

Finnish Ice Hockey Organisations as Multilingual Work
Environments

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This thesis studies the phenomenon of workplace multilingualism in the Finnish professional ice hockey community. The primary research material of the thesis consists of four interviews with members of the professional community: two staff members of team organisations, an international player, and a referee. The interviews focussed on gathering the respondents' subjective experiences of multilingualism in their everyday work environment. They were asked to identify which languages were used in their work environment and what strategies and policies were in place to manage multilingualism. The study also explored how these individuals viewed possible difficulties and advantages which may arise from the multilingual nature of their work community. The interviews were analysed using a qualitative content analysis approach.

The analysis revealed that the use of English as a lingua franca in parallel with Finnish was common in the organisations the interviewees represented. Self-translation and non-professional translations by members of the community were used to bridge gaps in participants' language skills. The use of professional translators was not considered cost-effective or practical in the everyday ice hockey environment. While concrete multilingualism policies were not implemented, and management of multilingualism seemed to rely on implicit assumptions rather than explicit coordination, the interviewees were in general satisfied with the current state of language management in their community. Despite this, more efficient management of language issues in the future would be beneficial for ice hockey organisations not only from a practical viewpoint but possibly also in terms of facilitating better athletic achievements.

Keywords: multilingualism, multilingual workplace, translation in sports, lingua franca

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1. Introduction

Global migration of labour means that more workplaces are becoming increasingly multinational and multicultural. This development has also resulted in the multilingualisation¹ of work communities that have become more international. Professional sports are a field where this effect is commonplace and due to the publicity and media coverage, particularly visible to outside observers. Despite this, multilingualism in sports has traditionally been understudied, and the existing research is largely focussed on the sport of football. This thesis seeks to fill some of this gap in multilingualism research by studying the language practices within organisational ice hockey and the management of multilingualism in everyday encounters by way of conducting research interviews with people that work within different aspects of Finnish professional ice hockey. It will also discuss the subjective perceptions of these individuals on the effect they feel multilingualism has on their work environments.

The world of professional ice hockey in Finland has become more international over the past decades. In the 1988-1989 season, 92% of the players in the SM-Liiga (the highest national level of professional men's ice hockey) were Finnish, and there were only 23 international players from two countries – Canada and the United States (QuantHockey 2020b). Ten years later, in the 1998-1999 season, the 307 Finnish players made up 85.3% of all players in the SM-Liiga, and there were 53 international players from seven countries (QuantHockey 2020c). During the 2018-2019 season (the current or most recently finished season at the time the interviews for this thesis were conducted) the total number of Finns in the by-then renamed Liiga had increased to 435 players², but they only represented 84.8% of all players (QuantHockey 2020a). There were now 78 international players of 14 different nationalities in the Liiga (QuantHockey 2020a). As a result of the increasing multiculturalism of the sport in Finland, the linguistic environment in ice hockey organisations has had to change to accommodate an increasing number of non-Finnish speaking officials and players within the working environment. To avoid conflicts arising from linguistic misunderstandings and to better manage the

¹ The use of this term has previously been limited to software engineering and used to describe adaptation and localisation of software into multiple languages (Boitet, Boguslavskij, and Cardeñosa 2007). Here it is used to describe the process of a specific environment, such as the workplace, becoming (more) multilingual.

² The number of teams participating in the league had changed between the 1998-1999 and the 2018-2019 seasons, which explains the rising number of total players in the league.

increasingly multilingual work environments, it is important to understand how language use may affect the dynamics of a workplace. This research presents new information on multilingualism in the field of professional ice hockey, with a focus on the Finnish situation.

The vast majority of the research in multilingualism in work environments has been focussed on multinational companies. In terms of professional sports, it has previously been studied in the context of internal communication within football organisations, as well as their press relations (Baines 2013; Sandrelli 2015). Despite the rising internationality of ice hockey in Europe and North America and the resulting multilingualism among the players in various professional leagues and individual organisations, there is a lack of academic research concerning the effects of that internationalisation on both the internal and external communication that surrounds these organisations. This study draws on previous research on the management of multilingualism in both the corporate world and the scant research conducted on the topic in professional sports and investigates the phenomenon in the context of ice hockey in Finland.

The purpose of this thesis is to map the current linguistic environment in the Finnish professional ice hockey community. The research attempts to find out which languages are used in the daily functions of teams, what strategies are employed to manage multilingualism in the workplace, and how those working in these organisations use those strategies to navigate communication in their everyday working life. It also hopes to explore how these people view any possible difficulties and advantages which may arise from the multilingual nature of their work community. This study seeks to describe the presence and management of multilingualism in the professional ice hockey context in Finland. Some of the more specific questions this research hopes to investigate are the language choice in different situations or contexts and the reasons behind the potential language switching, and whether a common lingua franca has emerged, which language that is and was it selected consciously or did it emerge unofficially through social interactions between the members of the organisation. Another aspect of interest is the existence or lack of translation activity in the organisation, whether the potential translation activity is professional or amateur in nature, and in which situations and for what purposes is it used.

In order to answer these research questions, data will be gathered by conducting interviews with people working in different roles within professional ice hockey. The interviews will shed light on the management of multilingualism in the everyday life of hockey organisations, such as the recruitment of new players, practice and game events, and other aspects of team life. The participants will also be asked to share their personal experiences of multilingualism in their work environment, and their thoughts on the subject. These interviews are semi-structured in nature, and the respondents are people who work in professional ice hockey in Finland, either as members of team organisations or in officiating roles. The goal of the interviews is to gather information on what these people think of the multilingualism in their work context and their subjective experiences of it. This is done instead of a more observational study, where the focus would be on observations of the types of multilingual interaction that actually takes place in the relevant contexts, because the interest of this research lies primarily on the personal experiences of the individuals within the community and not on outside observations of practices.

In this thesis, the term *lingua franca* is used to refer to any vehicular language used in a situation where all participants do not share the same first language. This includes occasions where one or more of the participants speak the chosen vehicular language as their first language. Some the traditional definition of a lingua franca states that it is a language that has no native speakers, or at least a language that is not the first language of any of the participants of the interaction that is being described (Berns 2007, 5). However, other scholars (Barančicová and Zerzová 2015) have suggested using an alternative definition for the term that allows the inclusion of native speakers, as long as not all participants share the same first language and because of this, the lingua franca has been chosen as the communicative medium for the interaction (Seidlhofer 2011, 7).

The term *translation* will be used to refer to both written and spoken translation. The focus is on the act of translating from one language to another, and the actual mode of the transfer is of secondary importance in the vast majority of the instances described in this research. Because of this, it is more economical to use one term as shorthand for the action rather than specifying at every mention whether a certain finding applies to one or both of these. If it is significant in a particular instance to note that the action concerns interpretation only, this differentiation is made.

The next section of this thesis will cover the previous research and relevant theoretical background related to the topic. The main areas covered are multilingualism and translation in work environments, and how they apply to professional sports in particular. The third section concerns the interviews that form the primary material of this research. It will explain the interview process, introduce the interview subjects, and cover the treatment of the materials after the interviews were conducted. This section also describes the method that will be used to analyse the material and discusses ethical questions related to the research process. After an overview of the material collection, the data will be analysed using directed qualitative content analysis. This seeks to categorise the central themes that arise in the interviews, and then compares the findings to previous research. The results are discussed in the final section, where conclusions are drawn based on the analysis.

2. Theoretical framework

This section will cover the theoretical background this thesis draws on, as well as introduce some of the key research previously done on the topic of multilingualism in working life and the role of languages in the sphere of professional sports. Subsection 2.1. is dedicated to discussing the central terminology of this thesis. After that, the theoretical overview focusses on multilingualism in the workplace and explores existing research into language policies and translation activity in work communities such as multinational corporations. From there the discussion moves on to the role of multilingualism in the sphere of sports as a work environment. The analysis of the theoretical framework of this thesis ends with a specific and narrow look into the significance of translation behaviour in ice hockey as a work environment, based on existing research done on the matter.

2.1. Terminology issues

One of the most central terms in this thesis concerns the athletes and nature of the teams they represent. The terminology used for these is not particularly well established, partially because there is significant variation across the disciplines (for example, sports and exercise science may lean towards a particular definition while other fields such as psychology or social sciences prefer different definitions). A vast number of terms exist to describe the athletes practising sports at a high national or international level. Due to the existence of various definitions for the terms, and the vast list of possible defining characteristics applied to them, it is important for clarity to consider and explain the chosen usage of the terminology in this thesis.

The most commonly used terms that were considered as options were *elite*, *expert*, and *professional athletes*. Each of these terms generally refer to a specific type of high-level athletes, defined by, for example, the level they compete or perform at compared to other athletes, or by whether or not they make a living from their sports career (Neva 2019; Swann, Moran, and Piggott 2015). Due to the existence of a wide variety of studies from different researchers from a large panel of disciplines, including but not limited to sports and exercise science, (sports) psychology, and economics, these terms could all be entirely synonymous depending on the articles under consideration. In some cases, it is also possible that an athlete defined as a “professional” in their field in

one study would not be considered to be any of these three by another researcher, or that the general understanding within a particular sport classifies certain players as “elite” or “professional”, while the existing academic definitions would not lead to such a conclusion. However, some defining factors are more commonly associated with certain terms than they are with others. These will be discussed in the following section, in an attempt to clarify the differences generally thought to exist between “elite”, “expert”, and “professional” athletes in everyday language use as well as in academic discourse.

The terms professional athlete and professional ice hockey teams/organisations will be used throughout this thesis to refer to the athletes and organisations discussed, interviewed, and analysed in this thesis. The following paragraphs will explain the research and thought process leading to the selection of this particular term, and will also explore what factors were used to determine who can be considered a professional athlete in the first place.

Elite and expert athlete

The terms elite and expert athletes have a significant amount of overlap in the categories they denote, and they are even treated as interchangeable synonyms by some researchers in existing research (Swann, Moran, and Piggott 2015, 3). Elite and expert athlete as terms often refer to skill level, either measured against certain benchmarks such as international or national best results (often in individual sports such as track and field), or the performance of other athletes in the same sport. The latter is more common in team sports such as ice hockey, where players’ skills and performance are often compared to those of other players and their achievements, and less rarely to objectively determined results from speed or strength testing. Professional athlete on the other hand tends to have a stronger relationship with athletes’ wages and their ability to earn a living by competing in sports. Being an elite or expert athlete is also sometimes considered a hypernym that describes a group of high-performing national or world-class athletes, while professionalism in sports is used to describe a feature that is one of the determining factors of eliteness in sports. This is shown for example in the study conducted by Swann et al. (2015), where the researchers attempted to formulate a cohesive understanding of the varying definitions given to expertise in sports in the domain of studies in performance psychology. In that study, “professionalism” is introduced as one feature used in research and in the field to define expertise in sport. In many studies, being a professional athlete or playing in what were classified as professional leagues was cited as a feature that had

been used to determine a set group as “expert athletes” (Swann, Moran, and Piggott 2015, 6). As Swann et al. (2015, 4) expectedly found in their study, there is significant inconsistency in the use and definition of what constitutes an expert athlete. Because of this ambiguity in the definition of the term and due to this term being more rarely used than the two other terms considered here, the term expert athlete was discarded as an option for usage in this thesis.

Many features applied to expert athletes above also relate to defining elite athletes, which explains their occasional use as interchangeable terms. For example, the elite in a sport is often, especially in non-academic discourse, also defined primarily by relative skill level within a certain sport rather than having a strict, objective definition across different sports. This is done on a scale of contrasting “novice” and “elite” in a sport, where the skill and performance levels range from low to high (Swann, Moran, and Piggott 2015, 11). A common understanding (in non-academic discussions) is that the elite athletes in a sport consist of a relatively small handful of the highest performing athletes. Because of this, it is more easily applied to sports where athletes compete as individuals rather than as a primary term for a thesis discussing team sports. In a team, it is harder to define who forms the small “elite”. The interactions between athletes and their ability to play as a team make it more challenging to determine the exact individual contribution of athletes. There are, of course, athletes competing in team sports that are generally regarded as the best in that sport due to their individual skill, ability to lead, or performance as a member of a team, but the presence of one elite athlete on a team does not automatically mean the other players on that team would be elite athletes as a result. Therefore, the term elite athlete is also not particularly applicable to and descriptive of the subjects of this thesis.

Professional athlete

As mentioned earlier, the definition for what constitutes a professional athlete at least partially leans on the level of income they are able to generate from practising their sport (a definition employed for example by Gabbett 2003). Another factor which plays into defining professionalism is the time commitment required from athletes. Instead of considering these two separately, it is more fruitful to consider both income and time management as equally important factors in achieving the level of “professional” in sports. Often, athletes are only able to dedicate significant amounts of their time to maintaining their athletic performance level and participating in games or competitions if

they are at a point where they receive sufficient income to support themselves from sources related to their sport. Therefore, these two are often deeply intertwined in the case of professional sports (Neva 2019; Swann, Moran, and Piggott 2015, 7).

This, however, is a problematic definition in the case of sports in Finland, since very few athletes are able to make enough money in wages, sponsorship deals, or stipends alone to support themselves solely using their athlete career, even when competing at the highest national level or internationally. Because of this, in most sports in Finland the athletes must either have an alternative source of income such as a large number of sponsorship deals or bursaries or another job on the side which they use to fund their career in sports (for example Rosvall 2014; Ziemann 2013). Another alternative is to live in relative poverty in hopes of making it to a higher competitive level, which would bring with it higher salaries (Rosvall 2014; Ziemann 2013). This in turn means that they would not be classified as professional athletes based on the definition which relies on wage level and means of making a living as grounds for defining professionalism. In practice, only ice hockey players competing at the highest men's national level (Liiga) generally earn enough money to make a living solely through sports; beyond that, the wage level in team sports in Finland is not high enough for the majority of players in other sports or lower leagues of ice hockey to support themselves without other sources of income on the side (Neva 2019). For example, many of the players in Mestis, the second-highest national level of ice hockey, either have a "day job" in addition to their hockey career, or they are full- or part-time students in secondary or higher-level education (Rosvall 2014; Sundell 2017; Ziemann 2013).

Neva's article (2019) discusses the issues related to using income as a primary indicator for the status of professional versus amateur athletes in team sports in Finland. In the article, the Neva (2019) refers to a possible model of assessing who counts as a professional, where "professional" was defined as earning at least 11,190 euros in wages from sports in one year. This level of annual income mandates that an athlete must sign up for what is known as a "professional athlete's accident insurance" in order to be permitted to continue competing in official competitions. Because this insurance is mandatory only in team sports, the figures do not include those athletes competing in individual sports that may reach this wage level. A look at the figures showed that based on this definition, there were 493 ice hockey players playing on Finnish teams across three leagues (the Russia-led KHL and the domestic Liiga and Mestis) that earned enough

from sports alone to be granted a professional status for this purpose (Neva 2019). Out of these players, 36 played for Jokerit, a team based in Helsinki but playing in the KHL, 455 played in Liiga, and only 2 played on teams in Mestis, the second-highest national level of men's ice hockey in the country (Neva 2019). Even though almost no Mestis players and not even all Liiga players reach this annual wage level, Liiga players and at least some players in Mestis are generally considered fully professional athletes. This shows that wage level is not the only factor in determining professionalism, but that the concept of what constitutes a professional athlete depends on multiple factors that affect the public's perception of the placement of certain athletes on the scale from amateur to professional. It is also necessary to consider that this perception is somewhat context-dependent since what is considered a professional level in certain markets or sports may not be in others. This is due to different cultural ideas about athletes and their professionalism, as well as the markers used to determine the status of "professional".

Because of this context-dependence and a possible disparity between a statistics-based or income-based definition and the public understanding of who can be considered a professional athlete, one further option for determining professionalism can be proposed. This thesis focusses on social structures and interpersonal interactions rather than on athletic performance, and the research is focussed on qualitative findings from a small sample rather than quantitative and generalisable results. As a result, it is reasonable to apply a less strictly data-based definition to classifying athletes as professionals or amateurs. As such, in addition to the aforementioned descriptors, including skill and competitive level, time commitment, and earned income, self-determination was considered as an additional factor in defining professional status. While not necessarily fitting all of the other descriptors, if an athlete or a staff member labelled themselves as a professional and the generally recognised public opinion supports this identification, they were considered a professional athlete for the purposes of this thesis.

Up until this point, this discussion of appropriate terminology has focussed only on the description of athletes titled as "elite" or "professional", contrasting them with "amateur athletes". The study by Swann et al. (2015, 6) brings up a third category that was used in some of the research it explored. This is the category "semi-professional athletes", and the related term of "semi-professional leagues". These terms are employed to describe those athletes and leagues that were somewhere between full professionalism and amateur level competition, and as such did not neatly follow the characteristics of

either of those categories. This term could be used, for example, to refer to players that, unlike amateurs, receive some remuneration for playing a sport but, unlike professional athletes, have another source of income in the form of additional employment (this definition is used for example in Gabbett 2003). In Finnish ice hockey, this definition applies to the Finnish Mestis league, where the average income per season falls around 10,000 euros and players must either have another job in addition to their playing career or face living in relative poverty due to a low level of income (Ziemann 2013). In addition to many of the players in Mestis, this term could be applied also to those players in Liiga that do not reach the wage level of 11,190 euros discussed by Neva (2019) as one possible criterion for distinguishing professional athletes from amateur athletes in the Finnish market. Considering the difference between wage levels of athletes in Finland and many bigger markets, such as North America or Russia, employing the term semi-professional could be one useful way of highlighting the difference between these athletes and leagues and the image that people from a different background might have of professional athletes. Because of this, the term semi-professional will occasionally be used in this thesis in instances where it is important to draw attention to, for example, the difference in available resources between teams playing in Mestis versus those in Liiga or possibly organisations outside the Finnish market.

2.2. Multilingualism in the workplace

This thesis focusses in particular on the professional sector of ice hockey and how multilingualism is present in and affects the everyday life of those working in this environment, and thus it is pertinent to take a look at previous studies on multilingualism in work environments. Most of these studies (such as Feely and Harzing 2003; Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen and Piekkari 2006; Kingsley 2013) have traditionally been concerned with the sphere of multinational corporations (MNCs), where there are multiple national offices or branches united under a common upper-level management, or with international organisations that operate in multiple official languages, such as the European Union and the United Nations (see for example Spataru-Negură 2016; Tesseur 2014).

Language policies³ lie at the heart of the management of language issues in multilingual workplaces. Spolsky (2019, 326) suggests a model where language policy consists of three aspects: practice, beliefs, and management. The beliefs relate to ideas about the value of language choices (Spolsky 2019, 326). Language practices cover the actual knowledge and use of languages by individuals in a given domain, while language management is centred around governing the two aforementioned aspects of policy (Spolsky 2019, 326). Spolsky's article (2019) suggests modifications to this original model of language policy, for example by adding to it the self-management of linguistic proficiency by individuals. In the domain of workplaces, self-management may prove to be a significant part of language policy since professionals may feel driven to improve their language proficiency to make them more desirable assets to their employees. Kingsley (2013, 533) divides workplace language policies into explicit and implicit, where explicit policies refer to top-down management policies and implicit policies cover employee beliefs and actual practices. While language management refers to the controlling and directing of language use in a domain, some research has shown that the reality of policy formation in workplaces may rely on the implicit policies developed from the bottom-up (for example Angouri 2013, 577). Spolsky's (2019, 326) division of the aspects of language policy implies that policies are shaped by top-down management which reshapes existing practices, but other research (such as Angouri 2013, 571) has suggested that sometimes actual practices in the workplace may affect the formation of official policies. In some organisations, language policies are kept unrestrictive to allow for flexibility in daily language use (Angouri 2013, 572; Kingsley 2013, 545). This may allow the employees more freedom regarding their language choices in workplace interactions, because they do not feel their actions must follow a set language policy that may, for example, restrict acceptable language repertoire to only one company language even if the employee possessed a more extensive range of language skills.

Due to the multinational and multicultural nature of MNCs, they have to resolve issues surrounding company language policies and draft guidelines on language use to facilitate the smooth running of business operations (Feely and Harzing 2003, 38). Some of these companies have chosen a lingua franca or "working language" to use in internal communication, while, in some cases, internal or external translation services are

³ In the context of companies, the term *language strategy* is sometimes used to mean practically the same thing that is elsewhere referred to as language policy. This thesis borrows its usage of *language policy* in corporate contexts from Angouri (2013).

used for intra-company communications as well as for communication with external stakeholders such as clients (Angouri 2013, 568; Piekkari et al. 2013, 773). Multiple studies have been conducted on the types and practicality of various language policies and language planning strategies employed by MNCs (for example Angouri 2013; Feely and Harzing 2003; Kingsley 2013). The following sections will focus on outlining some of the key findings and considering how they might be similar to the reality of professional ice hockey organisations in the Finnish context.

Businesses and decision-makers in Finland have noted the current and rising need for language competences in working life as the importance of world markets for businesses increases and the number of non-Finnish speaking immigrants seeking to enter the workforce in Finland rises rapidly (Pyykkö 2017, 95). Immigrants arriving to Finland create both opportunities and challenges in the workplace because, on one hand, they increase the variety of language competence of the workforce, but at the same time lacking competence in Finnish or Swedish can make it difficult for these individuals to enter the local workforce and find work (Pyykkö 2017, 111; Nieminen 2015). This is because often people and businesses only focus on the obstacles and note immigrants as “having poor language skills”, while in reality they may have excellent skills in a variety of languages, simply perhaps not in any of the local languages generally used within businesses (Pyykkö 2017, 13). This shows a tendency to focus on the issues created by the lack of sufficient skills in the national languages and English while ignoring the possibilities that could be derived from the increased variety in the company’s language reserve. For example, studies have found out that in order to forge long-lasting international business contacts and export, a knowledge of the target language and culture are important even if the initial contact and communication was conducted in English (Pyykkö 2017, 111).

