia, a couple of times. This city appeals to me greatly. I'd like to take the train to Vladivostok. I've traveled extensively with my Russian friend, and it appears to me that there are always individuals who speak Russian in every country.*

Ex. 3. *English was my first foreign language, which I began learning in third grade, but I was not really interested in it at the time. I knew English rather well, but I didn't put it to use very much. Everything changed when I came to Helsinki approximately six years ago and began speaking more English with friends and at work, and I can honestly claim that I learnt English by speaking. English, of course, proved to be extremely beneficial when traveling abroad. In general, I enjoy speaking English. I also began learning Swedish in school in the seventh grade. I suppose I did well enough, but I didn't utilize Swedish enough in normal life, so I forgot it. I practically never speak Swedish anymore. About four years ago, I fell in love with the Russian language. It is, in my opinion, the most beautiful language in the world. Then, before my first trip to Russia, I wanted to study Russian. Then I met the coolest folks in St. Petersburg and realized I needed to learn their language even better. I began learning Russian distantly every day and hired a private tutor. I now use Russian on a daily basis, and I write and communicate with my friends in Russian. I also do a lot of studying. I visited St. Petersburg several times when it was possible to travel to Russia. Everywhere there was a fantastic opportunity to practice. I was overjoyed.*

Ex. 4. *Languages have a minor impact on my life until now. However, Russian was spoken around me as a child because my father's uncle was married to the sweetest Russian*

woman. I recall lovely treks in the woods gathering mushrooms and her most delectable cabbage pies from this period. Russian was meant to be a long language in school, and I attended an ordinary Soviet school while living in Moscow in the 1980s, while my father worked there. I did well in mathematics, but everything else was too difficult for me. I did not learn Russian after high school. You could say I was served Russian on a silver platter, but I chose not to eat it. I'm almost 60 years old now, and knowing Finnish is sufficient for my job. I passively listen to television in English and Swedish and read something for work.

Ex. 5. *It is critical to be fluent in several languages. My mother tongue is Finnish. English is also quite good. I am also fluent in Russian and Swedish. And as a tourist, I can get by in a variety of languages. Language skills are useful when traveling, reading intriguing books and articles, and communicating with friends from other countries. Because my relatives speak Russian and a variety of other languages, I am also interested in languages. It was simple for me to acquire and understand a few words and phrases in each nation I visited and to understand what they were saying to me.*

Ex. 6. *Meeting people and making acquaintances have always piqued my curiosity since I was a child. I knew there were other languages besides Russian when I was approximately five years old. I grew obsessed with English and pretended to other kids that I could speak and comprehend it. We relocated to Sweden when I started school. It was challenging for me at first because I didn't speak a word of this language. But after a while, I noticed that I was starting to understand, and it was becoming simpler for me. Because I was the only one who spoke Swedish, I rapidly began to communicate and assist my family. We moved a lot and met folks from all over the world, I learnt to find a common language and, if necessary, explain using gestures. In addition to Finnish, I studied Swedish, English, and German in Finland. I am proud of my education, which has allowed me to meet interesting individuals and cultures.*

Ex. 7. *I began studying Russian when I was six years old. I started by6 doing it on my own via the Internet, and then continued in high school. I use it to communicate with my pals, listen to Russian music, and occasionally watch movies. Russian appeals to me because of its richness, sound, and culture. Grammar is the most difficult aspect of Russian for me. I have yet to visit Russia, but I am eager to do so. I have been studying English since third*

grade, as have nearly all Finns, so the language learning is second nature to me and speaking flows easy. Every day, I use it on social media, watch English-language TV shows, and play English-language video games. I visited England twice and enjoyed it both times. I opted to go to Bulgaria for a student exchange while I was in the high school. I lived there for a year and learnt their language well, because I went to a regular gymnasium. Currently, I try to speak a little Bulgarian every day so that I don't forget it. I also read Balkan newspapers on a regular basis. Understanding of different Slavic languages is gained through knowledge of one Slavic language. I have visited these countries several times and can confidently claim that the Balkans are my favorite area on the planet. These languages are particularly appealing to me because of their melodies. I studied Swedish, French, Italian, and Latin in school. I only speak Swedish because we had to learn it in school. In other words, I'm not very interested in it. I also studied French, Italian, and Latin in school and would like to resume studying them eventually when I have more time.

Teaching such a class necessitates knowledge of multiple languages and cultures, patience for errors and blunders (which I have not indicated here) and meeting the requirements of each learner, whose motivation and proficiency vary a lot. This process is interesting and appealing, and the diverse materials used should be adapted to the needs of learners without accentuating it.

Conclusion

Researchers investigate whether it is possible to revitalize and build upon the initially or previously acquired knowledge and what factors influence this process (including cross-language transfer). No studies thus far have considered the language skills of monolingual speakers to be invariably higher than those of bilingual speakers. The ultimate attainment among the first-language-speakers varies across any nation. Many of the questions raised concern the linguistic skills of the person's 'first language.' It is valuable to understand what happens when the language remains, more or less, 'safe' and corresponds to the developmental level of one's peers in monolingual environments. When something is grammatically incorrect from the point of view of the parents or educators, it maybe

represents another variety, a heritage speaking variety which is different from what is considered standard language.

The process of the language loss or the language shift starts with the child's refusal to speak the non-dominant language or to study literacy in their home language. The state, school, and the family's language policies propel a fast shift to the dominant language. The political incongruities among the members of the community do negatively affect the attitudes toward language maintenance and, therefore, disallow efforts to become a consolidated group of Russian language speakers. The power of the dominant language may be supported by its prestige, but not only. The analogical processes happen throughout the world independently of the status of languages on the world scale. Number of speakers, political structures, access to the technologies among other factors influence the linguistic vitality.

As we see from empirical studies, average L2 learners are better than heritage speakers (that is, if they can read and write) in some areas, but they lag behind those heritage speakers who are closer to native speakers in pragmatics, phraseology, and lexis. Yet, heritage speakers' skills are often imperfect, vague, or diffuse if compared to those of native speakers, but the native speakers should not be the milestone of bilingual skills. Not all of them can improve their proficiency. Teachers should differentiate the speakers of Russian as L1 or L2 and not ignore them completely. They should combine differentiated approach with understanding that translanguaging exists in their classrooms.

Notes

1. yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/novosti/russkaya_finlyandiya_100_let__100_sudeb__ot_sama_va nni_do_rostislava_ goltgoera/9961739

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