In many cases, limited language skills especially in the national languages lead to restricted work opportunities for immigrants (Kyhä 2011, 143; Official Statistics of Finland 2018). Language competencies can be one factor in making them unable to find work that is in their field, corresponds to their training, or is in line with their previous work experience abroad (Kyhä 2011, 143). In some professional circumstances, good command of the national languages is necessary for the safe and successful completion of the work, because these are the languages they will encounter most often in their work environment, and miscommunication can have severe consequences due to the nature of

the job. An example of such a position would be that of a medical doctor in clinical settings. Such professions and tasks, however, are very rare, and in many cases basic skills in the national languages, especially if supported by English language skills, would be enough for managing daily interactions in the workplace. Despite this, employees often tend to expect proficiency in Finnish from potential employees, even if it is not a true requirement for success in the position, such as in international-facing management and communications positions (Kyhä 2011, 48). The majority of Finnish people of working age are also competent in at least one other language, which means that in many places the language skills of the existing employees would facilitate the creation of a multilingual workplace (Official Statistics of Finland 2018). This would result in more opportunities for those without a working knowledge of Finnish and Swedish and would allow the workplaces to reap the possible benefits from having a wider language reserve at their disposal.

While multilingualism can result in new opportunities, it cannot be denied that it can also create obstacles to efficient workplace communication and management. These can, however, be successfully mitigated by forward planning and establishing strategies for multilingualism at the workplace. Possible strategies have been developed both by numerous companies and organisations managing multinational organisations and suggested by many researchers. Feely and Harzing (2003) have compiled a comprehensive introduction to many of the options that can be used to form a language policy. Rather than suggesting entirely new methods for language management, they introduce several strategies that are already in use in MNCs and give short rundowns of their strengths and weaknesses. Some of the strategies, such as relying on a lingua franca, selecting corporate languages, or using functional multilingualism or controlled language to navigate social interactions, lean on developing a shared understanding of expected language use in the workplace (Feely and Harzing 2003, 43 and 49). Others take a more human resources-based approach by expatriating or inpatriating management-level employees to facilitate a more linguistically skilled workforce in the headquarters or subsidiaries (Feely and Harzing 2003, 47 and 48). These managers or other linguistically skilled employees can then also work as language nodes, acting as a hinge between two languages and enabling communication by translating for people that do not have a shared language (Feely and Harzing 2003, 46). However, especially if there are only a few employees capable of acting as language nodes and there is a great need for their

facilitation services, this additional role can cause enormous strain on the individual and may prevent them from fulfilling their regular work tasks (Feely and Harzing 2003, 46). A similar issue will be discussed further in section 2.3., regarding non-professional translators in the workplace. The nature of ice hockey organisations as work environments makes the inpatriation and expatriation strategies far less applicable to them than they are for service industry or production corporations, so these will not be considered further in this thesis.

In addition to finding ways to more efficiently manage and work with the resources the company already possesses, they can also strive to improve the availability of language skills and options for multilingual communication at their disposal. One long term solution requiring significant commitment both from the employer and the employees is organising language training for the staff (Feely and Harzing 2003, 44). A more immediate solution is to selectively recruit personnel that already possesses the necessary language skills, because the time taken to recruit and then induct someone to their new tasks is significantly shorter than the length of time required to train an individual to reach a working level of fluency in a new language (Feely and Harzing 2003, 46). The biggest issues with this strategy concern the challenges of finding personnel with both the required language skills and knowledge of the relevant field, especially if it is a question of trying to hire professionals in a more niche area (Feely and Harzing 2003, 47). Finally, instead of finding ways to manage direct communication between people, organisations can opt for translation strategies instead. Out of these, Feely and Harzing mention the use of machine translation (either on its own or facilitated by the use of controlled language within the work environment) or external language resources such as translators and interpreters (Feely and Harzing 2003, 43 and 49). Corporate experiences of the use of different translation models in the workplace will be described in more detail in section 2.3. by referring to a study conducted by Piekkari et al. on the issue in a Nordic service multinational (Piekkari et al. 2013).

Even if having a shared and agreed upon working language (or languages) within a workplace is important in terms of clarifying expectations for communication in the work community, the lived reality of language practice is more intricate in many multilingual work environments (Angouri 2013, 566). Research has shown that monolingualism is rarely reality even in work environments that have adopted an official working language. Instead, the communicative situations in those environments tend to

be a mix of many languages, including the local languages, the official language of the workplace, and company jargon (Angouri 2013, 566). Official “company language” can also lead to communication issues between the headquarters and different subsidiaries of a company, because in reality these may operate in different languages, muddying the community flow between them (Harzing and Feely 2008, 56). The mixing of languages and the possible obstruction of information flow due to language barriers can raise questions of the usefulness and implementation of company language policy (Angouri 2013, 567).

It is important to note that the use of languages in day-to-day work is not a reflection of employees rejecting the idea of an official lingua franca in the work environment. People tend to communicate with one another in whichever language they find the easiest and most effective in conveying their message, and for individuals that share a language that is different from the agreed-upon lingua franca of the workplace, this other language may be their chosen language of communication in the given situation. This does not mean that they do not agree with or respect the choice of the company-wide lingua franca, but that they use their situational awareness to choose the language they consider the most effective for a given social interaction. This does not mean that MNCs should avoid adopting official language policies and thinking about language planning, because it may be helpful to have policies to draw on and refer to when there is uncertainty about which language to use in a particular situation. However, the policies should not be so stringent that they forbid the use of other languages in conducting communication tasks at work, and rather should trust the situational awareness of individual employees and their ability to judge the best language choice on a given occasion.

2.3. Translation in the workplace

As was previously mentioned, multilingualism and its effects on the work environment and processes within the workplace have been previously studied primarily in the context of multinational companies and international organisations. For example, Jo Angouri has studied multilingualism in corporate companies around the world (Angouri 2013), and Rebecca Piekkari with her research team has researched translation in multinational corporations (see for example Piekkari et al. 2013; Tietze and Piekkari 2014). These and a number of other studies form the core theoretical backdrop of this thesis. Some of these

studies on multilingualism in the workplace, such as Angouri (2013), focus on the language policies of MNCs and how those are used to deal with the multilingual reality of the everyday work environment as well as how the workers navigate their multilingual surroundings in their work interactions with colleagues and clients. Translation policy forms an integral part of language policy in multilingual environments, whether they are companies, international organisations, or nation-states (Meylaerts and González Núñez 2018, 196). Language policies and translation policies are deeply intertwined, and they both seek to manage communications and establish relationships between people in a given domain (González Núñez 2016, 91). Translation policies encompass decisions such as determining what is or is not translated under particular circumstances (González Núñez 2016, 92). These decisions are constantly being made in multilingual workplaces as members of the community make choices regarding their language use.

While translation policies, implicit or overt, form the core foundation of all decisions regarding translation activity in the workplace, the theoretical background of this thesis will focus more on the actual translatory action in work environments. Translation behaviour in multilingual work environments has received less attention in previous research than other aspects of workplace multilingualism. However, some research on this topic does exist (for example Piekkari et al. 2013). Despite its relative rarity as a focal point in research on business and workplace communication, typical communication processes in MNCs often have a significant translation aspect, either within a single person (switching languages and self-translating) or between participants (translating texts or relaying information between two people without a shared language) (Piekkari et al. 2013, 772). In studies that do investigate the occurrence of translation, the researchers have found that in addition to translation behaviour by professional translators or other proficient people who have translation as a part of their official job description, a number of translation tasks are regularly or occasionally performed by people whose job does not officially include translation (Piekkari et al. 2013, 772; Probirskaja 2017, 240). The reasons behind this can be issues such as cost-efficiency (will to avoid the use of external translation service providers) or response speed (inability to wait for a response to an official translation request) among other things (Piekkari et al. 2013, 779).

When it comes to processing translation tasks in a multilingual environment, there are various strategies that employees use to navigate the situation. The choice of a strategy is affected by available resources such as time, money, technology,

individual's language skills, translation resources provided by the workplace (in-house or freelance translators), company culture and policies, and personal responses and choices by the person confronted with a task requiring translation (Piekkari et al. 2013, 776). In work environments where the need for translations is not constant and easily predictable, it is often challenging to schedule for. In these situations, the employees have to rely on their own language skills, those of their colleagues, or even outsiders who happen to be present and possess the language skills necessary to provide ad hoc translation assistance, similar to what Probirskaja (2017, 242) refers to as "linguistic first aid" in her research on translational spaces on the Allegro train. The need may be instantaneous and demand an oral response, such as a customer service interaction in a face-to-face situation, or it may require a speedy response, such as an email from a potential client or a supplier. In these cases even if a central translation department or contracted outside translators are available, they are not ideal in terms of response times, which may result in them being infrequently called on, as was discovered in the case study by Piekkari et al. (2013, 776). The study describes several translation responses, both individual and organisational, that employees use to deal with translation needs they encounter in their work, as well as explaining factors that affect the choice of response in a given situation (Piekkari et al. 2013, 776). The translation responses described in the paper were

1. the use of a central, in-house translation department,
2. (self-)translation by an employee whose official job description does not include translation tasks,
3. outsourcing the translation to the employee's external social networks (friends, family members),
4. using technological translation tools (machine translation), and
5. ignoring the tasks that require translation (Piekkari et al. 2013, 772).

Response number 2 in this summary includes both self-translation by the employee initially faced with the translation task and the use of collegial contacts within the company, such as asking another employee to service a customer that speaks the language of the customer. In addition to the aforementioned responses, establishing a company-wide language policy was named as one response to dealing with translation tasks, with the idea that having an established lingua franca within the company would decrease the number of instances where translation was necessary (Piekkari et al. 2013, 772). Choosing and establishing the use of a lingua franca falls, however, more accurately under

the umbrella of language planning and management within a workplace (as discussed in Feely and Harzing 2003), and as such is not included in this list that focusses on translation strategies employed in these environments.

Each of the strategies introduced comes with its own set of pros and cons, which affect their usability and popularity in work environments. For example, ignoring the foreign-language communication completely is not entirely viable in face-to-face interaction in the workplace (Piekkari et al. 2013, 777). Even when communication happens over the telephone or online, ignoring the sender is not conducive to a continued business relationship, which is why this strategy is rarely used in the workplace, although participants in previous research have admitted to opting for this strategy on occasion (some examples are provided in Piekkari et al. 2013, 777). When it comes to the other options for a translation response, the use of a central translation department (if one is available) or contracted outside translators are likely to result in high-quality translations. However, these can be seen as less cost-effective than other options, especially when only explicit costs from the translation order are considered (Piekkari et al. 2013, 779). When translations are done by paraprofessional translators or non-professional translators (terms employed by Koskela, Koskinen, and Pilke 2017 and Pérez-González and Susam-Saraeva 2012 respectively), such as employees whose job description does not include translation and who do not have related training, the costs of translation are less apparent and as such often overlooked (Piekkari et al. 2013, 779). These hidden translation costs may arise for example in the form of decreased productivity as a result of repeated interruptions due to translation request, or from employees having less time to fulfil their official tasks because of the amount of time put towards creating translations (Piekkari et al. 2013, 779). While companies are often concerned with the notional costs of official translation work, little attention is often granted to the invisible costs of non-professional translators taking longer to achieve what is possibly a lower quality of translation, and doing so at the cost of their actual work tasks.

In addition to the issue of cost-effectiveness, many respondents in the study by Piekkari et al. (2013, 778) also noted that due to workflows and the structured nature of the translation process, the response time suffered when translation departments were involved. This meant that employees had to weigh the need for high-quality translation against the need for a quick response and decide which was more important in a given situation. Because of this, many respondents reported that they only use the official

translators for more challenging or high-profile translation needs and where the need for high accuracy and great quality of language were seen as more important than a quick response time (Piekkari et al. 2013, 778). In customer service interactions, where the employees felt a speedy response in less than perfect language was more important than seeking official translation help, they often resorted to ad hoc self-translation or requested help from another customer service employee who was more proficient in the language in question (Piekkari et al. 2013, 778). Other options for translation responses were using technological solutions in the form of machine translation or outsourcing the translation tasks to the employee's social networks outside the workplace (Piekkari et al. 2013, 776 and 778). The important role of personal social networks has been recognised in earlier research, but Piekkari et al. (2013, 777) found that at least their informants were prepared to use their contacts outside the workplace to obtain speedy translation responses. This creates significant confidentiality and security issues, and while the individuals felt that their trust in their external contact was sufficient assurance of confidentiality, employers, and the customers of the MNC might not agree with this assessment. The use of machine translation may also cause breaches to confidentiality unless the tool forms a secure environment that does not release information to the internet. This is an aspect that workplaces have to consider before adopting machine translation solutions, especially if they deal with sensitive and confidential content.

2.4. Multilingualism and translation in sports

As globalisation becomes more common and the mobility of members of the workforce between countries increases, the local work environments around the world also become more multicultural and, as a result, often multilingual. This is generally recognised and studied in the context of service and trade industries where there is international trade and co-operation or in the context of multinational companies (Angouri 2013; Kingsley 2013). However, multilingualisation also takes place in entertainment and sports as work environments rather than being limited merely to the traditional sphere of trade of goods and services. While professional sports is an economically and culturally significant area of modern society, and it has a vast international dimension, studies focussed on the linguistic and communication aspects of this domain are scarce despite the wealth of potential for research (Baines 2013, 207). The mobility of professional athletes between countries has centuries-old roots, inspired by the economic lure of sports leagues in

regions with more monetary support for a particular sport, the will to develop personal skills under the coaching of a new organisation, and a number of other reasons depending on the sport and the individual (Baines 2013, 210; Maguire 1996). Political tensions have guided and limited the flows of athlete migration over time and shaped the opportunities available to individual players. Politics, economics, culture, and geography each play a significant part in shaping the balance of power in global sports migration (Maguire 2011, 1044).

In the context of ice hockey, this flow of sport migrants has often taken place between Europe and North America, with Canadian players coming to play in the British Elite Ice Hockey League (EIHL) as “pioneers” of the game or in search of an opportunity to go professional, or with European players aiming to make it to the National Hockey League (NHL), the largest and most economically alluring ice hockey league in the world (for example Carlsson, Backman, and Stark 2020, 357; Crossan 2019, 379; Maguire 1996, 337). Especially after the 1990s, another common player migration pattern has originated from Russia and the former Soviet Union, with athletes moving to western Europe and North America (Andreff 2010, 35). In some cases, such as with American and Canadian players migrating across their shared border or with North Americans coming to the UK to play, language skills and competences do not have a significant factor in the immigration or integration process. However, in many cases the language competences of players can be brought up in the consideration of player purchases or the lack of language skills may influence the ability to work in a new country. For example, in his study of IFK Mariehamn, a football team which plays in the Finnish Football League, Ringbom (2012, 190) found that the players’ language skills might influence their ability to play as a part of the team. Therefore, despite the athletes’ potentially high skill level in the sport itself, these players might not be desirable investments for the organisation due to their inability to communicate sufficiently in the language used in the work environment, i.e. in in-game interactions and team practice, which in turn would mean that they would be unable to successfully perform the job they are paid to do. In his study, Ringbom (2012, 190) found that due to a lack of a common language and high enough proficiency in the language spoken, communication problems between some international hires and the rest of the team arose during games, preventing the team from acting as a cohesive unit. This shows that even if language can often be a somewhat overlooked factor of performance in sports environments, in team sports where the team

consists of players from a variety of linguistic backgrounds the language skills of players, or a lack of those skills, may become a crucial factor in the players' ability to efficiently do their job which is to play the given sport as a cohesive unit as well as possible.

As a result of the frequent migration of professional athletes within and across nation-states as well as between continents, athletes have become what some researchers refer to as “global nomads”, and the work environment within sports has become increasingly multilingual (Baines 2013, 210; Elliott and Maguire 2008, 482). While the migration is generally driven by economic reasons and career ambitions, the resulting multilingual professional communities mean that migrating players may be faced with both communication issues and challenges in successfully integrating into the community (Ringbom 2012, 186). This applies in particular to situations where the migration occurs between different linguistic environments, such as from anglophone Canada to Sweden, and is less of an obstacle when moving within similar language regions, such as between two anglophone countries or within the German-speaking European region. Of course, the language policy of a given community, such as a professional sports organisation, may differ from the general society, which can make transitioning to the new work environment smooth from a language perspective, even if the language of the surrounding society is unfamiliar.

Due to the increasing migration and resulting multilingualisation of professional ice hockey communities, organisations have been forced to consider the management of a multilingual work environment and to make decisions about language policy, even if the discussion may not always be an explicit process within organisations. While in some cases the multilingualism is managed by introducing a common working language, *lingua franca*, that all members of the community can communicate in, often multilingual interactions include either an apparent or an invisible translation component. As Baines states in his research, the increased linguistic diversity has resulted in “a need for translation and interpreting in professional sporting contexts.” (Baines 2013, 209).

Because many migrant athletes remain with a particular team or even in a specific country only for a handful of seasons before moving on to a different location, they may not have the time or motivation to learn the local language⁴ (Ringbom 2012,

⁴ While many researchers (Elliott and Maguire 2008; Ringbom 2012, 190; Sandrelli 2015) touch on this in passing, no current studies directly focus on researching the second language acquisition rates by migrant athletes, nor the effect of time spent in a particular language environment on their motivation or success in language learning.

191). This is a factor especially with languages that are not widely spoken outside a specific country or a region, as is the case with Finnish. As a result, migrant athletes may not be acculturated to the language of their host environment and are dependent on either translation or the use of a lingua franca or another multilingualism strategy in their work environment (Baines 2013, 209). Even if a different and not translation-dependent multilingualism policy is in use, some situations may still demand translation in the workplace. This type of translation behaviour in ice hockey organisations is likely to be largely spontaneous and performed by people who are not trained in translation but otherwise have the necessary language skills to perform the translation task at hand. This is due to the specific nature of the translation needs in this context, since most of the participants are likely to learn the core vocabulary used and be able to get by in most of the everyday situations in team practice rather quickly since the vocabulary is relatively limited and context-bound (Ringbom 2012, 190). Because of this, the instances where translations are needed may be rare and it would not be cost-effective to keep a professional translator around in case such situations arise. The everyday translation needs are often addressed by staff or team members that have proficiency in necessary languages and are able to relay the necessary information to participants not familiar with the language that was originally used (Ringbom 2012, 190). Official documentation, such as necessary insurance paperwork, is translated officially or is initially drafted in English. For example, player contracts have to be filled out on forms provided by the Players' Association, and these are provided both in Finnish and in English on the Association's website (Finnish Ice Hockey Players' Association 2020).

While the translation strategies explored by Piekkari et al. (2013, 772) may work in many service sector and office environments, the nature of ice hockey organisations as work environments poses vastly different challenges to the provision of translation services. The management side will be able to make use of many of the same strategies as other office-based organisations can, but the team environment itself that is focussed on training and playing games will have to employ different strategies to respond to any translation needs that arise. For example, since the interactions are oral and mostly face-to-face and the need for communication is spontaneous, the use of a centralised translation service is out of the question (Piekkari et al. 2013, 778). Much like in most other in-person interactions in the workplace, ignoring the line of communication is not a productive option either, since, in general, both parties are aiming for the same goal, a

functional team environment (Piekkari et al. 2013, 777). Modern language technologies are creating numerous new possibilities for instant translation of both written and spoken language, but so far, no research has been done on the use of these tools in sports environments. While these machine translation tools can be useful and are relatively functional in some language pairs, Finnish as one side of the equation poses additional problems. Features such as the morphological structure of Finnish mean that machine translation in the language pair English–Finnish or vice versa create challenges even in text-based machine translation (Tiedemann, Ginter, and Kanerva 2015, 177). These issues are likely to be magnified when dealing with spoken language, where there is even further dialectal and idiolectal variation in the input. Because of this, machine translation, especially when involving Finnish as one of the languages, is not yet at a level where it can be relied upon as the sole facilitator of multilingual communication. It can, however, help provide support for multilingual communication, and the availability of electronic dictionaries can be vastly helpful in overcoming troubles related to a narrow vocabulary in interactions.

Out of the translation responses, self-translation and outsourcing to social networks seem like the only truly suitable options for sports contexts. Of these, the latter is better suited to situations where the need for a response is not instant and where the circumstances allow for the use of an external relay translator (Piekkari et al. 2013, 777). Examples of this could be different types of negotiations or meetings, where a family member, friend, or a player's agent can participate on the telephone and provide immediate translation assistance from a distance, or where a player can discuss documents with them in private in their own time. In more time-sensitive or otherwise challenging situations, such as during training sessions or games, the use of such an external social contact is likely to prove challenging, as their availability cannot be relied upon.

In her research, Sandrelli (2015, 89) refers to Lavric and Steiner's study from 2012, where they interviewed several football players, coaches, and referees in Austria, Italy, and Germany. Based on these interviews, Lavric and Steiner identified three common translation strategies that were being utilised by multilingual football clubs (Lavric and Steiner in Sandrelli 2015, 89). The first of these strategies involves the use of personal interpreters for players that lack the necessary language skills to communicate directly with the other players or the coaching staff (Lavric and Steiner in Sandrelli 2015, 89). This is a relatively costly strategy, which has led to many organisations choosing to

use factotums or other players from the team as translators instead (Sandrelli 2015, 89). A factotum is often a retired player who has the necessary language skills to act as a translator for an international player (Sandrelli 2015, 89). As this still requires keeping an additional individual around simply for the purpose of providing language assistance to a single player, an easier option is to have another player act as a mediator, if there is a player with suitable language skills on the team (Sandrelli 2015, 89). The pros of this solution, in addition to eliminating the need for an additional hire, include the player's familiarity with team dynamics and organisational policies, and knowledge of the early adjustment process when joining the team, since they have personally experienced it (Sandrelli 2015, 89). Ringbom found in his study (2012, 190), that in some cases the translator can also be a member of the coaching staff. This can be particularly helpful if the translation is needed by a larger segment of the team since the coach has more authority on the team than players. Especially if they are self-translating (rather than one coach speaking one language, and another translating it), they already have the attention of the players and the platform to instruct them.

3. Data and methods

This section is focussed on the topic of data gathering, treatment, and methodology used in this thesis. It outlines the selection and backgrounds of the interviewees, describes the interview and data processing methods used and explains the methods used to facilitate the analysis of the collected data. The section concludes with a discussion of the ethical questions relevant to the conducting of research interviews, such as the topics of informed consent and confidentiality.

3.1. Primary research data

The primary material for this thesis consists of interviews with people who work in and with professional ice hockey organisations in Finland. The interviewees consist of an ice hockey referee, two staff representatives of two different Finnish ice hockey organisations, and a professional hockey player playing for a Finnish team. The attempt was to select participants that covered the different types of work positions in the field, so that the interviews would give a more well-rounded image of multilingualism in the field of professional ice hockey in Finland as a whole, rather than being limited only to the perspective of one position such as players or league officials. From this perspective, the final group of interview participants covered a good range of job positions in the field. The particular individuals, teams, and organisations were chosen due to their interest in and ability to participate in this study, geographical proximity which allowed for face-to-face interviews with selected interviewees (with one exception), and the fact that the teams at the time of the interviews had several international players on their roster. The interviewed team representatives were from two distinct organisations. One of the staff members represented an organisation in the Mestis-league (second-highest national league for men's ice hockey), while the other staff member and the player were with a team from Liiga. As a result, the representatives of these organisations have experience in dealing with multilingualism in their everyday communication and can therefore offer an insider's view of the role multilingualism plays in shaping the everyday interactions of these particular work environments. The individual team organisations the interviewees represented were kept anonymous due to requests from the participants.

In addition to the player and staff member interviews, the research material includes an interview with a referee who has experience working as a referee in both

international games as well as at different levels of ice hockey in Finland. Because many of the teams in Liiga as well as Mestis have foreign-born and trained players as captains or alternate captains, even the national league requires the referees to be prepared for multilingual communication in their line of work. The language skills of the players holding the captaincy positions are of particular importance because per the rules of the IIHF (international ice hockey federation), only the designated captain and alternate captains of a team may communicate with the referees on the ice during the game (IIHF 2019, 31, rule 28 iv). Hence, their communication skills have more bearing than those of other players when it comes to navigating on-ice discussions between players and officials. Interviewing a referee who regularly works closely with players from different backgrounds and with varying language skills gives another point of view to the multilingualism present in the world of ice hockey as a work environment in Finland.

3.2. Selection of the interviewees

The process of selecting interviewees for this research began by contacting a person responsible for outward-facing communications at the Finnish Liiga organisation and requesting contact information for referees who have experience at working as a referee at different national levels of ice hockey as well as potential international experience. An additional preference was given to possible candidates residing within a reasonable travel distance from Turku, as that would enhance the possibility of conducting in-person rather than video interviews. This enquiry yielded a possible interviewee suggested by the person that was initially contacted, selected based on fitting the aforementioned criteria. This referee was later contacted via email and agreed to participate in this study as an interviewee.

Participant recruitment for the players and ice hockey organisation staff began by contacting the media representatives of multiple Finnish ice hockey organisations. These organisations were asked if they could provide the opportunity to interview their staff members or players. This proved to be immensely challenging because even if some organisations showed some interest in participating, finding the time in the teams' and players' schedules for arranging the interviews during the hockey season proved to be too difficult. Once the season ended, especially foreign players soon travelled away from Finland, which again made it challenging to organise an opportunity

for interviews. Eventually positive responses were received from an organisation in Mestis, providing an opportunity to interview one of their staff members for this study, as well as an organisation in Liiga which offered the chance to interview both a current foreign player and a member of their team staff, who also had previous playing experience. Profiles of each of the interviewees are provided in section 3.3.

3.3. Description of the interviewees

This section gives basic and background information about the interview subjects for the data collection of this thesis. This is meant to provide an understanding of their language knowledge and relevant experience for their positions in ice hockey, which might help understand their opinions and experiences of multilingualism in this environment. The profiles presented in this section are also meant to describe the central information about these people so that the reader can formulate an image of these subjects without risking the anonymity of the interviewees. In order to maintain anonymity, some details such as specifics of language skills or previous countries of residence have been obscured in the case of some of the profiles. This has been done where certain details combined with other information given would make it hard to maintain the level of anonymity requested by the participants, due to the small number of people the information could point to. Similarly, some information was not gathered at all in the course of the interviews, as it was not considered to have particular importance in terms of the scope of this study. This includes the specific ages of the interviewees, which was not considered significant beyond all of the interviewees being legal adults and having the ability to consent to taking part in this study.

Key information on the interviewees is presented below in table 1. The language listed as a first language for each interviewee is the one that they named as their strongest language. In “other languages”, languages where an individual assessed their skills as “very good” or above are listed first, and languages where they listed their skills as existing but below that are in brackets. The column “League level experience” refers to the levels of domestic hockey in Finland that the person has experience working at. The levels listed first are those they work for at the time of the interview, and those in brackets signify previous experience at that level in a professional capacity in the role(s) listed.

Interviewee	Role	First language	Other languages	Nationality	League experience
Staff member 1 (S1)	Coach, sports manager	Finnish	English (Swedish)	Finland	Mestis and juniors (Liiga, amateur league)
Staff member 2 (S2)	Assistant coach	Finnish	(English, Swedish, German)	Finland	Liiga (Mestis)
Referee (R1)	Referee, linesman	Finnish	(English, Swedish)	Finland	Mestis (Liiga)
Player (P1)	Team captain	North Germanic other than Swedish	English, Swedish (Finnish)	Scandinavian other than Swedish	Liiga

Table 1: Key information on interviewees

S1 is involved at both the men's Mestis level team and in coaching the junior teams. He has coached or been otherwise involved as a staff member at the amateur, junior, Mestis and Liiga level teams and organisations and as a result has a host of experience of different ice hockey work environments, both mono- and multilingual. In his current position, he works closely with both Finnish and foreign language players and uses multiple languages in his daily work. **S2** is currently a member of the coaching staff of a Liiga level team. He has previous experience as a player from various Finnish leagues, including multiple seasons in Mestis and Liiga. **R1** currently works as an ice hockey referee in Mestis but has previous experience in working as a referee in Liiga. He also has experience from several international games and tournaments, which gives him an additional perspective to multilingualism in ice hockey. **P1** is a non-Finnish native and currently acts as one of the captains for a team playing in Liiga. **S2** is the assistant coach of the team that **P1** plays for. He has played for Finnish ice hockey organisations for four years and has been one of the captains for his team for one season. In addition to Finnish teams, **P1** has played for teams in different professional leagues in three other European countries.

3.4. Structure of the research interviews

The interviews conducted for this study were semi-structured, themed interviews. This interview type was expected to yield the most relevant type of information about the topic because due to the lack of previous research on the subject, it was difficult to determine in advance the kind of specific questions that would produce useful data (this issue is discussed for example in (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2010, 35). Therefore, producing a survey-type questionnaire which would yield results that can be studied in a sensible manner and which would effectively describe the phenomenon in question would have been challenging. On the other hand, in order to get insight into the specific topic of language and communication, some degree of structure was necessary to keep the interview on track. Therefore, it was considered more fruitful to guide the interviewee through a set of preselected topic areas and have them talk about their own experiences and observations regarding those topics. The semi-structured interview type was also considered suitable because the purpose of the interviews was to produce descriptive qualitative data rather than quantitatively measurable results, and this interview type is often successful in producing data for this kind of studies (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009, 208). Since the subjective observation of multilingualism and the individual experience of a multilingual work environment were at the centre of the research, quantitative analysis would not yield results from which sensible generalisations about this phenomenon could be made, and therefore optimising the data collection for quantitative analysis was not a primary concern. Generalisations based on the results of these interviews would also not be sensible given the small sample size of only four interviewees. With a sample of this size, it was possible to accurately gather only subjective individual experiences, rather than data that could be generalised to cover entire classes of people such as all referees, officials, or players in the field. However, in the case of specific subcategories of particular questions an approach closer to a questionnaire was used to more clearly catalogue for example the modes of communication used to aid in navigating a multilingual workspace. In the case of these questions, the participants were first prompted to give their responses unaided, but if they had issues with describing particular strategies they use, examples of possible strategies were given. The unprompted descriptions were categorised by the interviewer into suitable existing categories for purposes of analysis.

The interviews were organised as individual interviews that were recorded and subsequently transcribed and they took place over the timeframe from December 2018 to September 2019. The interviews were conducted in a face-to-face setting, except for the player interview, which was done over the phone due to scheduling reasons. These interviews covered various aspects of the daily life in the organisations the interviewees represented, as well as their own experiences of dealing with a multilingual work environment. The questions were roughly divided into four categories: background information and a description of linguistic background and language skills of the interviewee; communication in the work environment; multilingualism in the work environment; and issues in communication situations. Some questions could, of course, have been placed in many of these categories and there were more general questions about linguistic assistance and translational behaviour that were covered at the end even if they would perhaps thematically have fit into the second or third category. The order of questions was decided and adjusted based on the idea of covering simpler and more straightforward questions and topics at the beginning and progressing to harder or more complex topics as the interview continued. For this reason, the questions about translational behaviour were covered at the end. This way, the topics covered previously paved the way for this more complex discussion, and the interviewee had had the opportunity to think about the topics – such as which languages they use and with whom, and how possible communication issues are dealt with – in relation to the earlier questions, which was intended to help them when trying to answer questions that were perhaps more unfamiliar to them in the context of their own everyday working life.

The questions used in conducting the interviews were adjusted to suit the positions in each of the interviewees hold in their organisations and in the field of professional hockey in general. This was done so that the questions would more accurately reflect the situations each of the interview subjects face in their specific line of work. The central issues dealt with, however, were kept the same for all interviews so that parallels could be drawn between the answers of the participants, which in turn would help create a more well-rounded picture of the phenomenon in the field. The lists of the original questions used as well as their English translations (in cases where the originals were in Finnish) are attached in this thesis as appendices 1–3. The questions used for these interviews draw on the study Håkan Ringbom (2012) on multilingualism in professional football and the questionnaires he used for data collection because the subject matter and

areas of interest of that study and this thesis overlap in many places. However, many questions were formatted to better suit the interview format, and changes were naturally made to better reflect the new ice hockey-related setting. Multiple questions were also added to gain further and more specific information regarding the topic of translational action and other issues at the heart of this study, which were not relevant to the research questions Ringbom was aiming to answer in his paper.

The teams who provided staff member participants for this study have had native speakers of multiple languages on their rosters in both previous as well as the ongoing hockey seasons. This means that there is plenty of ground for multilingualism within the organisational structure, both among the players of the team and between the players and the organisational staff, making the organisations and the individuals working within them suitable sources of data and personal experience on multilingualism at work for this thesis. Thanks to the opportunity of interviewing both a player and a staff member (P1 and S2 respectively) working for the same organisation, the interviews also provided the chance to observe potential differences in how individuals experience multilingualism in their work environment because while the surrounding situation is the same, their individual subjective experiences of it might be different.

3.5. Treatment and analysis of materials

After the interviews were conducted, the recordings of the interviews were transcribed. In processing the recorded interviews, a basic level of transcription (Finnish Social Science Data Archive 2020a) was chosen as a guideline for the depth and accuracy of the processed text material. As a part of the transcription process, the language was partially standardised to omit slang, dialect and spoken language features, as they were not relevant to analysis purposes. Some interviewees used expletives as a part of their style of speech, and these were also omitted or replaced with a similar word in standard language use, as they were considered to be irrelevant features in terms of the analysis. All the interviews with staff and game officials were conducted in Finnish, while the player interview was done in English. Some of the interviewees used code-switching by interspersing their speech with words and phrases from English and other languages, especially when providing examples of language use in different situations. In these cases, the quotations were included if they were considered relevant in terms of content, or they were replaced

in the transcript with a note of *[different language used]*. Similarly, when an interviewee supported their speech with particular gestures or body language, a separate note was made in the transcript to include this information. The information regarding additional gestures et cetera came from notes taken down during the interviews to support the recording.

In the case of the player interview conducted over a telephone call, the recording failed to capture the interviewee's answers in good enough quality that it could have been decently transcribed. Because of this, that interview was only transcribed partially, as far as was possible given the poor quality and partial nature of the recording. As a result, the contents and results of that interview are in the most part based on interview notes taken down during the interview. These notes were taken in English, so nothing was done to these beyond writing the notes out into full sentences. After the transcription process, the content of the transcripts of the other interviews was translated into English so that they could be directly incorporated into this thesis if needed.

3.6. Method

This thesis is focussed on yielding qualitative rather than quantitative research. Content analysis will be used to study the interview material gathered. It is an often-used method in qualitative data analysis, and it can be used to categorise findings that emerge in the interviews (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 87). Content analysis was chosen as the method for this thesis instead of other common alternatives for handling interview data, such as discourse analysis, because due to the nature of the study, the primary focus is on the content of what the interviewees say, rather than on the way they express that content (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 87). The primary interest of this study lies in the subjective opinions and experiences the participants have of the effects of multilingualism on their work environments.

Qualitative analysis, and as its subcategory content analysis, are often divided into two or three subcategories which differ in their approach to the categorisation of the data and their relationship to existing theoretical information (Mayring 2000; Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 91). There are many ways to think about and label these distinctions. One common way is to distinguish between the types based on the logical models that can be used to create a categorisation for the analysed data (Mayring 2000;

Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 80) These logical models are induction, deduction, and abduction, which is sometimes excluded from the categorisation (Mayring 2000; Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 80). An alternative model which is somewhat parallel to the logical approach considers the division based on the relationship to data versus theory (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 80). This is divided into data-based, theory-based, and directed content analysis (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 91). To relate these to the logics-driven conceptualisation, they have features similar to inductive, deductive, and abductive thinking, respectively.

This thesis makes use of the directed content analysis approach. This type of analysis forms the middle ground between the data-based approach which ignores existing theoretical information, and the theory-based approach which to a large extent pre-determines the results that can be drawn from the data (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 81 and 95). Because a theoretical background was needed to create a functioning core for the research interviews, a purely data-based approach to the analysis was not an option. On the other hand, in order to give room for a variety of possible findings, especially given that this is a relatively little-researched topic, a rigid, theory-based approach with pre-determined analysis categories was not an ideal option either. The directed content analysis model draws on features of both the data- and theory-based approaches, making use of existing theoretical material and previous research to guide the analysis process but rather than testing existing theories, new ideas are formed based on the data gathered (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 81 and 98). Generally, this process begins as a more data-based approach to the analysis, but the findings are related back to existing theory at a later point in the process. As Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018, 98) point out, this allows the data to speak for itself without forcibly placing the findings in pre-determined categories, but it does not ignore all connections to previous research. Instead, it uses that to support the findings derived from the data (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 98). The lack of use of pre-determined theoretical categories at the start of the process differentiates the directed form of analysis from a theory-based analysis.

3.7. Ethical considerations

It is important to consider the ethical implications of research projects, especially when they involve gathering data on people for research purposes. Following good research practices is crucial to the ethical conducting of such research. This entails safe handling

of personal information, obtaining informed consent from participants, protecting the collected confidential data and monitoring who has access to it, and disposing of the data according to prior agreement (these are explained in detail in Finnish National Board on Research Integrity, TENK 2019). This section will outline how ethical practices were followed in the process of collecting, storing, and analysing data for this thesis.

When initially contacting possible participants, they were given a general idea of what the research was about and they were told that the purpose of the interviews was to gather the opinions and experiences of individuals working in the field of professional ice hockey. Once the participants agreed to being interviewed, they were provided with a form containing further information on the research. The purpose of this form was to ensure informed consent was obtained from the interviewees, and that they had the information necessary to make the decision to participate (Finnish Social Sciences Data Archive 2020b). The consent form contained a description of the topic and aim of the research and informed the participants of the details of the interview process. Interviewees were reminded that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw their data at any time if they wish, or to refuse an answer to any given question they were uncomfortable with. The participants were told that the interviews would be recorded, and they were asked for their oral consent to this. The form also contained details such as naming the individuals that would be able to access the data (the researcher and, if necessary, the supervisor of this thesis), a declaration about the intended use of the collected data (only for research purposes), and an assurance that care would be taken to protect the confidentiality of the interviewees. For example, the names of the interviewees were not stated on record. Instead, the files were identified by date and an anonymised code given to the participant. As a part of the consent form, the participants were also given the option to allow or forbid the connection of their name to the research project and asked to sign the document to confirm they had read and accepted the terms in it. In the case of the player interview, which was conducted over a phone call, consent was given initially in preliminary correspondence, and orally before and after conducting the interview. The content of the consent form, purpose of the interview and the research, and the voluntary nature and the anonymisation of the data were explained to the interviewee in English, and they assured they had understood their rights and consented to participate in the study.

4. Analysis and results

This section will focus on analysing and discussing the results of the research interviews. It will present the views brought forward by the interviewees and will consider how they relate back to the previous research and earlier findings concerning similar topics. Quotations from the interviews are used to showcase the personal views of the interviewees more accurately and to work as examples of their opinions. Due to technical failure, there is no recording of the player interview, so no exact transcript could be produced and as such, no direct quotations could be pulled from that interview. Therefore, the player's views are represented only in paraphrased form. All the quotations are provided both in the original Finnish and as English translations. All translations were done by the author.

The section has been split into thematically defined categories that loosely follow the structure of the interviews. This allows for an organised discussion of different categories of findings emerging from the data gathered. The first category gives insight into the interviewees' views on language and communication training in the sphere of professional ice hockey, as well as on their linguistic backgrounds and the significance placed on language skills in recruitment processes. The second section covers the interviewees' views on a variety of questions regarding languages, communications, and multilingualism in their work. It offers insight into the importance of communication in the ice hockey communities in Finland as perceived by the interviewees, analyses the phenomenon of multilingualism in these work environments and how it affects the individuals' experiences of communication in their work. The final section is more closely concerned with the concrete strategies that these individuals use to navigate multilingualism in their workplace.

4.1. Interviewees' language use and skills

The analysis will begin by introducing the actual use of languages in the organisations studied. This will start with a description of each interview participants' language skills as described by themselves, as well as a look into how they describe language usage in their work environments. Then the discussion will move onto discussing their views on whether there is a need for structured language or communications training for

professionals in ice hockey. The section will wrap up with an analysis of the role of languages in the recruitment of new players.

4.1.1. Interviewees' language practices and skills

This section covers language usage in the work environments of the interviewees, as described by themselves. Table 2 below shows which languages each of the respondents reported to using in their work environments. The marks placed in parentheses denote languages that they rarely use, but which the respondent included in their answer to the question. The usage of these languages is described in more detail after the table.

Language	R1	P1	S1	S2
English	x	x	x	x
Finnish	x		x	x
Swedish	(x)	x		
Other		x	(x)	

Table 2: Languages used by interviewees in the workplace

A summary of the interviewees' opinions of the level of their language skills has been provided in the table below. Only skills in the languages they reported as the primary ones in the respondents' work environments have been included. These were considered to be the ones where their view of their abilities is most likely to affect their ability or willingness to use them in communication in their work community.

Interviewee	Finnish skills	English skills
S1	native	excellent
S2	native	fair
R1	native	fair
P1	weak	excellent

Table 3: Assessment of own language skills

All respondents reported that they used English as the lingua franca in their work environments, although S2 said that he mainly used Finnish because he felt his English

skills were not very good. He said that the head coach of the team spoke English, so often there was no need for him as an assistant coach to use the language, and communicating in Finnish was more efficient to him, especially given that a large number of the players spoke (or to some extent understood) Finnish. As P1's Finnish skills were limited to some words and being able to understand it but not speak it himself, he did not actively use the language. However, he still encountered Finnish daily in his work environment, due to the Finnish staff (such as S2) and other players using it among themselves, alongside using English with those who do not speak Finnish. R1 and S1 also said that they used Finnish in their work with other Finnish speakers. For R1, it was the primary language of communication since the officials (save for some foreign officials on an exchange in Finland) and the vast majority of the players spoke Finnish. He only reported to using English with foreign players in the Finnish league, and during his work in international tournaments and games. S1 stated that on his team, Finnish was the primary coaching language, and it was expected that the Finnish players would translate in English to the foreigners. He also said that if he wanted to ensure that a message was received and understood by all players for example during a game or other time when there was no time for the relay process of translation that was usually in place, he would speak English himself to deliver the message to everyone on the team faster. English was not used as the primary coaching language because according to S1, the English skills of many of the Finnish players on his team were not very good, so it was considered better to coach in Finnish and make the players practice their English skills by having them translate the instructions to the non-Finnish speaking players. Similar translation behaviour in a team setting has been described by Ringbom (2012, 190) in his study of multilingualism in an Åland-based football team. This type of translation behaviour shares many characteristics with what Feely and Harzing (2003, 46) call language nodes. These are linguistically skilled people that can become a communication channel between two participants that do not have a common language (Feely and Harzing 2003, 46). This is often an unofficial role occupied on ad hoc basis. The use of the term language node highlights the informal nature of the task, as opposed to formal translators intended to serve as facilitators for inter-language communication. The term "linguistic first aid" (Probirskaja 2017, 243) is also highly descriptive of the sudden and unplanned-for need for translations in the work environment.

The language practices the interviewees described combined features of multiple approaches to managing multilingualism in the workplace. A central aspect was the use of a lingua franca which enable communication between speakers of different first languages. The use of a lingua franca is a well-established practice in environments where participants come from different linguistic backgrounds, and its use in work environments is well documented (Feely and Harzing 2003; Kingsley 2013; Louhiala-Salminen, Charles, and Kankaanranta 2005). As has been noted in earlier research on the use of English as a lingua franca in multilingual work environments, English is often used to ensure inclusion and involvement of all colleagues, since in many environments it is the most widely shared language between colleagues (Kingsley 2013, 543). Using English as lingua franca to manage multilingualism in sports environments has been explored by media (Gladwell 2014) and by researchers such as Sandrelli (2015). All of the interviewees that work directly with a team reported that in their work environments English is used to overcome language barriers and to more effectively include members of the team, regardless of their first language. R1 offered similar comments from a non-team view and mentioned that English was used among officials in situations where everyone did not have the same first language, such as with visiting international referees or in international tournaments, where officials came from different linguistic backgrounds. While the use of a lingua franca is a common feature that surfaced in all interviews, it only forms one part of the multilingual reality of these work environments. The teams also seem to utilise a form of language practices called corporate languages, although in this case, the appropriate term would be organisation or team language. Many studies (Feely and Harzing 2003, 45) suggest that this refers to the selection of a single language for use in all organisation communication. However, some more recent research (Piekkari et al. 2013, 778) has recognised the presence of multiple parallel corporate languages in modern work environments. One language may still have the position of an official corporate language, but some official intra-organisation communication may still be available in multiple language versions (Piekkari et al. 2013, 778). This usage of the concept of corporate or organisational languages seems applicable to Finnish ice hockey organisations since they appear to use multiple languages alongside each other in their internal communication, while possibly elevating one language to a more official status.

All interviewees except S2 said that they also sometimes use languages other than Finnish and English in their work environments. For S1, this meant using the

few words he knew in the players' native languages to clarify or emphasise his statements. In general, this seemed to encompass expletives or similar concise expressions. R1 said that he has occasionally tried to use Swedish instead of English when interacting with Swedish speaking officials, but felt that while it would be a good way to practice his Swedish language skills, it is not very practical during the games where the pace is hectic and communication has to be swift and efficient. P1 on the other hand said that he used either Swedish, his own first language, or a modified variant of the two (sometimes called the Scandinavian language) when talking to the other Scandinavians on the team because they are mutually intelligible and it was nice to be able to use his own language (or one that is very close to it) instead of English sometimes. He also felt that Swedish newcomers on the team seemed to be relieved when they were able to occasionally use their own language at work because some of them were shy to use English when first joining the team. P1 said that for many newcomers the chance to communicate in Swedish with a fellow player, especially the captain or one of the alternate captains, made them be more at ease in the team environment during the initial integration period, which in turn allowed them a smoother transition to using English as their primary language of communication at work.

Neither of the teams studied had forbidden the use of “non-team languages”, meaning languages not used by the majority of the team or by the coaching staff. S1 said that on his team, players were strongly encouraged to use English when interacting with others in the team setting, but the use of other languages was not strictly forbidden.

S1: Osa joutuu puhumaan sitä [omaa kieltään] väkisinkin, et ei siitä niinku sen enempää oo puhuttu. Et se [että ei saisi puhua muuta kuin englantia] on sellanen puoliks vitsi ja puoliks kuitenkin tosissaan. Siihen mä pyrin. Tullaan taas siihen, että kun on sellasia, jotka pystyy puhuu englantia kaikkien kanssa ja sit on se yks tai kaks [jotka eivät osaa englantia].

S1: Some have to speak [their own language], so we haven't really talked about it. It's half a joke and half not [when I say they should only speak English]. That's what I aim for. Again, it's a fact that some of them can speak English with everyone and then one or two of them [know no English]. (translation by SL)

The encouragement towards the use of English was aimed at increasing team cohesion and preventing high levels of language clustering, which he felt could become an issue

due to the weak English skills of some of the players on his team (Angouri 2013, 572). However, he also pointed out that for some of the players, it was necessary to be allowed to use their own languages especially when first joining the team, because their English language production skills were almost non-existent. Because of this, they had to rely on using another language, usually a shared first language if possible, to communicate with a teammate who would then translate it into English for the coaching staff and other players. S2 and P1 said there had been no discussions about not allowing the use of languages other than Finnish and English in the locker room or otherwise. Neither of them thought that it posed any issues because they felt that players were capable of making these decisions themselves and automatically tended to switch to a language that would allow others to join the conversation if such a situation arose. Because the players seemed to be able to adjust their behaviour themselves, there had been no need for official rules banning the use of certain languages in specific situations.

The fact that players were allowed and able to use their preferred languages in the team environment meant that the multilingual nature of the teams was highly transparent. P1 felt that multilingualism was very obviously present in the everyday interactions in his work environment and that an outside observer would have quickly been able to spot the multilingual nature of their hockey organisation. When asked for examples that would showcase the multilingual reality of these workplaces, P1 and both of the staff members interviewed all mentioned locker room conversations as one of the instances where the linguistic diversity was most apparent. This was because the aforementioned situation allowed for multiple simultaneous and not necessarily related paths of conversation to exist in a single space and, therefore, different conversation groups were able to employ different languages depending on the language skills of the participants. S2 mentioned the same phenomenon as the most apparent sign of the multilingualism within the team, stating that often there would be various discussions occurring simultaneously in a number of languages in the team environment.

For R1 multilingual interactions were less common than for the other respondents. This was to be expected since most of the referees and other game officials in the Finnish leagues speak Finnish as their first language or are bilingual Swedish-speaking Finns. Since Finnish is the dominant language in the league and it is R1's first language, it is the natural choice in his interactions with other officials. Because these formed the majority of R1's everyday interactions as a referee, it is clear multilingualism

will have a smaller effect on him than on the other interviewees. However, especially when working as a referee in Liiga with its numerous international players, multilingualism did play a part in his regular work tasks in most games. Even if did not have to interact directly with any non-Finnish speaking players during a game, he witnessed the multilingual interactions between the players on the team as they communicated with their teammates or the opponents. In some cases, Finnish was not enough even in the interactions between officials, because sometimes there would be international officials on a referee exchange programme working in the Finnish league.

R1: Suomessa puhutaan käytännössä vain suomea. Toki sit ulkomaalaisten kanssa englantia. [...] Suomessa tulee välillä ulkomaisia vaihtotuomareita kotimaiseen sarjaan. Silloin puhutaan, no, englantia, kai käytännössä kaikkien kanssa. Et joskus ruotsalaisten kans yritetään vähän ruotsia, mut kun sitä käytetään niin vähän ni sit sitä on vaikee puhuu.

R1: In Finland we speak practically only Finnish. Though of course with foreigners it's English. [...] Sometimes we get foreign exchange referees in the domestic league. Then we speak, well, English I guess with everyone. Sometimes we do try to use Swedish with the Swedes, but because we use it so little, it's a little bit difficult. (translation by SL)

As was discussed earlier, in these cases R1 would usually opt for English in his communication with the international officials, because he considered it to be the best choice for efficient on-ice communication. Similarly, when he took part in international games or tournaments outside of Finland, English was the established lingua franca between officials from different language backgrounds since it was the most commonly spoken language among them.

4.1.2. Language and communication training

Table 4 below summarises the interviewees' reports on any voluntary or compulsory communication or language training they have previously received or been offered, and whether they saw a need for training in these areas.

Interviewee	Previous language/ communication training	Need for training
S1	- no training - learning by doing	no
S2	- some modules in training -learning by doing	no
R1	- no training - learning from others	yes
P1	–	no

Table 4: Views on multilingualism and training

S1 had previously taken some short coaching courses organised by the Finnish ice hockey association but felt that working alongside veteran staff and coaches had personally been more significant in terms of learning coaching in practice. The courses had not specifically covered communications or language skills, and these skills were only developed unofficially as an additional result of teamwork. S2 said he had done a degree in sports instruction and another aimed at developing the skills of professional coaches working with athletes of different ages across a wide range of sports. The vocational degrees involved some language and communication modules, which is the case with all such degrees in Finland. These courses focussed mainly on general spoken communication skills, rather than explicitly coaching-related communication. In terms of specific training or guidance in communication in ice hockey, he said that he had not received structured, official training, but that guidance had instead consisted of peer support and feedback from other coaching staff members. R1 had taken referee training courses organised by the Ice Hockey Association and said that these did not include training on communication or language use. He said that advice from other, especially more senior, officials had been the primary form of guidance he had received regarding referee communication.

The significance of mentorship relationships and peer support as sources of learning was prominent in the interviews with R1, S1, and S2. This was the case concerning both gaining practical knowledge of coaching or officiating the game, but also when it came to improving communication skills and even areas such as key vocabulary.

Ranging from advice on correct ice hockey terminology from native English speakers to feedback received from other coaches on professionalism in front of the media, the role of peer support and peer feedback seemed to feature more prominently than any official training in learning language and communication skills for the work environment. Peer feedback has been recognised as an important tool in language learning, and the results from these research interviews suggest that it can help improve workplace communication as well (Akbari et al. 2017). Learning practical skills in the workplace, either through informal knowledge-sharing or more formal mentoring and shadowing arrangements, has been the subject of various studies over the years (Brčić and Mihelič 2015; Eraut 2007; Waring and Bishop 2010). Considering the wealth of studies supporting the merits of both peer feedback in language learning and the effectiveness of different modes of learning in the workplace, it could be theorised that combining these would also lead to successful language and communication learning from colleagues in the field. The findings of the interviews conducted for this thesis support that, since each of the non-player interviewees described one or more at-work learning activities recognised in previous research (Eraut 2007, 414) as the main ways in which they had learnt language or communication skills relevant to their positions.

Of the three non-players interviewed, R1 was the only one that saw some need for increased communication training for people in positions similar to his, but even he did not consider the current communication abilities among officials to be lacking. He also did not think that the training should necessarily be compulsory for all, only that it would be good to have such training available to those, who wanted to participate. His view was that an increase in knowledge regarding what to say in specific situations and how to communicate is “never a bad thing”, and could lead to better communication between staff, players, and the officials in ice hockey.

R1⁵: Mun mielestä [voisi olla koulutusta tarjolla], koska ei se ikinä haittaa. (...) Johtaminen on sitä puheviestintää, mitä meidän pitäisi enemmän harrastaa, niin mun mielestä se ois ehdottomasti hyvä.

R1: In my opinion [there could be training available] because it's never a bad thing. (...) Leading consists of oral communication,

⁵ The use of square brackets in the interview quotations indicates clarifications by the author. Ellipsis in brackets are used to indicate omissions in longer citations.

which we should do more, so I think it'd definitely be a good thing.
(translation by SL)

S1 saw no need for communication training, especially not in a structured or compulsory manner, and emphasised general interpersonal skills as a more important factor for successful communication as a coach. Language training is apparently not offered by any of the governing organisations, but based on the (admittedly small) sample size of this thesis, there may not be much demand for it either. None of the interviewees felt that there was a need for language training or any overarching language requirements for any of the positions. S2 commented that he did not feel there was a need for structured, compulsory communication or media training for all coaching staff, but mentioned that it should be available if someone needed help getting comfortable talking to the media, or if someone had trouble acting and speaking professionally.

S2: Ehkä sitten, jos siihen on aihetta puuttua, et sieltä alkaa tulla ihan tökeröitä haastatteluita. Mut yleisesti ottaen kuitenkin on ihan fiksua porukkaa tuolla, et pysyy ihan hyvän maun rajoissa sekä valmentajilla että pelaajilla. Mut kyllä sit tarvittaessa ois hyvä olla, jos näyttää siltä, että sieltä tulee ihan mitä vaan tai jotakuta jännittää, ni vois vähän sparrata.

S2: Maybe [there should be training] if there's a reason to intervene, if someone starts to give totally inappropriate interviews. But in general, everyone's pretty smart and both coaches and players stay within the realm of good taste. But it'd be good if it were available if it's needed, if it seems like someone has no filter or someone is nervous, then they could use a bit of help. (translation by SL)

Based on the comments from the staff and referee interviews, at least among this small target group the idea of increased formal and compulsory language or communication training was not popular. This mainly arises from the idea that they all feel they have good enough English skills to get by in their position, and feel that others are in a similar position and discrepancies in English (or other) language skills do not cause significant issues that could not be easily resolved. S2 noted in his interview that he mainly uses Finnish to address his team as a whole because he does not feel that his English skills are good enough to convey his message effectively and efficiently. Despite this, he did not think there was a need for language training. While Feely and Harzing (2003, 45) point

out that language training in work organisations is not a quick-fix solution because of the time-consuming nature of language learning, they did suggest that refresher courses for people with existing language skills could be an efficient choice for improving multilingual communications. Language courses have been used by some football clubs to improve the language skills of their players, but these tend to not be popular because unless they are directly tailored to the players, the courses are often not sport-specific enough and as such lack focus on the vocabulary that would be most helpful to players (Ringbom 2012, 189; Sandrelli 2015, 89). Even Feely and Harzing (2003, 45) note that other ways to improve multilingual communications might be more effective than language courses and they could have a more immediate effect, and since S2 seems to manage in his position with Finnish and his existing level of English skills, language training may indeed not be the most suitable option.

According to R1, referees that do not have good communication abilities in English tend to be aware of that and do not apply for places in international events, and that the lack of English skills should not be an obstacle for working as a referee in the Finnish leagues, since the majority of the players are Finnish speakers. According to him, the referees working in the top Finnish leagues had at least some ability to communicate in English, or the other referees or linesmen with better English skills could cover for them during games if needed. Comments from the interview with P1 supported this view, as he said that he had never had trouble communicating with referees despite not speaking Finnish. R1 also mentioned that the main objective of Finnish referee training is to produce officials for the Finnish leagues, not to prepare them for international games. Therefore, having strict language skill requirements for English would be counterintuitive since especially in the junior and amateur leagues and even in the professional Liiga, English communication forms a minor part of the officials' work, while Finnish is the language used for most communication instances in their daily work.

R1: Suomalaisten tuomarityöskentelyn tavoite on kuitenkin palvella suomen jääkiekkosarjoja, ei kehittää vain pelkästään ulkomaille. Se tulee sitten vähän ekstrana.

R1: The purpose of Finnish referee work is to serve the Finnish ice hockey leagues, not just prepare you for going abroad. That's more of an extra. (translation by SL)

The other interviewees seemed to agree with R1 in terms of establishing language requirements for the various positions in ice hockey organisations. All three non-player interviewees felt that most people aiming to work as coaches, staff, or referees are relatively aware of their existing language skills and their limits. They also felt that they have the skills necessary to work in their position, or have developed ways to sufficiently overcome gaps in their language knowledge and manage to convey their ideas despite the limitations. As reported in the interviews by R1 and S2, this can mean using their limited language skills in English (or occasionally other languages) and supporting them with alternate communication modes, or seeking assistance from another coach or referee that has the language skills needed in a specific situation. These solutions for overcoming gaps in language skills were also discovered by Ringbom (2012, 190), and they seem to be well suited for sports environments. Because of the range of options available to enable communication despite less-than-perfect skills in a shared language between participants, the interviewees thought that the current system of having no defined language requirements worked well for the ice hockey environment. While the individuals' skills in the languages used in the organisations (usually Finnish or English) could be improved by training, this would be time-consuming, would require commitment and motivation, and ultimately would take time and resources away from the central purpose of ice hockey teams, which is success in their sport.

4.1.3. Languages and recruitment

One of the points of interest in this study was to explore what role players' and officials' language skills have in their recruitment process. The participants were asked whether language skills were used as recruitment criteria when their organisation was considering new potential recruits (for S1 and S2) or if their own language skills had been a factor in recruitment (for R1 and P1). Table 5 summarises the answers to this question, and these responses are discussed in more detail below.

Interviewee	Languages as recruitment criteria
S1	no
S2	possibly, no certain information
R1	no
P1	no

Table 5: Language skills as recruitment criteria

R1 said that while there are no particular language requirements for working as a referee or a linesman in the Finnish leagues, in the international events he had participated in there had been expectations of having sufficient language skills in the necessary languages, usually in English. He pointed out that even in an evaluation form used to review a referee's performance in international tournaments, "English language skills" are a category that is of equal value to categories that assess professional performance. The focus, however, is on the ability to communicate and convey the message to players and coaches, rather than on judging an individual's grasp on grammar or other linguistic details that do not necessarily prevent the participants from understanding each other. If the individual referee was willing to use the level of English they possess and was able to communicate the necessary information about on-ice calls and justification for their decisions, their language skills were considered sufficient for the position and they could receive a good assessment, regardless of gaps in their grasp of the language. Thus, there was more focus on the communicative event and its success, rather than on the particularities of the language used. Partially because of this, assessment of an individual referee's skills and whether they are developed enough to succeed in a particular international role lies on self-evaluation by the individual. There are no set requirements for skill levels and participants are not asked to provide language certificates demonstrating their knowledge of English. The organisations responsible expect that those officials that are sent to referee international games will have sufficient English language skills to perform their job properly, or they would not be participating.

P1 said that he was not asked about his existing language skills when he first moved to play abroad, nor has he been asked about it when joining a new team since. He felt that everyone had operated under the expectation that if a player was seeking to play abroad, he had already evaluated his linguistic abilities and decided that they were good enough to manage living in another country and playing for a foreign organisation.

As Sandrelli (2015, 88) has pointed out in her research, in hiring players and coaches the teams understandably base the selection on the individuals' playing or coaching abilities and not their language skills. As proven by the interviewees' personal experience, the language aspect is frequently overlooked or considered secondary, and rather than being discussed directly, there is often an implicit assumption about all potential players or staff members possessing sufficient language skills. In the case of Finland, this usually means that teams and organisations expect that the player can communicate in English well enough to handle everyday aspects of life and communication within the hockey organisation and in their personal lives off the ice in the host country. P1 said that during his time playing professional ice hockey outside of his native country, he had never encountered a player that did not have good enough English (or other relevant language) skills to manage on their own in the current host country. He felt that in Finland, as well as in all the other European countries he had played in, English was enough to get by in the daily life even outside of his work environments, because most people spoke English so knowledge of Finnish or other local languages had not been a necessity. However, from the point of view of long-term integration, having even a basic understanding of the local language can make an individual feel more connected to the surrounding community and facilitate fuller integration (Pyykkö 2017, 103). This applies especially to players who are looking to remain in their host country for multiple seasons or after they retire from professional sports. Even during their playing career, having rudimentary language skills in Finnish or a relevant local language could benefit migrant players since even if it is possible to get by in English in many regions, knowledge of the local language would help reduce possible remaining language barriers and would diminish the potential feelings of isolation from the surrounding society.

Comments from both S1 and S2 supported the view of implicit expectations regarding players' language skills since according to both of them organisations did not put significant emphasis on language when they considered signing new players to join the team. It seems clear that not all teams in the Finnish professional ice hockey leagues use language as a selection criterion when considering new players, and that they do not systemically practice selective recruitment from a language perspective (Feely and Harzing 2003, 46). S2 noted, however, that he was not particularly privy to the exact discussions related to player acquisition, since as an assistant coach it was not one of his areas of responsibility. He did think that the head coach and sports manager probably

considered the issue of language skills when looking at potential new players, but that to his knowledge, anyone's (lack of) knowledge of the languages already used in the team environment, namely Finnish and English, had never been a deciding factor when it came to signing a particular player.

S2: En ite rekryä periaatteessa, et se on enemmän urheilujohtajan ja päävalmentajan asia sitä enemmän miettiä, ni tota... Ni veikkaan et on siihen otettu [kantaa]... Mut en osaa varmaksi sanoa. (...) On siitä varmaan keskusteltu, mutta ei siitä [ole tullut estettä].

S2: I don't really do the recruiting, it's more the sport manager's and the head coach's thing to think about that, so... I'd think they've thought about it... But I can't say for sure. (...) I expect they've talked about it, but it's never [become an obstacle]. (translation by SL)

Players were expected to be able to communicate in a language that is used in the team environment, and it was up to them rather than the organisation to ensure they were able to do that. This finding is in line with Ringbom's (2012, 186) assessment of factors that affect the decision to sign a particular player to the team since he points out that prowess in "the language(s) used in the team and in the environment is an essential element of successful integration." Despite this expectation, it seems that this was not something that was explicitly discussed with players, at least not always as the experience of P1 shows.

While the local language in most of Finland is overwhelmingly Finnish (although some areas especially on the western coast have a high percentage of those who speak Swedish as their first language), most of the teams in Liiga have foreign players on their rosters and as such have begun to operate at least partially in English. As a result, prospective players from around the hockey-playing world have a high likelihood of knowing a language that is used in any given organisation. In terms of numbers, the biggest ice hockey player producers globally are the United States and Canada (International Ice Hockey Federation 2020). In these countries, English is spoken as either the first or second language (Xiaoqiong and Xianxing 2011, 220). In many European countries the trend towards teaching languages in schools at an even earlier age than before, combined with English being either the mandatory or the most popular choice of the first foreign language to be taught, has resulted in the majority of the European youth studying English for multiple years while still in school (Berns et al. 2007, 24). In addition

to formal education, they are exposed to the language via Anglo-American media as well as on the internet (Berns et al. 2007, 33).

Because of this, some researchers have suggested that while most of Europe (except for the British Isles) has traditionally been thought to exist in the third, expanding circle of Kachru's model or speakers of English as a foreign language, this might be changing in some areas, or in the case of specific sections of the population in the region (Leppänen et al. 2011, 168). In Finland, parts of the population use English so frequently in their daily lives, that they could be said to speak English as a second rather than a foreign language (Leppänen et al. 2011, 168). There has even been some discussion of English being or becoming the "third national language" in the country. However, a survey on the uses of and attitudes towards English in Finland showed that the number of people using it at that level and to such a significant extent is small enough that such a change in its official status seems unlikely to take place in the near future (Leppänen et al. 2011, 168). While the large-scale institutional shift is not immediate, for some sections of the population English is becoming a part of the everyday language use of the individuals. They may also grow up using the language from a very early age, which does put into question the traditional placement of Finland (and most of the rest of the world) in the third circle or English as foreign language-group, while the current situation might be more reflective of an English as a second language type of a situation for some individuals. Because they work in an international and multilingual work environment, professional ice hockey players in Finland may well fall into this group, because as the interviews conducted show, they are likely to at least hear English in their daily work environment. In addition to improving their ability to communicate with their non-Finnish speaking teammates during training and games, English language skills are also crucial enablers for socialising with these players off the ice, and the (English) language skills of the Finnish players on a team may be a critical component that affects a migrant player's integration to the team and the surrounding society.

4.2. Views on the role of multilingualism and perceptions of communication skills

The following sections will cover the interviewees' views on multilingualism in their work environment and the significance of communication and language skills in professional ice hockey in Finland. It will also take a look at their experiences of developments in the importance of those skills over their careers, as well as possible changes over the years in how these individuals communicate in their work environments. It also covers the interviewees' descriptions of the visibility of multilingualism in their everyday work environments, as well as how that affects their work. It continues from the latter topic into more detail and explores the team representatives' opinions of how the multilingual nature of their work environments possibly affects team cohesion and the internal dynamics of a team. The last section concerns the question of how language issues are taken into consideration in the early integration stages when a new international player joins a Finnish organisation.

4.2.1. General views on multilingualism

As the multilingualism of work environments is at the core of this thesis, this section will begin with a look at the interview participants' attitudes towards this phenomenon in their work environments. Table 6 below summarises the views of the interviewees on this subject.

Interviewee	View of multilingualism at work
S1	–
S2	negative
R1	–
P1	positive

Table 6: Views on multilingualism at work

Not all of the interviewees had any particular views on whether multilingualism in their work environment was positive or negative in their opinion. The general consensus seemed to be that it was not something they thought about in detail, and rather they simply accepted it as the current state of things. As such, many of them were mainly indifferent

in their opinion on the matter. S1 and R1 did not have any particular view on multilingualism in their work environments. P1 said that multilingualism is simply how things are in modern ice hockey organisations, where professional teams attempt to gather the best possible group of players and playing skills and other qualities take priority over acquiring only players with a specific first language. He felt that it was good for him and the other Scandinavian players to get to use Swedish during practice and games if they wanted to, but in general, he saw having English as the established lingua franca on the team as a good thing. He thought that having frequent opportunities to use and practice English would be good for all the players overall and that improving their English skills during their time on the team would benefit the players in their life after their playing careers, too.

S2 had a somewhat negative view of multilingualism in his work organisation. This opinion stemmed from his personal experience of multiple languages on a team complicating the act of coaching, rather than him having negative feelings about multilingualism in work environments in general. He felt that his English skills were not good enough to allow him to communicate as well in English as he could in Finnish, which meant that he did not feel like he was able to coach non-Finnish speaking players as efficiently as he could coach Finnish speakers. Because of this, he mainly used Finnish whenever possible, and only used English when coaching non-Finnish players one-on-one or when interacting with a group consisting only of foreign players. This in turn meant that, according to him, he was sometimes unable to give the same level of detail in his feedback or instructions to the non-Finnish players on the team. In his experience, having to use two languages side-by-side in coaching also complicated matters and took more time than using only one language would have. Because of this, he saw that having teams be as homogenous as possible would be a good thing from a coaching perspective. For him this meant that he would prefer the team he coaches to consist mostly of Finnish players to ensure smoother communication and more effective coaching.

Some research suggests there may be benefits to be reaped from linguistic homogeneity among team members. While looking beyond national borders means there is a broader pool of players and experience to draw from, research has shown that there are benefits to having a homogenous team (Kahane, Longley, and Simmons 2013). Employing international talent has the possibility of increasing the skill level of the team, but Kahane et al. (2013, 310) found in their study on the effect of homogeneity on the

output of NHL teams that when they are looking to add international players to their rosters, organisations could benefit from employing players from similar backgrounds. Adding three Swedish players to a team would mean lower integration costs and a decreased likelihood of communication issues compared to hiring one player from Sweden, one from Slovakia, and one from Germany (Kahane, Longley, and Simmons 2013, 302). Based on the interviews conducted for this thesis as well as observations made outside this study, many teams in the professional Finnish ice hockey leagues already employ at least two languages, Finnish and English, in their everyday communications. Instead of further increasing the language and culture diversity of the team by employing a highly heterogeneous group of international players, the teams might benefit more from trying to hire international players that are from similar backgrounds to prevent additional integration costs (Kahane, Longley, and Simmons 2013, 312). Even if communication issues may still arise between the Finnish and the international players, similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds among the foreign additions are likely to make communication easier among them and may reduce the overall costs resulting from miscommunication (Kahane, Longley, and Simmons 2013, 305). While homogeneity among international players would not be a solution to S2's worries about needing to use English in addition to Finnish in his line of work, it is something that teams should possibly pay attention to when considering potential new players.

4.2.2. Views on the importance of communication skills

The table below summarises the views of each interview subject on their opinion of the importance of communication in their work. This covers all types of communication, regardless of language and the professional roles of the participants. The views are discussed in more detail after the table.

Interviewee	Is communication important?
S1	+
S2	+
R1	+
P1	+

Table 7: Views on the importance of communication

R1 considered communication skills to be vital in his position as an ice hockey referee and said that communicating with players, coaches, and other officials formed the majority of the officials' work during a game. As such, he felt he would be unable to perform that job if they lacked the language or communication skills needed.

R1: [Tuomariviestinnällä] on ihan sairaan suuri merkitys, että siihen peli jopa perustuu osittain, että niitä sääntöjä noudatetaan. Ja että tuomari pystyy viestimään, ehkäisemään rikkeitä sekä vähän asettamaan rajoja pelille.

R1: The way a referee communicates, it is super important. In a way, the game revolves around the referee being able to make sure that rules are followed and being able to communicate and prevent penalties. [The referee] has to be able to set boundaries to the game. (translation by SL)

Based on his comments, he placed more emphasis on the actual interpersonal communication skills than on the language skills themselves. A similar focus on interpersonal skills was repeated in the interviews with S1 and S2. P1, too, emphasised the necessity of good interpersonal skills improving teamwork, and saw them as particularly important for the captain and alternate captains of a team, since they had a special leadership position among the players. R1, S1, and S2 were all of the opinion that communication skills and the ability to effectively convey their message to the players and other staff and officials formed the core of their role, and that without such skills one would be unable to sufficiently perform their job.

S2: No onhan sillä suuri merkitystä, et miten sitä suutaan aukoo. On suuri merkitys. Koko ajan siinä kuitenkin kommunikoi ihmisten kanssa, johdat valmentajana sitä ihmisjoukkoa. Se tekee siitä erittäin tärkeää.

S2: I mean, it does matter a lot how you run your mouth out there. Definitely. You're constantly communicating with people, and as a coach, you're leading that group of people. That makes [communication] really important. (translation by SL)

While they were emphasised less by all of the participants than the actual interpersonal communication skills themselves, language skills were seen as an important tool for

enabling communication. This was the case in particular with regard to Finnish and English, which all of the interviewees named as the primary languages used in their work environments. Out of the interviewees, S2 felt the strongest that language skills had a negative effect on workplace communication and that his weak English skills (and conversely, the other side's weak or non-existent skills in Finnish) hindered the act with non-Finnish members of his work community.

S2: Koen myös sen ongelmana, että kun sä valmennat englanninkielistä, ja varsinkin just niissä, jos kahden kesken tai pienemmällä porukalla käy jotain läpi. Ne ei saa sitä [samaa informaatiota] mitä kun suomalainen, jos suomeksi pystyt perustelevaan täydellisesti ja muuta niin mä koen sen ongelmana. [...] Et saa sanottua ihan kaikkea, [...] kun ei oo tosiaan niin vahva se englantti.

S2: I also feel it's a problem that when you're coaching an English speaker, especially if it's a situation where you're going over something one-on-one or in a small group. They don't get the [same information] that a Finn gets, because in Finnish you can give perfect reasoning behind it all, to me that's an issue. [...] You aren't able to say everything [...] when the English skills aren't that good. (translation by SL)

S1 on the other hand did not feel that language skills (or someone's lack thereof) had had a major influence on the flow of communication in his work environment. He did give examples of some challenges in communication between him as a coach and some of his players, or of issues between players. Ultimately though, he felt that other means of communication could make up for a lack of language skills in a shared language, and as such he did not feel he personally struggled at work even if he or his conversation partner lacked sufficient skills in a shared language. Despite this, he did think that his ability to speak both Finnish and English fluently and to switch between them fluidly were important assets in his position, given the multilingual nature of his team. According to him, while he mainly used Finnish during practice and in other team events, during games he would switch to English more often in order to deliver his message to a larger group of players. Usually this meant employing a form of self-translation by repeating the same content first in Finnish and then in English (Kolehmainen, Koskinen, and Riionheimo 2015, 382; Piekkari et al. 2013, 776). S1 said that this mode of communication was also

often used in team meetings, where issues would either be discussed first in Finnish and then the same content would be translated into English before moving on to the next topic, or alternatively a meeting would be held in Finnish and then S1 would give a shorter summary of the contents in English at the end to ensure everyone knew at least the main points that had been discussed.

P1 felt that communication was important in his position, but it seemed that to him the importance was directly related to the team nature of ice hockey and the necessity of communication skills when it comes to being a so-called team player. He did not think there had been a change in his way of communicating or in the expectations placed on his communication when he was made the captain of his team. This was because he felt that communication with his teammates had always been an important part of being a member of the team. For him this had meant trying to use English and talk with everyone on the team, instead of sticking to an in-group with the other Scandinavians and using Swedish, which would have effectively excluded others from the group. This process of employees forming social clusters whose borders align with the members' shared first languages has been recognised in other studies on multilingual and multinational work environments (Angouri 2013, 572). The same studies that have discovered the tendency to cluster according to shared first languages, however, also discovered that employees also are often willing to switch to using a different language to not exclude others who do not share that same first language from the discussion (Angouri 2013, 573). Based on the interviews, this same process seems to take place within ice hockey organisations.

P1 did not think that languages played a significant role in choosing the team captain and alternate captains. He did, however, mention that it might pose a problem if a captain lacked a shared language with everyone on the team. To him, it was important that a captain had a good relationship with all members of the team and was able to talk to them in order to prevent and resolve any potential issues. As such, he thought that while it did not matter which language and what other means it took to ensure good communication and concluded that having good enough language skills in a language they shared with all team members was probably crucial to being a good leader for the team.

S2 agreed with this latter statement and said that choosing a non-Finnish player, especially one with good English language skills, as the captain (and previously

as one of the team's alternate captains) had been a deliberate decision. The idea behind this was that because there were multiple nationalities and players that did not speak Finnish on the team, choosing one of the non-Finnish players as the captain would help tie the group of players together regardless and prevent a division between the Finnish and the international players.

S2: Kyllä, tänä vuonna ennen kaikkea, kun valittiin kapteeniksi P1 [niin ajateltiin kielitaitoa], että on niin paljon ulkomaalaisia ja hän on hyvä henkinen johtaja kopissa ja on avoin ja positiivinen ja puhelias kaveri, niin oli kaikille valmennuksessa selvä yhteinen sävel [että valitaan P1] ihan sen takia, että meillä on paljon ulkomaalaisia, että [P1:n ominaisuudet ja kielitaito] yhdistää ne suomalaisiin, tai joukkueeksi. Et kyllä se on ihan mietitty.

S2: Yes, especially this year when we chose P1 as the captain [we took language skills into account]. We have so many foreign players, and he is a good mental leader in the locker room, and he's an open, positive, and talkative guy, so all of the training staff agreed on [this choice]. Just because we have so many foreign players that [P1's characteristics and language skills] tie them together with the Finns, as a team. It was a thought-out decision. (translation by SL)

According to S2, especially when a team is as diverse in terms of nationalities and languages as theirs, it is not enough that the captain is a good leader. He has to also be able to communicate with everyone on the team, which in many cases requires English skills in order to communicate with all the international players. He, as well as the rest of the training staff, felt that P1 fit this description well. By choosing Finnish players as the alternate captains to work alongside P1, they also managed to ensure that all the Finnish players would still be able to communicate with one of the team captains with ease.

The choice of Finnish alternate captains also meant that if P1 had trouble communicating with a game official due to a language barrier, one of the alternate captains would be able to step in while still respecting the rules of the game, which allow only the captain or alternate captains (if the captain is not on the ice) to discuss calls during the game. However, while this is an additional benefit and possibly a deliberately made choice, it seems that such instances of communication failure between international players as team captains and the Finnish officials are rare. When asked if he had experienced issues when dealing with game officials due to him not speaking Finnish, he reported that there had been no trouble. In his opinion, officials were well aware and

mindful of the fact that he was a foreign player and automatically switched to English in communication that included him. This was reflected in R1's answers, where he said that the referees knew players well enough to know whether or not someone was able to converse with them in Finnish, and that they would automatically opt for English with foreign players to ensure smooth communication. In his experience, the referees working in Liiga also all spoke enough English that he had never had trouble communicating with any of them during a game.

While it might be simply a matter of subjective opinion or personal experiences, the question of the importance of communication in the various positions within professional ice hockey may also be affected by how the different dimensions of the language barrier apply to a certain position. The roles of a game official or a referee, a member of the coaching staff, and that of a player all come with their own set of expectations and job descriptions. For example, as R1 and both S1 and S2 mentioned in their interviews, success in their respective positions relies on the ability to communicate efficiently with players and other professionals involved in the game. While players need to be able to communicate with each other and with their coaching staff, and during games the different officials, the level of language sophistication required is likely to be lower for them (Feely and Harzing 2003, 40). A referee and a coach might need to explore more complex questions of rule interpretations or game plans and will need to be familiar with the accompanying vocabulary and enough grammar and spoken language skills to make their point clearly. Most players on the other hand are likely to get by with less refined language skills to convey their message, since their communication needs are likely to deal with more concrete matters, such as directing fellow players regarding their positioning on the ice.

4.2.3. Views of the changes in the importance of communication skills

This subsection and the one following it will cover the interviewees' perceptions of potential changes they have observed in communication in the professional ice hockey community. The responses cover changes both at the individuals' personal level, as well as observations about more general changes in the communication culture of the community.

Interviewee	Changes in the importance of communication
S1	+
S2	+
R1	+
P1	-

Table 8: Changes in the importance of communication

R1 felt that there had been a change in the importance of communication and interpersonal skills in Finnish ice hockey over the years, as the culture in the game had moved to a more interactive direction where the officials communicated more with not only the players and the coaches but the media as well.

R1: On oltu tosi jäykkiä, ei oo viestitty, ei oo kommunikoitu, tuomarit on ollu vähän sellanen ulkopuolinen organisaatio, [...] on haluttu et ollaan vähän piilossa, ei olla kenenkään kans tekemisissä. Mut nykyään just halutaan antaa kommentteja, halutaan olla näkyvissä mediassa ja halutaan keskustella, kommunikoida, olla osa lajia. [...] Maailma on muuttumassa et koko ajan keskustellaan enemmän.

R1: It's been very stiff, there's been no communication, the referees have been kind of an outside organisation [...] that has wanted to be a in the background and not have anything to do with others. But nowadays we actually want to comment on things, be visible in the media, want to discuss, communicate, and be a part of the game. [...] The world's changing so that there's more and more communication. (translation by SL)

He felt that there had been an overall change in referees' attitudes and the officiating culture that had shifted the tides towards increased and more open communication. This in turn meant that communication skills had become a more important part of the professional skills of all referees. R1 believed that this was a good thing and he felt very positive about the change, but he had observed there had been resistance to the change and negative opinions of it from some of the other referees, especially the veterans who had grown into their position in the traditional, less communicative culture R1 described. According to R1, most of these individuals had over time grown accustomed to the changing nature of communication in the environment.

P1 did not think there had been changes in the importance of language or communication skills for him or otherwise. This could be because while the other participants' careers as professionals in the Finnish leagues had lasted for at least around ten years, P1 had been in Finland only for a handful of seasons. Even if he had previously played professional hockey in other countries, it could have been more difficult to perceive changes in communication culture when moving between countries that are likely to have their own unique ways of communicating to begin with. Even for the captain of the team, the expectations set for player communication are also less demanding than those faced by coaches and officials. S2 said in his interview, that as a coach he had to develop his communication skills to a more commanding direction in order to gain the respect of his players and to be able to effectively instruct them. As P1 had not undergone such a transition from a player into another position, it is possible he had not experienced similar, more noticeable changes in the importance of communication. A captain is often already a social person and a leading figure among the players because these tend to be what the coaches look for in a potential captain. As a result, it is likely that P1 did not indeed have to re-shape his view of the significance of communication in the team environment when he was named the captain of the team.

For the other interviewees, the changes they had observed had more to do with developments in their careers rather than with the sphere of ice hockey in Finland as a whole. S1 felt that communication skills were more important in coaching his current team than they had been with many of his previous teams, because this team consisted of players from all over Finland and abroad, while on his earlier teams the players had often known each other for a long time. With a team full of people that were not yet familiar with each other or each other's playing styles, the coach's ability to lead the team was more pronounced. S1 also thought that his English language skills had become more important to him personally when he moved up in the leagues because the more professional teams tended to have more international players on their roster, while lower division teams have few non-Finnish players.

S1: Niillä on paljon isompi merkitys nyt, kun [valmennan korkeammalla tasolla] ja kun on tullut ulkomaalaisia.

S1: They are more important now that [I coach at a professional level] and there are more foreigners. (translation by SL)

It is true that at any given moment, the percentage of foreign players is higher in the top professional leagues than in the amateur leagues, due to budget constraints and the relative attractiveness of certain leagues to potential foreign players. However, as was mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, the number of foreign players even within Liiga has increased over the years (compare for example the data in QuantHockey 2020b and QuantHockey 2020a). As such, even without the movement between different league levels, it is possible the need for English language skills would have increased. This change is not limited to increasing internationalisation within ice hockey either. The number of speakers of languages other than Finnish or Swedish in Finland has increased rapidly over the first decades of the 21st century (Karlsson 2017, 18; Leppänen et al. 2011, 19), and the resulting multilingualism has become visible in all spheres of social life.

S2 had similar comments about how English language skills had become more important as the number of non-Finnish players increased. Although he admitted to using mostly Finnish when coaching the team as a whole, he had to be able to communicate in English as well, because even as an assistant coach, it would make his work challenging if he was unable to communicate directly with some of the players on his team. When S2 contrasted the importance of communication skills in his current position and when he used to play himself, he thought that as a coach, communication skills were more important. This was because of the leadership position of the coach. While as a player one only has to get along with the other players and follow the instructions from the coaching staff, the coaches are responsible for, among other things, leading the team, communicating their game plans to the players, and ensuring the team works as a cohesive unit.

4.2.4. Views on the changes in ways of communication

Continuing from the previous topic, this section deals with changes in the manner of communication in the ice hockey work environment over the interviewees' careers. Table 9 depicts the interviewees' opinions on whether or not there had been changes in their manner of communicating in the professional hockey environment.

Interviewee	Changes in ways of communication
S1	–
S2	+
R1	+
P1	–

Table 9: Changes in ways of communication

None of the interviewees remarked on any significant changes in their personal ways of communicating in work environments. In fact, P1 and S1 said that they were unable to pinpoint any particular changes that would have taken place in how they communicated with others. For example, P1 did not think that his way of communicating had changed when he became the captain of the team. Similarly, S1 felt his manner of communicating had remained more or less the same throughout the different teams and staff positions he had held over the course of his career.

S2 said that he felt his communication style had become calmer and more authoritative as he gained experience and developed his style of coaching. Especially contrasting it with his time as a player, he thought that the way he communicated had become more professional. He believed that this was a natural development resulting from the change in his position in the employing organisation because as a player he was not a leader in the group and did not face similar scrutiny by others in the community or by the media for his language use or other aspects of communications as he did as a coach. The coach is often seen as the face of the team in the eyes of the media and the public and they have more public speaking engagements than most players do, for example in the form of postgame press events. To present a better picture of both himself and the organisation he worked for, S2 had developed his communication style to a more formal direction. Besides the changing publicity of his position, he had also adjusted his style in order to establish authority with the players on his team. While early on in his career as a coach his style was louder and more aggressive, it had calmed down and become more composed over the years as he noticed that a more thoughtful and matter-of-fact style of communication garnered more respect and attention from the players than aggressive shouting did.

S2: Ehkä se vähän on muuttunu, se tapa miten on tottunut viestimään. [...] Kun tulee kokemusta ni tulee vähän rauhallisemmaksi. Huutohan menettää merkityksensä, jos koko ajan huutaa [...]. Ajattelee ehkä enemmän sitä, että mitä keinoa käyttää. [...] Et sillan kun on pelaaja, ni [puhe] voi olla vähän rajumpaa ja [valmentajana] pitää olla vähän rauhallisempi.

S2: Maybe it has changed a bit, the way I'm used to communicating in. [...] You get calmer as you gain experience. I mean, shouting loses its meaning if you shout all the time [...]. Maybe you think more about how you communicate. [...] As a player [your way of speaking] can be rougher and [as a coach] you need to be a bit calmer. (translation by SL)

The changes described by S2 reflect the changes in his role in the hockey organisation rather than a change in the ways of communication in the professional ice hockey community at large. He also recounted the changes as having taken place in his communication style overall, regardless of the language used.

R1 on the other hand felt that even during his career, there had been a change in the way in which communication in the role of a referee was perceived in Finnish ice hockey.

R1: Lyhyeltä uralta tavallaan se maailma on muuttunut siihen, että ruvetaan puhuu koko ajan enemmän. [...] Keskustellaan, kun ennen oltiin semmoisia jäykkiä vaan et näytettiin merkkejä ja se oli siinä, et ei keskusteltu. Et nykyään mun mielestä keskustellaan, et sillä erottuu, jos puhutaan pelkästä tuomaritoiminnasta, niin hyvät ja huonot. Sillä miten pystyy kommunikoiimaan ja keskustele.

R1: From my short career, I think the world has changed so that there's constantly more and more communication. [...] Previously referees were stricter and only used [referee/linesman] signals and that was it, no conversation. Nowadays I feel like there's more talking. When talking about referees, how you communicate and discuss [the calls] separates the good and the bad officials. (translation by SL)

He felt that there had been a gradual change in the game culture that had led to more communication between players and coaches and game officials. Previously the Finnish ice hockey officiating culture had leaned heavily on the officials' use of agreed-upon hand signals and gestures that functioned as a non-verbal lingua franca in the community. The use of body language and gestures was named as the main mode of communication

between non-Finnish players and Finnish referees in Ringbom's (2012, 190) study. While in football gesturing, especially on the part of players, sometimes leads to severe misunderstandings and negative consequences (Ringbom 2012, 190), the availability of pre-determined, well-known official signals in ice hockey means that the referee signals work as a rather clear mode of communication between parties without a shared verbal language. However, the signals are limited to communicating the nature of penalties or a limited number of in-game events (IIHF 2019, 157). As R1 noted, verbal communication is often necessary or at the very least useful in enabling more detailed communication even in the ice hockey environment and during games. The change towards more verbal communication reflected on the referees as an increased need for communication skills, since it was no longer enough for referees to simply communicate non-verbally with the official signals and instead they were expected to be able to explain the calls they made. In his opinion, these skills were what separated great referees from less good ones in the modern game. In response to the expectations set by the changing culture, R1, too, had developed his communication style towards a more conversational direction. He indicated that for him personally, this had become rather easily, especially since the change started to gradually take place as he had been officiating only for some years, which enabled him to train himself in this new style early on in his career. He had observed that adapting to it had seemed to be more difficult for those, who had learnt a more spartan style of referee communication over their career and were faced with learning a different way of communicating later on.

4.2.5. Views on multilingualism and team dynamics

With multilingual communities, there is a possibility that the members will form language clusters and prefer to interact with those that share their native language or a foreign language that they have strong language skills in (Angouri 2013, 572). In a team environment, this may affect team dynamics, if the members of these clusters do not interact with each other across language boundaries. Table 10 below and the following paragraphs describe the participants' experiences of the effects of the players' linguistic diversity on team dynamics and group cohesion.

Interviewee	Have language boundaries affected dynamics?
S1	–
S2	–
R1	not applicable
P1	–

Table 10: Effect of language boundaries on team dynamics

On his team, S1 had observed that language was not a particularly significant factor in creating or breaking down group cohesion. In his experience, whether players worked well together, had positive interactions with each other, and formed a cohesive group or not was more down to their personalities rather than language barriers. He stated that he had had players with the same language and cultural background causing disruptions to group dynamics by being unable to work together, and at the same time had witnessed players without a shared language working as a tight unit and cooperating.

S1: Tänä vuonnakin on tullut hyvin selväksi, että persoona ja tavoitteellisuus on ne, jotka vaikuttaa. [...] Se et ei sil kielitaidolla oo merkitystä [yhteishengen rakentamisessa], et kyl ne toimeen tulee ja hyväksyy toisensa [kielestä riippumatta].

S1: This year it has once again become clear that personality and shared ambitions are the most important factors. [...] Language skills don't matter [in building group cohesion], they get along and accept each other [regardless of language]. (translation by SL)

S1 asserted that even with the multilingual player material his team had and the fact that some of the players were not able to communicate in English and were as a result relying on translations by a teammate to participate in any discussions, there had still been a functional team dynamic in the group over the season. In his opinion, this proved that language barriers were a secondary issue and that alternative modes of communication would provide a solution to communication issues if both parties wanted the interaction to succeed.

S2 said that their organisation had recognised the possibility that language boundaries could affect team dynamics and even inhibit integration, and that they had attempted to address this among the staff and directly with the players at the start of every

season. They had also organised various team-building events before the season and early on during it to encourage cross-cultural and inter-linguistic group cohesion.

S2: [Kielierojen mahdollinen vaikutus] on otettu huomioon kyllä kun on ryhmäytetty, ja tiedetään se. Tietty heti ensimmäisessä palaverissa tehtiin selväksi, että meillä on paljon ulkomaalaisia ja eri kulttuureista tulevia, eri kieliä puhuvia [joukkueessa]. Ja paljon on tehty ryhmäytymishommia, saunailtaa tai jotain yhteisiä juttuja, että ei tulis [kieliklikkejä]. Et tossahan on aina se pelko, että [niin käy]. Kyllä meillä on siitä puhuttu ja kiinnitetty siihen huomiota.

S2: We have taken [the potential of language differences causing trouble] into account when we have worked on building team cohesion, and we're aware of it. Obviously, already in the first meeting we made it clear that we have a lot of foreigners and people from different cultures and speaking different languages [on our team]. And we've of course done a lot of group cohesion stuff, sauna evenings and other things together so that there wouldn't be any [language cliques]. There's always the fear of that [happening]. We've definitely talked about it and paid attention to it. (translation by SL)

Both S2 and P1 felt that these actions had had the intended effects and the team formed a cohesive unit that was not divided according to the shared first languages of groups of players. Neither S2 nor P1 thought that language differences had had any significant effects on the team's group dynamics. While there was some linguistic clustering, it was not seen as a particularly dividing factor by the staff or the players, and the clustering was mainly communicative in nature rather than a form of "cliques" that would seek to exclude others from their in-group. P1 felt that this sense of cohesion was thanks to the fact that while it was nice to be able to use one's native language instead of English with certain teammates sometimes, all players had enough situational awareness to not exclude others in a group setting by using a language not spoken by everyone present. In his experience, everyone on the team was aware of language boundaries and tried to be mindful of them. This could mean, according to him, players switching from Finnish to English when a non-Finnish player was attempting to join the conversation. Both S2 and P1 attributed the lack of language-related team cohesion issues to this awareness of and consideration for others on their team.

4.2.6. Views on language and initial integration

When relocating to a new team, players may need assistance with settling into their new host organisation. If they are unfamiliar with the local language, they may also need linguistic assistance when dealing with official business and documentation, especially if the information is not directly available in a language they have sufficient skills in. This subsection deals with the interviewees' experiences of initial integration and language support provided for players during this period.

Interviewee	Language assistance during integration
S1	+
S2	+
R1	not applicable
P1	-

Table 11: Availability of language support from team during integration

Based on the interviews of the staff members and the player, teams offer different types of assistance to new players to help them adjust to moving to a new place and joining a new team. For example, the organisation of P1 and S2 provides “care packages” to new international players to help them get settled in Finland. These packages consist of English documents that contain important information the player will need as they begin to settle into their new team and the new environment. The team also assisted incoming players by giving them information regarding the provision of healthcare, social security, and insurance, and by getting the player an apartment and ensuring that they were able to set up a bank account. Assistance was provided in English, both in written form as part of introductory documents and orally as part of early discussions with team personnel and other players. S1 said that his organisation offered similar practical help to incoming international players. In addition to the support directly from the organisation, teammates that have been with the organisation for longer and are familiar with the area often advise newcomers on everyday necessities such as the locations of different services, but many practicalities of moving to a new location are also left up to the new player. The general idea was that the team helped players with setting up the bare necessities and ensured that they knew who they should contact if they needed help, but otherwise they were expected to figure things out on their own.

In P1's experience, the team did not officially offer help with language matters when he joined the team. The Finnish Ice Hockey Players' Association provides contract templates in both Finnish and English on their website, and these are used as the basis for all player contracts in the league. If a player has trouble understanding the English contract, they will usually rely on their agent or on their social networks either within or outside the team organisation for help. Both S1 and S2 gave similar reports, saying that generally players relied on their social contacts in their home country for translation or language assistance if they were unable to understand the English documentation on their own. These findings seem to be in line with those of Piekkari et al. (2013, 776), who discovered that employees are often willing to rely on their social networks for translation needs, even in cases where intra-organisational language support was explicitly available. As such, it is not unexpected that players would be inclined to ask for assistance from family and friends rather than their team organisation when translation services are not directly offered by the team.

Some of the respondents alluded to the possibility of hiring a language professional to take care of translation needs. However, due to the relatively small budgets of even Liiga teams and the costly nature of having professional language assistance on hand for significant amounts of time, this was not seen as a desirable option (this is referenced in Sandrelli 2015, 89). S2 said that the organisation he was currently working for would hire external translation professionals to interpret for a player if the benefit of that translation service was considered greater to the team than the monetary cost. However, no situation had so far presented itself where this decision would have had to be made, because of the generally sufficient English skills of most players these days, and because often another player's linguistic assistance would suffice to make up for possible gaps in a player's language skills. None of the interviewees knew of Finnish teams that would have hired professional translators to assist with multilingual communication (other than possibly in terms of translation documentation or other paperwork). While officiating international events, R1 had observed that some teams with higher budgets or national teams with foreign coaches and limited English proficiency among the players would occasionally use professional translators to facilitate communication between the coach and the players. He had not experienced a situation where there would have been a separate translator for referee communication, and he felt that that would not have been particularly feasible either because of the fast pace of the game. If necessary, other players

and officials, or team translators if one was available, would assist in communication between a player and an official if they could not find a shared language and non-verbal communication was too limited as a means of communication.

R1: Kiina, Kazakstan ni niissä joukkueissa voi olla yks tulkki mukana. Siellä kuitenkin valmentaja voi olla ulkomaalainen, joukkueessa kukaan ei puhu ees englantia... Tosiaan sit tuomariviestinnässä siel ei oo kyllä, ei koskaan.

R1: China, Kazakhstan, those kinds of teams might have one interpreter with them. They might have a foreign coach and maybe no one on the even team speaks English... But in referee communications we never [have a separate translator], never. (translation by SL)

S2 also referenced the practice of team translators, mentioning that in the KHL it was not unusual for organisations to provide translation services to players in languages such as English or Finnish for the foreign players if the team's coaching language was Russian. KHL organisations tend to have significantly larger budgets than Liiga and Mestis organisations, which makes hiring language professionals more feasible for them. Most KHL teams are located in regions that historically had less exposure to anglophone cultures due to first Soviet, then Russian, influence. Because English is the typical lingua franca for many of the North American and western European teams, the foreign players in the KHL may need translation services in the league where Russian is the dominant language.

4.3. Reported strategies for multilingual communication

The final section of the analysis will analyse the actual strategies individuals in the ice hockey organisations use to navigate multilingual communication in their work environments. The use of a chosen lingua franca has already been discussed in the earlier sections of this analysis. This part of the analysis will focus on managing those situations where individuals have to find tools to overcome obstacles in communication, or where they need to find solutions to bridging the gaps between languages.

4.3.1. Strategies in multilingual communication

This section will explore the actual strategies that the interviewees said they use to supplement their communication in multilingual situations when needed. The following table summarises the different strategies that were brought up in the interviews by each of the participants.

Strategy	S1	S2	R1	P1
Using simpler language			X	X
Switching languages	X			
Asking someone to help	X	X		
Asking someone to translate	X		X	
Simplifying the content/explanation			X	
Using non-linguistic means	X	X	X	
Repeating the message			X	
Asking to confirm they understand		X	X	

Table 12: Strategies used to support multilingual communication

As table 12 shows, there are many strategies available to individuals when it comes to supporting multilingual communication. Some of the interviewees reported using a wider range of these communication strategies than others. R1 and P1 represented the opposite ends of this spectrum, with the former mentioning six different strategies he used, while P1 said that he only occasionally uses simplified language to support his communication. It is not certain what caused this difference in the number of tactics used by each person. It may have been a question of personality or individual tendency to rely either on various strategies or alternatively only a small selection of options that had previously proven useful. It could also be related to the type of communication demanded of the individual. For example, R1's position as a referee is likely to demand a higher degree of language sophistication (Feely and Harzing 2003, 40) than most players would need during a game. Especially since R1 emphasised the change towards a more conversational style of officiating and increased expectations of verbal communication in addition to the official referee signals, the referees have to be able to effectively communicate with the players,

team staff, as well as other game officials. While much of the communication is likely to be relatively simple and recurring, they may suddenly be expected to explain more complicated calls. Even if the individuals' English skills were sufficient to explain frequently occurring events and calls, rarer or more complex situations might exceed their linguistic abilities. These situations require a higher level of language sophistication and may create a need for the use of additional, supporting communication strategies (Feely and Harzing 2003, 40). While P1 is the captain of his team and the player responsible for liaising with the game officials on behalf of all the players on his team, it is unlikely he will need to explain particularly complex concepts to either his teammates or the game officials. As such, he may need a lower level of language sophistication in his role.

P1's self-assessment of his English skills was also higher than R1's. If this assessment is accurate, P1's better English skills would make it easier for him to communicate more complex ideas in that language, leading to fewer obstacles in communication. Meanwhile, the opposite would be true for R1. Even if the discrepancy between their actual skill levels was not as significant as their personal assessments suggest, P1 might feel more confident in his English language skills and as a result, would potentially be less likely to adopt multiple supporting communication tactics to supplement his speech. Conversely, while R1 evaluated his English skills as only "fair", he was willing to use it for workplace communication and felt positive about using various communication strategies to help him reach an understanding with his conversation partner. Because he already perceived his English skills as lacking, it is possible he would anticipate the appearance of communication issues and might start to support his communication pre-emptively. S1 and S2 fall somewhere between these two "extremes" of the spectrum. Out of them, S1 reported to employing more supporting communication strategies than S2. However, in reality, the difference might be even smaller than the number of named strategies (4 and 3, respectively) suggests, since S2 suggested that he often asks a third party for assistance in communicating. S1 also said this but added that he sometimes asks players to translate for each other. It is possible S2 included such translation activity under the umbrella of "help" in general. In addition to asking for assistance, be it translational or otherwise, and using non-linguistic means of communication, S1 also said that he would sometimes switch languages in an attempt to communicate more effectively with someone. This could mean switching from Finnish to English, for example, to directly explain something to a foreign player instead of

trusting other players to translate his message. Sometimes it meant code-switching on a smaller scale and using words in the player's native language to support or clarify what had been said in English.

The most commonly mentioned strategy was the use of non-linguistic means to support communication. This included various modes of non-linguistic communication, such as the use of body language or gestures, drawings, props, or video material. All of the interviewees except for P1 said that they often used non-linguistic modes of communication in their work. S1 and S2 said that solutions such as drawing on whiteboards to explain game strategy or showing video material for players to demonstrate points of improvement were commonly used coaching methods for them. While they used these with all players regardless of language skills, they felt that these methods were particularly helpful in coaching a multilingual team when language barriers made it difficult to get their exact meaning across.

S1: Visuaalinen, käsitulkkaus, piirtäminen, oli se sit mikä tahansa se valmennuskieli ni noi on tärkeitä osia siinä. [...] Ja siitä tulee just se, että ”nyt sä vaan teet näin”, toistat sen puheella, eleillä ja piirtämällä, ni niillä kolmella tavalla on siinä ihan eri vaikutus. Ja sit varsinkin se, et mitä se teet näiden käsien kanssa, ni se aina kiinnittää jonkun huomion. Ne on kolme ihan eri asiaa, [puhe,] äänensävy ja sit se miten sä visualisoit sen.

S1: Visual aspects, using hands to interpret, drawing, whatever the coaching language is, those are important aspects. [...] And that's the thing, saying "you're just going to do this now", you repeat it verbally, with gestures, and by drawing, those three things each have a completely different effect in communication. And especially what you do with your hands, that's always going to catch someone's attention. They're three completely different things, [speech,] tone and how you visualise it. (translation by SL)

Visual communication was not only seen as something that could be used to mend gaps in verbal communication, but it was also used to enhance it by using supporting materials. Especially because the coaching staff must get a large group of players to follow their advice and play together, using visuals may help them ensure that the players understand the coaching staff's instructions the same way.

R1 also said that he often used gestures to explain penalties to players if he felt that merely using linguistic means was not successfully getting his point across. While

events mid-game tended to be straightforward enough that professional players easily understood what was happening from the referee's use of official hand signals and a few words, sometimes more explanations were needed for more complicated penalties or to clarify misunderstandings. In these situations, R1 had found the use of more extensive gestures and body language helpful in supplementing spoken communication.

R1: [Käytän] eleviestintää että ”tossa kohtaa teit tota”, ettei välttämättä tarvii sitä puhetta. Että ”tuolla oli maila jalkojen välissä” ja näytät eleillä mailaa jalkojen välissä, että siksi se kaatui.

R1: [I use] gestures like “you did this over there”, you don't always need to talk. You go “you had the stick between the legs over there” and mimic a stick between the legs, that that was why the other player fell. (translation by SL)

The use of non-linguistic means to replace or supplement verbal communication has been recognised in earlier research as a commonly used tool in cross-linguistic communication. For example, in her study Probirskaja (2017, 240) recounted that the officials on the Allegro train resolved communication issues by using whatever visual means they had at their disposal to support communication activity when spoken languages were insufficient for the occasion. They would use gestures, images, or even their surroundings to ensure their message was understood (Probirskaja 2017, 240). Descriptions by S1, S2, and R1 are very much in line with Probirskaja's observations. It is noteworthy to mention that while the use of gestures was common from the point of view of game officials, it is interesting to note that other research has noted that for players, gesturing and related misunderstandings may have negative consequences. Ringbom (2012, 190) mentioned that while gestures are often used to compensate for restricted command of a language, they may severely complicate the interaction if they are interpreted differently by the recipient than what was intended. Because of this, it is important to consider the possibility of different interpretations of body language depending on the recipient's cultural background and other similar factors affecting the interpretation of particular gestures and to use verbal communication to clarify the meaning of gestures if needed to avoid misunderstandings.

Despite the availability of numerous communication strategies to support multilingual communications, not all interactions flowed smoothly. Because of this,

frustrations regarding the mismatch of language skills could arise. Table 13 below shows that half of the interviewees had at least sometimes felt frustrated because of language barriers in communication, while the other two had not.

Interviewee	Has experienced frustration
S1	–
S2	+
R1	+
P1	–

Table 13: Feelings of frustration in communication

Based on the gathered information it cannot be deduced whether the experience of frustration is to do with the recurrence of trouble with communicating or perhaps with the individual's temperament and tendency to become frustrated. In the case of these respondents, the division does correspond to their assessment of their foreign language skills, with S2 and R1 having rated their English skills as “fair” and other language skills as less than that and reporting to feelings of frustration in multilingual communication situations. Simultaneously S1 and P1 assessed their English skills as higher “excellent” and said they have not experienced frustration due to language barriers. However, as was mentioned earlier, no direct connection between the assessment of language skill level and the experiences of frustration (or lack thereof) can be made. S1 for example put his lack of feelings of frustration down to his “resourcefulness” and ability to overcome potential obstacles rather than his language skills themselves. Based on R1's answers, a particularly high level of English skills could pose problems on occasion when there was a significant disparity in the skills of the participants. He recounted experiences especially from early on in his career where he had had difficulty understanding native English speakers because they spoke faster and used more complex vocabulary than non-native speakers. This issue is not unique to his experience and has been identified in previous studies concerning the use of English as a lingua franca in contexts where native and non-native speakers of the language interact (for example Barančicová and Zerzová 2015, 41). This shows that improvements in language skills alone will not solve all language-related communication issues, because the disparities in individuals' grasp on languages will remain as everyone will not have the same skill level and perfectly corresponding

vocabularies. Communication skills are necessary to resolve the issues created by these mismatches.

4.3.2. Translation in practice in the ice hockey environment

This section will take a more in-depth look into translation as a means of facilitating communication between parties that do not have a shared language. Translation can be done by professional translators, by non-professionals for whom it forms their primary work task, by non-professional whose actual tasks do not involve translation, or it can take the form of self-translation whereby an individual translates themselves into a different language to facilitate understanding (Piekkari et al. 2013, 776; Feely and Harzing 2003, 43). As was established in table 12, switching communication languages or asking a third party to translate are strategies that are sometimes employed by some of the interviewees. The act of code-switching in this way or reiterating the message in a different language can be seen as a form of self-translation by the speaker (Kolehmainen, Koskinen, and Riionheimo 2015, 382). This section will focus on the types of translation that the respondents revealed to be most common in their work environments, namely self-translation by the communication partners and non-professional translation or linguistic first aid by other members of the community. None of the interviewees had experience with using professional translators in their own organisations, but some of them had observed the use of language professionals in organisations in other countries. This was discussed to an extent earlier, in section 4.2.6.

The following table summarises the personal experiences of the interviewees in terms of the occurrence of translation activity in their work environment.

Interviewee	Has translated at work	Seen someone else translating
S1	+	+
S2	+	+
R1	+	+
P1	+	+

Table 14: Acting as translator

All the interviewees said that they had at some point during their career acted as translators in their work environment and that in addition to that, they had also witnessed others doing the same. All of them also considered translation to be relatively common in ice hockey and they regularly either translated or saw others doing it regularly in their work community. Translation by teammates and team staff has been mentioned as a common strategy in sports environments also in previous research (Ringbom 2012, 190; Sandrelli 2015, 89). As these people are already within the organisation, it is more cost-efficient than hiring additional employees to take care of translation needs. As members of the team, they were also familiar with the practices and policies of the organisation, meaning that they could bring in an insider's view to the communication and thus possibly further clarify the content (Sandrelli 2015, 89).

Based on the interviews, interpreting in ice hockey organisations seemed to occur on a largely ad hoc basis and it was dealt with in a very organic manner. None of the respondents mentioned interpreting as an act that had been purposefully negotiated. Rather, it was seen as something that would almost “sort itself out” when needed, with members of the work community looking out for each other and taking care of any translation needs. For example, P1 stated that if a player did not hear or could not understand what a coach was saying during practice, they could simply ask another player that was close by to repeat what the coach had said in other words or perhaps even in another language if needed. He said that it did not matter whether this was needed because they had not understood what was said due to a language barrier or because they simply had not heard, or for any other reason. As such, he felt that the typical translation or linguistic first aid needs in their work environment were managed largely in the same way as any other matter of communication failure would be dealt with, namely by asking for help from others. This seems to suggest translation behaviour similar to what Ringbom (2012, 190) described in his study on multilingualism in football. This non-structured approach to translation may be particularly suited to team sport contexts which often have a large number of participants present but in varying configurations. Because of this, it is more reasonable to rely on interaction with those that happen to be around at a given time, rather than to expect that specific “designated translators” would take care of all linguistic assistance.

Self-translation was the other major translation method described by the interviewees. This was employed especially by staff members and referees who would

first deliver their message in one language and then reiterate in another for the benefit of those participants who did not speak the first language. In the case of S1, this meant coaching or leading a team meeting in Finnish and then repeating the same thing or a summary of the previous content in English.

S1: Ottelupalaverit on vedetty suomeksi ja englanniksi, riippuen totta kai palaverista. Et suomeks on saatettu vetää pidempi ja englanniksi tiivistetty. Mut kuitenkin pyritty, se on sellasta tietynlaista tasapainottelua ollu sen kanssa, et jos mulla ei oo ollu [sisällöstä erityisesti] mitään sanottavaa, ni en mä oo sitten sanonu mitään muuta kuin että [muut kääntävät] ja menny pois.

S1: We've done pre-game meetings in Finnish and English, of course depending on the meeting. We've maybe done a longer one in Finnish and then summarised in English. But we've tried to, it's been sort of about balancing it so that if I've not had anything to say [about it], I've not said anything other than [they will translate] and left. (translation by SL)

Using the definition introduced by Kolehmainen, Koskinen, and Riionheimo (2015, 382), this reiteration is a form of self-translation. S1 described extensive use of this type of self-translation in his style of communicating. He found it relatively easy to quickly code-switch between sentences and said that he often took advantage of this ability and coached in parallel in both Finnish and English during games. Under less hectic circumstances, such as the pre-game meetings described in the quotation above, he would instead deliver the whole message first in one language, and afterwards code-switch and follow up in the other. The other interviewees reported similar behaviour either by themselves or by others in their work community. Based on the interviews, self-translation seemed to be an obvious and often-utilised solution for multilingual workplace communication for individuals that had sufficient language skills in multiple languages.

5. Discussion and conclusions

This section will discuss the findings of the analysis and what they tell us about the nature and management of multilingualism in Finnish ice hockey organisations. It will also cover points of improvement in the study, and suggest avenues of further research in the area.

5.1. Key results

The central aspect that many of the findings of this study have in common is that much of the management of multilingualism in ice hockey organisations seems to not be pre-planned, and instead relies on implicit assumptions and on shaping the organisational policy or behaviour based on existing practices (Feely and Harzing 2003). For example, when interviewed about organisation practices on language skills and recruitment, all the interviewees working directly with teams said that players' language skills were not something that was explicitly discussed during the recruitment process. Some of them thought that the issue of a player's language skills must have been considered at some point during the process. However, personal experience of the recruitment process seemed to suggest that matters of language skills were not directly addressed and instead it was implicitly expected that the player had sufficient English language skills to live in a foreign country and manage in English in both their professional and personal life. In general, it seemed that not much attention was paid to the language skills of players, and there were unspoken expectations of either existing language skills or the participants felt that breakdowns in communication could be avoided by using alternative communication methods if there was no shared language. While none of the respondents had encountered situations where the lack of acknowledgement of players' language skills during recruitment had led to problems once they had joined the team, it could be beneficial for organisations to pay attention to the language skills of their prospects and how those align with the languages used within the team. As has been recognised in earlier research (Ringbom 2012, 190), communication can affect a team's ability to work as a cohesive unit, which in turn may affect their performance. Because of this, successful communication within the team is not an insignificant factor of the overall performance of the organisation, and a complex linguistic environment may create challenges unless it is properly managed.

All the interviewees reported that Finnish and English were the most commonly used languages in their work environments. While Finnish as the language of the majority on most teams and as the language of the league and the surrounding society had been a natural choice for the organisations studied, English had been established as a lingua franca to allow for communication between individuals whose first languages were different (Barančicová and Zerzová 2015). Based on the interviews, the organisations' language policies were developed bottom-up by making established practices into organisation-level policies, rather than by forming and enforcing top-down management policies. None of the interviewees acknowledged any formal decisions about the choice of English as a lingua franca, which suggests, and suggested that it had arisen as the natural choice due to being the most commonly spoken shared language within the community (Lockwood 2019, 22; Mauranen 2019, 9). Because the international player interviewed had only very basic skills in Finnish, he himself used English with his teammates, staff, and game officials, but he heard Finnish being used daily by others in his work community. Because the referee interviewed worked most closely with other Finnish-speaking referees, he largely used Finnish in his work but relied on English in communicating with international players during games. Overall, it seemed that the quantities in which the participants used each of the languages depended greatly on the language skills of the people they worked with most often. Those who had Finnish as their first language tended to prefer the use of Finnish if possible, but readily switched to English when they considered it to be the more efficient way of communicating. Some of the interviewees said they also used other languages at work. This could mean the use of another language besides English that they shared with a teammate because it felt easier to speak that with specific people when everyone present knew that language, or it could mean emphasising the message delivered in Finnish or English by inserting some words in the recipient's native language into the mix. All these descriptions speak of a highly fluid environment in terms of language use, and none of the organisations seemed to have strict guidelines regarding language use but rather the decision was left up to individuals and their judgement of the best language choice for given interactions. Based on the comments from the interviewees, they felt that this worked well in their work environments and they saw no need for more structured language management.

Most of the interviewees did not feel multilingualism had resulted in significant communication issues in their workplace. When asked about their opinion on

multilingualism in ice hockey, the interviewees generally did not have strong views in either a positive or negative direction. They were more likely to suggest that due to the internationalisation of the game, multilingualism was inevitable in organisations at the professional level and was accepted as the norm. While some felt uncertain of their English language skills and as a result preferred to use Finnish whenever possible, they still thought that the parallel use of Finnish and English in daily communication worked relatively well. The interviewees voiced two main concerns with multilingual communication – the time. They felt that repeating the same information in different languages or even providing translations to clarify key points of the message was much more time-consuming than using a single team language for all team communication. One of the coaches was concerned that they were unable to deliver the same standard of coaching in English as they could in Finnish, placing the players in unequal positions. Because of this, he would have preferred to only coach in Finnish, but like the other interviewees, he also recognised the advantages of having international players on the Finnish professional leagues. Hiring beyond national borders enables organisations to draw from a wider pool of player talent, which can increase the skill level and lead to better overall team performance (Kahane, Longley, and Simmons 2013, 313). As athletic success is the primary goal of these professional organisations, it is reasonable for them to try to optimise their chances by hiring the best possible group of players, regardless of nationality or first language. However, as has been discussed in this thesis and research such as Kahane, Longley, and Simmons (2013), the linguistic environment within the team should be taken into consideration when making decisions about player signings.

In professional sports just as in international business, it is beneficial for companies even from a business perspective to focus on the possibilities created by a varied language reserve within their employees, and work on overcoming the obstacles rather than avoiding hiring professionals with limited skills in the national languages in fear of having to alter language management models in their internal communications. However, while the variety may bring with it more international talent and benefit team performance, it also runs the risk of increased communication costs, especially if language management is overlooked in the organisation (Kahane, Longley, and Simmons 2013). Some of the positive aspects of multilingual work environments that were acknowledged by the interviewees were the ability to practice their English skills. Language skills beyond Finnish are an important asset for Finnish players interested in

playing professionally abroad or for coaching staff aiming to develop their career in ice hockey outside of Finland. Their potential future employees, the ice hockey organisations in other countries, are likely to have similar expectations regarding a potential player's language skills and ability to integrate into the team as the Finnish teams do. Many of the respondents thought that the opportunity to practice and improve their English language skills during their time in the multilingual environment of professional ice hockey would benefit them in their lives outside the hockey environment as well, due to the prominent role of the language in modern society.

Communication was seen to be an important part of the staff and referee positions in ice hockey. Due to the coaches' role in creating game plans and the referees' task of ensuring rules were followed, the ability to communicate their point of view clearly and concisely to the recipients was seen as a core requirement of each position. While all interviewees emphasised the necessity of overall communication and interpersonal skills, language skills were considered to be an important facilitating tool for communication. In particular knowledge of Finnish and English as the most commonly used languages in the league and on the teams was considered an important tool for communication. While the other interviewees reported that Finnish was used in many situations within and across teams, and it is used by Liiga in its outward-facing communication, P1 did not feel that there was a significant need for foreign players to learn Finnish. He felt that the generally good level of English skills among the Finns in professional ice hockey in Finland meant that knowledge of English was enough for players to manage in their professional circles. Because the majority of the coaching staff and players as well as all the regular referees in the leagues spoke Finnish either as their first, or in the case of Swedish-speaking Finns as a second, language, Finnish had maintained its dominant position despite the increasing number of international players. As mentioned previously, in general the interviewees saw the use of English as inevitable in the increasingly international environment of Finnish professional ice hockey. While most of the interviewees felt mostly positive about the use of English in their workplace, it seemed that those who assessed their English skills to be good or otherwise trusted in their ability to successfully communicate in English felt more positive about using it in a professional capacity. For example, while the referee felt his English was not very good, he felt confident that his general communication skills would make up for the gaps in his language skills and allow him to communicate successfully in English. On the other hand,

one of the coaches interviewed also rated his English skills as only “fair” but was not as trusting in his ability to make up for the gaps in his knowledge of English. However, based on his other responses and those from the international player who had been training under his coaching, this coach seemed to manage well in English in his position despite his low self-evaluation of his English skills. This could be a result of a tendency to underrate one’s language skills, or reflect a view where the emphasis in determining language abilities is on grammatical correctness rather than communicative ability (Martin 2012, 182). In the reality of a multilingual working place the latter takes precedence over the former, which should also be considered if organisations begin to assess the language skills of potential new recruits before signing them onto the team. The focus of assessment should be on the ability and willingness to communicate in a particular language, rather than focussing on the minutiae of grammar or pronunciation, as long as these do not affect general comprehensibility of language use.

There are many communication strategies used by individuals to manage multilingualism in their workplaces. A general understanding of acceptable language use within the organisation is an important first step. None of the interviewees felt that a top-down language policy would have been necessary to establish this type of understanding and instead the lingua franca of each organisation had arisen naturally. The interviewees felt that individuals within their communities were able to judge which languages were appropriate for given circumstances and as a result, there was no need for official decisions on the organisation level. Even when a lingua franca or other organisational languages have been established, communication issues may surface due to the varying language skill levels of communication participants. There are various solutions for overcoming these issues, many of which rely on forms of interactions no different from those used in monolingual communications, such as repetition and rephrasing. Participants may also request third-party assistance that may involve translation. Individuals may also code-switch either for the duration of one or a few words or the rest of the interaction. This code-switching can also be called self-translation (Kolehmainen, Koskinen, and Riionheimo 2015, 382). The interviewees’ experiences suggested that this type of self-translation was very common in the ice hockey communities.

Translation in the ice hockey environment in Finland is mostly non-professional in nature and takes place largely on an ad hoc basis. The coaching staff members interviewed suggested that when coaching, they mainly communicate in Finnish

and either expect that players will translate for those who need it, or explicitly request that players translate for each other. Translations by linguistically more proficient teammates, along with self-translation, were one of the two most commonly used methods mentioned by the interviewees. The interviewed player said that among teammates, translation assistance is not treated any differently from other communication events where clarifications are needed. Translation needs seemed to be dealt with via non-structured interactions, with those needing translations requesting assistance from whoever was available to assist them. It did not seem like the teams had anyone even unofficially assigned as a translator that everyone would direct their requests to. The interviewees appeared to be satisfied with this model of managing translations and they felt that it worked well in their work environment.

The interviewees stated that the use of professional translators during game events or in training was rare in ice hockey and they had not witnessed it in Finland. The use of professional translators was considered costly and mostly unnecessary because players, coaching staff, and game officials could largely take care of any translation needs that arose. As such, under these circumstances investing in a professional translator was not considered worth the monetary burden it would place on the organisation. Some of the respondents suggested that their organisation would be willing to employ a language professional to take care of translation needs if a situation arose where the benefits of employing one outweighed the costs, but so far during their career no such situation had surfaced. As such, the use of language professionals in Finnish ice hockey has mainly been limited to the translations of the official documentation such as player contracts which are provided both in Finnish and in English on the player association's website.

5.2. Improvements and further research

Only very tentative generalisations can be made based on the results of this research due to the extremely limited number of interviewees. While the interviews conducted yielded a fair amount of data, four interviewees cannot be claimed to sufficiently represent the community, or even sections of it, as a whole. As was explained in section 3.4., interviews were chosen as the data collection method, because formulating questionnaires that would yield useful research data would have been challenging due to the scarceness of previous research on this topic. As a result of the labour-intensive nature of research interviews

and the limited resources available, only a small number of respondents could be selected for the interviews. However, despite the highly limited scope of the research, it provides a starting point for further research and suggests potential avenues that can be pursued on a larger scale. If more resources were available for the conducting of research on this topic, a questionnaire could be distributed to a large number of players, coaches, and game officials to yield more significant amounts of data. The interview questions used in this research and the questionnaire used by Ringbom (2012, 188) to study multilingualism in football could be used as a starting point for the development of the survey questionnaire. As this topic is still a relatively unmapped area of multilingualism research, selecting several interview subjects from the target audience of the survey would be beneficial. Conducting a number of research interviews in addition to the survey responses would provide more in-depth responses on the topic than a survey would. However, as was mentioned previously, conducting interviews requires investing more resources to the collection of the data. Because of this, it would be ideal to combine them with the survey, where the data collection portion of the research is less labour-intensive but yields larger amounts of data are received if the response rate is as expected. The questionnaire can be used to map out general tendencies and to give an overview of the phenomenon, and the interviews can go into more depth on these matters.

While the interview participants provided a reasonable cross-section of the professionals in the Finnish ice hockey community, there were obvious gaps in the representation. For example, no current professional Finnish players were available for interviews, which meant that a significant portion of the actors in the field were left unrepresented in this study. This would have been an interesting perspective to include, as the Finnish-speaking players form a clear majority in the league and on individual teams. Therefore, it would have been valuable to the study to be able to compare their views of the linguistic environment and management of multilingualism in organisations to that brought forward by foreign players that make up the linguistic minority on the teams. The team representatives interviewed also represent only two team organisations participating in the two top leagues in Finland. Participants from a broader number of organisations would have given a more accurate image of the variety of situations faced by players and staff in their daily professional lives, as different organisations are bound to have a variety of organisational cultures that affect how multilingualism is dealt with in practice. The inclusion of representatives from women's ice hockey would also have

broadened the perspective. Because of the limitations and features of this study described above, the most important improvement in the research process would be to conduct the research on a larger sample size, as this would yield more data and generalisations about multilingualism in ice hockey could be made on the results.

The overview of existing research revealed a lack of previous studies on the second language acquisition rates by migrant athletes and the effect of time spent in a particular language environment on these athletes' motivation for or success in language learning. Many studies (such as Elliott and Maguire 2008; Ringbom 2012; Sandrelli 2015) touched on this issue but none of them investigated it further. This is a clear avenue where further research is needed to provide a more well-rounded image of language skills and learning in professional sports contexts. Comparisons of multilingualism and its management in other sports or professional ice hockey in other countries would form another interesting direction for further research. These further studies could yield generalisations that could in turn be used to formulate best practices for organisations for the management of multilingualism in their workplace in the sphere of professional sports. It would also shed light on the general state of multilingualism management across the board, and whether more systematic approaches to multilingualism or language policy are applied in other countries or other sports. Due to the limitations in the scope of this study, it has only been able to present the views of a small number of individuals and to describe their perceptions on multilingualism in their work environments. While it does achieve the goals set for this piece of research, a larger sample would provide insight into how multilingualism is managed at the league-level, the differences that might exist in the management across the various organisations, and give a more thorough account of the strategies used to manage multilingualism in Finnish ice hockey. While there are presumably common features, organisations developing their language management strategies are also likely to end up with different combinations of the available strategies. Studying these in more depth would allow for an investigation of the general best practices in language management in these types of environments.

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Appendix 1: Questions for foreign players

Language background

1. Proficiency in different languages

	Native	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Weak/basics
Finnish						
Swedish						
English						
German						
French						
Other						

General background

2. Which language(s) was used in your family or in your education growing up?
3. How long have you lived in Finland?
4. Which other countries have you lived in?

Communication in the work environment

5. What is the language(s) used in practice/team functions? What are your thoughts on this?
6. Do you have a single common language in use in the team environment or do you use multiple languages at once/in different situations?
7. Do teams ask about the players' language skills before/after joining the team? Do you think they should?
8. Have you encountered situations where a new player has been unable to/has had difficulties with communication because of their lack of language skills in a given language? How was this situation handled?
9. Do players get help (courses, otherwise) if they feel they have trouble understanding the languages used within the team?
10. Has your current/ previous team tried to help foreign players improve their Finnish/English/other proficiency? How? Did you find it helpful?
11. Have your teams otherwise tried to help foreign players integrate better in the organisation and Finland? If yes, in what way? Did you find it helpful?

12. If a new player has trouble with the language(s) currently spoken within the team, is it on them, on the team, or equally on both sides to accommodate this difficulty?

Multilingualism in the work environment

13. How do you decide which language to use with specific people?
14. Do you have a set language for communication with particular teammates? Do you use multiple languages depending on the situation?
15. Do you ever mix languages when you speak? (In the same sentence/thought) If yes, which languages?
16. Do you feel that your team/organisation is multilingual? How is it visible in the everyday life?
17. Do you feel that multilingualism is an obstacle, a benefit, or simply the way things are in your team?
18. Do you feel that the presence of multiple languages affects team dynamics or team cohesion?
19. How is it viewed in your team if a set of players speak a language among themselves that others do not understand?
20. Which language(s) do you speak with your teammates during practice/games?
21. Do you use other languages with them outside of practice/games?
22. Which language(s) do you speak with the coaches?
23. Which language(s) do you speak with the other staff?
24. Which language(s) do you speak with players from the other teams?
25. Which language(s) do you speak with referees/game officials?
 - a) Do you feel that being a non-native Finnish speaker affects your ability to speak with the referees?
26. Does the position of team captain and previously that of an alternate affect your language use during team activities? How?
27. Are there expectations regarding language skills/communication skills when it comes to choosing the captain or alternates? Do you think this is something that should be considered in the selection?
28. Which language(s) do you speak in your daily life with people outside the organisation?

Possible issues in communication

29. Have you ever been frustrated **because of language barriers**/problems with being understood? In what situations?
- During training sessions with teammates / with the coach
 - During matches with referees/officials
 - During matches with players on your own team/ other teams
 - Off the ice, with teammates / with staff / with players from other teams
 - Talking to people outside of the organisation
 - I have not experienced any language problems
30. If you have felt frustrated, has it depended on
- **Your** limited proficiency in the language (which language?)
 - Mainly your **partner's** limited proficiency in the language (which language?)
 - **Both** my own and my partner's limited proficiency (which language?)
31. When you are talking to people and have problems because of **their limited proficiency** in the language you are using, what do you do? What strategies do you use?
32. Are the strategies you use different when you talk to people who are not teammates/organisation staff? If yes, what is different?
33. What do you do if you have **difficulties in understanding** what your partner says?
34. What do you do when you notice that **you** yourself **do not know** the language well **enough** to **convey** your message?
35. Which strategies (gestures, etc.) have you found useful/not helpful in supporting your message?
36. Have you acted as a translator/interpreter at work for someone?
37. Have you witnessed others acting as interpreters at work (official or unofficial)?

Appendix 2a: Tuomarikysymykset (Questions for referee)

1. Kielitaito ja kielitaidon taso

	Äidinkieli	Erinomainen	Erittäin hyvä	Hyvä	Tyydyttävä	Alkeet
suomi						
ruotsi						
englanti						
saksa						
ranska						
venäjä						
muu kieli, mikä						

Kommunikaatio työympäristössä

2. Mikä merkitys viestinnällä mielestäsi on tuomarin työssä?
3. Onko näkemyksesi tästä muuttunut urasi edetessä? Miksi? Mikä tähän on vaikuttanut?
4. Oletko saanut tuomariurasi alussa/aikana ohjausta viestintään tai sen eri keinoihin?
5. Mitä kieltä/kieliä käytät tuomarien/toimihenkilöiden välisessä kommunikaatiossa?
6. Mitä kieltä/kieliä käytät kommunikaatiossa joukkueiden/valmentajien kanssa?
7. Onko Liiga asettanut tuomareille kielivaatimuksia, jotka ovat edellytyksenä tuomarina toimimiselle?
 - a. Jos on, tarjoavatko Liiga tai esimerkiksi Suomen Jääkiekkotuomarien Liitto kielikoulutusta? Pitäisikö koulutusta mielestäsi olla tarjolla?
 - b. Jos ei, pitäisikö tuomareille mielestäsi asettaa kielivaatimuksia?
8. Jos käytät työssäsi tuomarina useita kieliä, kuinka päätät, mitä kieltä käyttää tietyssä tilanteessa/tietyn henkilön kanssa?

9. Sekoitatko joskus puheessasi useita kieliä (saman virkkeen sisällä/yhden ajatuksen ilmaisemisessa)? Kerro esimerkkejä: mitä kieliä, millaisissa tilanteissa?
10. Oletko tuomaritehtävissä kohdannut tilanteita, joissa olet kokenut turhautumista kielimuurista tai kielen ymmärrysvaikeuksista johtuen? Kuvaile näitä tilanteita.
11. Jos olet kokenut turhautumista edellä kuvatulla tavalla, onko se riippunut
 - Omasta puutteellisesta kielitaidostasi (missä kielessä?)
 - Pääosin keskustelukumppanisi puutteellisesta kielitaidosta (missä kielessä?)
 - Sekä omasta että keskustelukumppanisi puutteellisesta kielitaidosta (missä kielessä?)
12. Kohdatessasi viestintätilanteita, jossa huomaat, että keskustelukumppanisi ei ymmärrä viestiäsi johtuen hänen puutteellisesta kielitaidostaan, mitä teet? Mitä keinoja käytät ilmaistaksesi asiasi?
13. Mitä teet, jos sinulla on vaikeuksia ymmärtää keskustelukumppanisi sanomaa?
14. Kohdatessasi omasta kielitaidostasi tai sen vajavaisuudesta johtuvia ongelmia viestintätilanteissa, mitä teet?
15. Mitkä viestintää tukevat keinot ovat oman kokemuksesi mukaan olleet toimivia (tai vaihtoehtoisesti eivät ole toimineet)?
16. Oletko koskaan toiminut tulkkina työympäristössäsi?
17. Oletko havainnut, että joku muu olisi toiminut tulkkina työympäristössä?
18. Käytetäänkö Liigassa tai kansainvälisissä otteluissa (CHL-ottelut) tulkkeja?
19. Onko kielitaidon ja viestinnän merkitys mielestäsi muuttunut työympäristössäsi urasi aikana?
20. Onko oma tapasi viestiä työympäristössä muuttunut urasi aikana?
 - a. Millä tavoin?
 - b. Miksi? Mikä on johtanut muutokseen?
21. Onko kieli- tai viestintätaidoilla erilainen merkitys Liigassa vs. alemmat liigatasot?

Appendix 2b: Questions for referee (translation)

1. Language skills

	Native	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Weak/basics
Finnish						
Swedish						
English						
German						
French						
Other						

Communication in the work environment

- In your opinion, what is the meaning and importance of communication in your work as a referee?
- Has your opinion on this matter changed during your career? Why? What has caused this change?
- Have you received communication training before or during your coaching career?
- Which language/s do you use with other referees or game officials?
- Which language/s do you use when communicating with teams/coaching staff?
- Does Liiga have set language requirements as a pre-requisite for working as a referee?
 - If yes, does Liiga or e.g. the Association of Finnish Ice Hockey Referees offer language training? Should such training be offered?
 - If no, do you think there should be language skills pre-requisites?
- If you use multiple languages in your work as a coach, how do you determine which language to use in particular situations or with specific people?
- Do you sometimes mix languages in your speech (within a single sentence or in expressing a single idea)? Give examples of this: which languages and in which types of situations?
- While working as a referee, have you encountered situations where you have become frustrated due to a language barrier or because of other communication-related issues? Describe these situations.
- If you have felt frustration in the aforementioned situations, has it been due to

- a) limitations of your own language skills (in which languages?)
 - b) mainly the limitations of your conversation partner's language skills (in which language?)
 - c) limitations of the language skills of you both (in which language?)
12. When you encounter situations where you notice that your message is not understood by your conversation partner due to their limited language skills, what do you do? Which methods do you use in order to resolve the issue?
 13. What do you do if you are having difficulties understanding your conversation partner's message?
 14. When you encounter problems arising from the limitations of your language skills while trying to communicate, what do you do?
 15. Which alternative or supporting methods of communication have you found useful or not useful in your own experience? (such as gestures, repeating yourself, using simpler vocabulary, or substituting words with those from other languages)
 16. Have you ever acted as an interpreter in your work environment?
 17. Have you noticed anyone else acting as an interpreter in your work environment?
 18. Are interpreters used in the Liiga or in international games (such as in the CHL)?
 19. Has the importance or purpose of communication and language skills in the work environment changed during your career?
 20. Has your way of communicating in the work environment changed during your career?
 - a) How?
 - b) Why? What has caused this change?
 21. Do language skills and communication abilities have a different level of importance in Liiga vs. Mestis vs. lower levels of competition?

Appendix 3a: Valmentajakysymykset (Questions for staff)

1. Kielitaito ja kielitaidon taso

	Äidinkieli	Erinomainen	Erittäin hyvä	Hyvä	Tyydyttävä	Alkeet
suomi						
ruotsi						
englanti						
saksa						
ranska						
venäjä						
muu kieli, mikä						

Taustakysymyksiä

2. Koska olet aloittanut valmentajana?
3. Millä tasoilla olet toiminut valmentajana?
4. Oletko saanut koulutusta valmennustehtävissä toimimiseen?

Kommunikaatio työympäristössä

5. Mikä merkitys viestinnällä mielestäsi on valmentajan työskentelyssä?
6. Onko näkemyksesi tästä muuttunut urasi edetessä? Miksi? Mikä tähän on vaikuttanut?
7. Onko oma tapasi viestiä työympäristössä muuttunut urasi aikana?
 - a) Millä tavoin?
 - b) Miksi? Mikä on johtanut muutokseen?
8. Tarjotaanko valmentajille viestintä- tai kommunikaatiokoulutusta? Pitäisikö koulutusta mielestäsi olla tarjolla?
9. Mitä kieltä/kieliä käytät oman joukkueen sisäisessä kommunikaatiossa?
10. Mitä kieliä joukkueen pelaajat puhuvat ”äidinkielenään”?

11. Onko joukkueella käytössä lingua franca vai onko samanaikaisessa käytössä useita kieliä tai ”oma kieli”, joka yhdistelee eri kieliä?
12. Miten monikielisyys näkyy ja kuinka sen kanssa toimitaan joukkueen sisällä?
13. Koetko, että monikielisyys vaikuttaa joukkueen dynamiikkaan tai yhteispeliin? Onko siitä hyötyä vai/tai haittaa? Anna esimerkkejä, miten.
14. Onko joukkueen vieraskielisille pelaajille tarjolla kielikoulutusta? Entä tukea kentän ulkopuolella, mitä tulee mahdollisiin kielestä johtuviin sopeutumisvaikeuksiin?
15. Odotetaanko uusien pelaajien opettelevan jo joukkueen käytössä oleva kieli, vai onko paine pikemminkin joukkueen puolella? Yhtä paljon kummankin vastuulla?
16. Miten joukkueessa suhtaudutaan siihen, jos pelaajat puhuvat keskenään kieliä, joita kaikki jäsenet eivät ymmärrä?
17. Mitä kieltä/kieliä käytät kommunikaatiossa tuomarien/toimihenkilöiden kanssa?
18. Mitä kieltä/kieliä käytät kommunikaatiossa vastustajajoukkueiden/-valmentajien kanssa?
19. Jos käytät työssäsi valmentajana useita kieliä, kuinka päätät, mitä kieltä käyttää tietyssä tilanteessa/tietyn henkilön kanssa?
20. Sekoitatko joskus puheessasi useita kieliä (saman virkkeen sisällä/yhden ajatuksen ilmaisemisessa)? Kerro esimerkkejä: mitä kieliä, millaisissa tilanteissa?
21. Oletko valmennustehtävissä kohdannut tilanteita, joissa olet kokenut turhautumista kielimuurista tai kielen ymmärrysvaikeuksista johtuen? Kuvaile näitä tilanteita.
22. Jos olet kokenut turhautumista edellä kuvatulla tavalla, onko se riippunut
 - Omasta puutteellisesta kielitaidostasi (missä kielessä?)
 - Pääosin keskustelukumppanisi puutteellisesta kielitaidosta (missä kielessä?)
 - Sekä omasta että keskustelukumppanisi puutteellisesta kielitaidosta (missä kielessä?)
23. Kohdatessasi viestintätilanteita, jossa huomaat, että keskustelukumppanisi ei ymmärrä viestiäsi johtuen hänen puutteellisesta kielitaidostaan, mitä teet? Mitä keinoja käytät ilmaistaksesi asiasi?
24. Mitä teet, jos sinulla on vaikeuksia ymmärtää keskustelukumppanisi sanomaa?
25. Kohdatessasi omasta kielitaidostasi tai sen vajavaisuudesta johtuvia ongelmia viestintätilanteissa, mitä teet?

26. Mitkä viestintää tukevat keinot ovat oman kokemuksesi mukaan olleet toimivia (tai vaihtoehtoisesti eivät ole toimineet)?
27. Oletko koskaan toiminut tulkkina työympäristössäsi?
28. Oletko havainnut, että joku muu olisi toiminut tulkkina työympäristössä?
29. Onko kielitaidon ja viestinnän merkitys mielestäsi muuttunut työympäristössäsi urasi aikana?
30. Onko kieli- tai viestintätaidoilla erilainen merkitys Mestiksessä vs. Liigassa/alemmilla tasoilla?

Appendix 3b: Questions for staff (translation)

1. Language skills

	Native	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Weak/basics
Finnish						
Swedish						
English						
German						
French						
Other						

Background information

2. When have you started your career as an ice hockey coach?
3. Which levels of teams have you coached?
4. Have you received/gone through training for coaching?

Communication in the work environment

5. In your opinion, what is the meaning and importance of communication in coaching?
6. Has your opinion on this matter changed during your career? Why? What has caused this change?
7. Has your way of communicating in the work environment changed during your career? In what ways and why? What has caused this change?
8. Is training in communication offered or available to coaching staff? Should there in your opinion be opportunities for this type of training?
9. Which language/s do you use in the internal communication with your team?
10. Which languages do the players on your team speak as their native or first languages?
11. Is there a lingua franca in use among the team, do you have multiple languages in use alongside each other, or do you use an “own language” among the team that combines elements of multiple languages?
12. How is multilingualism present in the working life of the team and how is it managed?

13. Do you feel that the multilingual nature of the team environment influences team dynamics or the players' ability to work together? Is it beneficial or harmful to these aspects of work? Give examples of this.
14. Is language training offered to those players who do not speak Finnish as their first language? Do they receive support outside of the rink, in case they face difficulties in adjusting to life here as language is concerned?
15. Are new players expected to learn a language that is already being used by the team, is the pressure to accommodate communication on the side of the team. or is it equally on both sides?
16. How is it taken by the team if some players speak a language among themselves that other players do not understand?
17. Which language/s do you use when communicating with the referees or game officials?
18. Which language/s do you use when communicating with the players or coaching staff of opposing teams?
19. If you use multiple languages in your work as a coach, how do you determine which language to use in particular situations or with specific people?
20. Do you sometimes mix languages in your speech (within a single sentence or in expressing a single idea)? Give examples of this: which languages and in which types of situations?
21. Have you encountered situations while coaching where you have become frustrated due to a language barrier or because of other communication-related issues? Describe these situations.
22. If you have felt frustration in the aforementioned situations, has it been due to
 - d) limitations of your own language skills (in which languages?)
 - e) mainly the limitations of your conversation partner's language skills (in which language?)
 - f) limitations of the language skills of you both (in which language)?
23. When you encounter situations where you notice that your message is not understood by your conversation partner due to their limited language skills, what do you do? Which methods do you use in order to resolve the issue?
24. What do you do if you are having difficulties understanding your conversation partner's message?

25. When you encounter problems arising from the limitations of your language skills while trying to communicate, what do you do?
26. Which alternative or supporting methods of communication have you found useful or not useful in your own experience? (such as gestures, repeating yourself, using simpler vocabulary, or substituting words with those from other languages)
27. Have you ever acted as an interpreter in your work environment?
28. Have you noticed anyone else acting as an interpreter in your work environment?
29. Has the importance or purpose of communication and language skills in the work environment changed during your career?
30. Do language skills and communication abilities have a different level of importance in Liiga vs. Mestis vs. lower levels of competition?

Appendix 4: Finnish summary

Johdanto

Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan työelämän monikielisyyteen liittyviä kokemuksia ja käytäntöjä suomalaisissa ammattijääkiekon organisaatioissa. Monikielisyyttä työelämässä on aiemmin tutkittu enimmäkseen kansainvälisten yritysten ja järjestöjen näkökulmasta (Angouri 2013; Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen ja Piekkari 2006; Tesseur 2014). Vaikka ammattiurheilu on taloudellisesti ja kulttuurisesti merkittävä osa yhteiskuntaa ja kansainvälisyys on arkipäivää monissa urheiluorganisaatioissa, niiden monikielisyyttä on tutkittu varsin vähän (Baines 2013, 207). Aiheen aiempi tutkimus on keskittynyt pääasiassa jalkapallon tutkimukseen (Sandrelli 2015; Ringbom 2012). Ammattijääkiekon levitessä yhä laajemmalle sen synnyinsijoilta Pohjois-Amerikasta ja joukkueiden palkatessa pelaajia ja valmentajia yli kansallisten rajojen, kansainvälisyys ja monikielisyys lisääntyvät jatkuvasti myös näissä organisaatioissa. Tämä tutkielma pyrkii paikkaamaan aukkoa monikielisyyden tutkimuksessa jääkiekon osalta.

Tutkielma kuvaa monikielisyyden esiintymistä suomalaisissa ammattijääkiekko-organisaatioissa. Keskeisiä tutkimuskysymyksiä ovat

- Mitä kieliä organisaatioiden päivittäisessä työssä käytetään?
- Millaisia kielellisiä strategioita organisaatioissa käytetään monikielisyyden hallinnointiin?
- Millaisia näkemyksiä yhteisön jäsenillä on monikielisyyden eduista ja haitoista työympäristössään?

Tutkielmassa selvitetään myös kääntämisen roolia monikielisyyden hallintakeinona jääkiekko-organisaatioissa. Haastatteluilla selvitetään kääntämisen asemaa joukkueiden arjessa sekä sitä, vastaavatko kääntämisestä kielitaitoiset pelaajat, valmentajat tai toimitsijat muiden tehtäviensä ohella, vai käytetäänkö organisaatioissa ammattikäntäjiä. Edellä mainittujen kysymysten lisäksi tutkimuksessa selvitetään myös lingua francan käyttöä yhteisöissä. Lingua francalla viitataan tässä tapauksessa mihin tahansa välittäjäkieleen, jota kaksi puhujaa, joilla on eri äidinkieli, käyttävät kommunikaatiossaan (Barančicová ja Zerzová 2015, 31). Perinteisestä määritelmästä poiketen kyseessä voi siis

olla myös toisen osapuolen äidinkieli. Mahdollisen lingua francan kohdalla kiinnostavaa on myös, onko kieli tietoisesti valittu organisaation yhteiseksi kommunikaatiokieleksi vai onko se valikoitunut sattumanvaraisesti.

Teoriatausta

Tutkielman keskeisen teoriataustan muodostaa työelämän monikielisuuden tutkimus. Pääasiallinen fokus on erilaisissa ratkaisuissa työyhteisöjen monikielisuuden hallinnointiin ja tavoissa ratkoa työelämän kääntämistarpeita. Monikielisuuden käytännön organisoinnin osalta viitataan pitkälti Feelyn ja Harzingin (2003) esittämään kuvaukseen monikansallisten yritysten käyttöön soveltuvista monikielisuuden koordinoimien keinoista, joista monet ovat sovellettavissa myös jääkiekko-organisaatioiden arkeen. Kääntämiseen liittyviä käytänteitä tarkastellaan niin ikään yrityskäytäntöjen kautta (Piekkari ym. 2013), joihin haastatteluissa esiin tulleita menettelytapoja verrataan.

Feelyn ja Harzingin (2003, 43) mukaan monikieliset organisaatiot voivat turvautua erilaisiin ratkaisuihin välttääkseen monikielisyydestä mahdollisesti aiheutuvia ongelmia. Näitä ovat esimerkiksi lingua francan tai virallisten yrityskielten käyttöönotto ja funktionaalinen monikielisyys (Feely ja Harzing 2003, 43, 45). Toisaalta organisaatiot voivat panostaa työntekijöidensä kielikoulutukseen tai käyttää kielitaitoa keskeisenä rekrytointikriteerinä, jolloin ne pystyvät tehokkaammin kontrolloimaan kieliresurssejaan (Feely ja Harzing 2003, 44, 46). Näiden ratkaisujen lisäksi Feely ja Harzing esittelevät erilaisia kääntämistä hyödyntäviä strategioita, kuten ulkoisten käännöspalvelujen ostamista, konekääntämisen käyttöä tai kielitaitoisten työntekijöiden toimimista viestinvälittäjinä kahden kielen välillä (Feely ja Harzing 2003, 43, 46, 49). Kaikilla näistä strategioista Näillä kaikilla strategioilla on omat etunsa ja haittansa, ja jokaisen työyhteisön pitääkin arvioida, mitkä niistä strategiat vastaavat juuri kyseisen organisaation tarpeisiin (Feely ja Harzing 2003, 50). Sama pätee myös kääntämisen järjestämiseen organisaatioissa. Joissakin organisaatioissa sisäinen, keskitetty käännösosasto voi olla hyvä ratkaisu, kun taas toisissa yhteisöissä se koetaan liian jäykäksi rakenteeksi arjen käännöstarpeisiin (Piekkari ym. 2013, 778). Tutkimusten mukaan työntekijät ovatkin valmiita hyödyntämään jopa työpaikan ulkopuolisia

sosiaalisia kontaktejaan saadakseen nopean avun käännösongelmaansa sen sijaan, että odottaisivat ammattikäännöstä virallisten kanavien kautta (Piekkari ym. 2013, 777). Myös itsekääntämisen osuus haastateltavien arjen käännöskokemuksissa on merkittävä, mikä korostaa henkilöstön monipuolisen kieliosaamisen etuja monikielisen työelämän mahdollistajana (Piekkari ym. 2013, 776).

Ringbomin (2012) artikkeli on keskeinen lähde suomalaisten urheiluorganisaatioiden monikielisyyden tutkimuksessa. Tutkimus antaa yhden organisaation kokemusten pohjalta kuvan siitä, millaisia ratkaisuja suomalaisessa ammattiurheilussa on tehty monikielisen työympäristön arjen organisoimiseksi. Toisaalta se tarjoaa myös merkittävää pohjustusta siihen, millainen rooli kielellä ylipäättään on joukkueurheilussa ja miten kieliympäristö organisaatiossa voi vaikuttaa urheilulliseen menestykseen (Ringbom 2012, 190). Ringbomin (2012, 192) tutkimuksessaan käyttämää kyselylomaketta käytettiin pohjana myös tämän tutkielman haastattelurunkojen kehittämisessä. Lomaketta muokattiin jääkiekon ominaispiirteisiin ja haastattelututkimuksen käyttöön sopivaksi.

Aineisto ja metodi

Tutkimuksen empiirinen aineisto koostuu neljästä tutkimushaastattelusta. Yhtä puhelimitse toteutettua haastattelua lukuun ottamatta ne tehtiin kasvokkain, ja haastattelutapahtumat nauhoitettiin. Nauhoitteet purettiin ja haastattelut litteroitiin, niiden sisältö anonymisoitiin ja muutettiin osittain yleiskielelle. Koska tutkimus keskittyi haastatteluissa esiin nousseisiin näkemyksiin ja teemoihin eikä itse ilmaisutapaan, perustason litterointi katsottiin riittäväksi analyysin tarpeisiin (Finnish Social Science Data Archive 2020a). Koska urheilun ja etenkin jääkiekon monikielisyydestä on olemassa toistaiseksi varsin rajallisesti aiempaa tutkimusta, oli ennakkoon haastavaa arvioida, millaiset kysymykset tuottaisivat parhaiten tutkimuksen kannalta keskeistä informaatiota. Tämän takia haastattelut päätettiin toteuttaa puolistrukturoituina, jolloin ne noudattaisivat ennalta suunniteltua rakennetta, mutta tilaa olisi myös haastateltavien omille, kysymysten ulkopuolisille havainnoille, tai mahdollisille haastattelutilanteessa esiin nouseville aiheille, joita ei osattu ennakoida (Hirsjärvi ja Hurme 2010, 35). Tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli kerätä laadullista eikä niinkään määrällistä aineistoa, ja puolistrukturoidut haastattelut

soveltuvat hyvin nimenomaan laadullisen aineiston keräämiseen (Hirsjärvi ym. 2009, 208).

Kerätyn aineiston tutkimiseen käytettiin laadullisen tutkimuksen perusmenetelmää, sisällönanalyysiä. Aineistoa tarkasteltiin teoriaohjaavan sisällönanalyysin keinoin (Tuomi ja Sarajärvi 2018, 81). Tämä lähestymistapa yhdistää aineisto- ja teorialähtöisen analyysin ominaisuuksia niin, että analyysiä lähestytään ensin kerätyn aineiston pohjalta, mutta lopuksi tulokset sovitetaan jo olemassa olevaan teoreettiseen kehykseen (Tuomi ja Sarajärvi 2018, 98). Näin analyysin tulosten jäsentämisessä voitiin toisaalta hyödyntää aiempaa työelämän monikielisyysstrategioiden keskittynyttä tutkimusta (Feely ja Harzing 2003; Piekkari ym. 2013), mutta aineistoa ei pakotettu olemassa olevaan teoriakehykseen. Joustavuus aineiston jaottelussa oli tärkeää, koska tutkielman teossa käytetty teoriapohja ja aiempi tutkimusmateriaali kuvasivat pitkälti yritysmailman monikielisyysstrategioita, joiden oletettiin eroavan joissakin määrin jääkiekko-organisaatioiden käyttämistä keinoista.

Haastateltaviksi pyrittiin valitsemaan ammattijääkiekko-organisaatioissa eri rooleissa toimivia henkilöitä. Valittujen haastateltavien pieneen lukumäärään vaikuttivat ensisijaisesti pro gradu -tutkielman rajalliset resurssit, jotka eivät mahdollistaneet haastattelujen toteuttamista suurelle joukolle vastaajia. Lisäksi vapaaehtoisten haastateltavien tavoittaminen oli vaikeaa. Osallistujat edustavat kuitenkin laajasti erilaisia näkökulmia organisaatioiden sisästä. Haastateltavat S1 ja S2 toimivat joukkueidensa valmennustiimien jäseninä, ja S1 vastasi myös edustamansa seuran urheilujohtajan tehtävistä. Haastateltava R1 on toiminut tuomarina sekä Liiga- että Mestis-tasolla Suomessa, sekä useissa kansainvälisissä jääkiekkoturnauksissa maa- ja seurajoukkueetasoilla. Haastateltava P1 on Suomessa pelaava ulkomaalainen pelaaja. Merkittävimmistä ryhmistä ainoastaan suomalaisten pelaajien näkökulma jäi puuttumaan haastateltavien joukosta. Entisenä pelaajana S2 toi kuitenkin esiin joitakin havaintoja monikielisydestä myös pelaajanäkökulmasta. Haastateltavat edustivat kahta eri joukkueorganisaatiota ja tuomarinäkökulmaa.

Keskeiset tulokset

Haastateltavat kertoivat työyhteisöissään käytettävän pääasiallisina kommunikaatiokielinä sekä suomea että englantia. Liigan pelaajista, valmentajista ja toimitsijoista enemmistö puhuu suomea, ja kielen asema organisaatioissa on vakiintunut. Ulkomaalaispelaajien määrän kasvaessa englanti on tämän tutkimuksen aineiston perusteella kuitenkin noussut yleiseksi lingua francaksi sekä Liiga-organisaation puolella että yksittäisten joukkueiden toiminnassa. Myös toimitsijoilta odotetaan kykyä kommunikoida englanniksi ulkomaalaispelaajien kanssa. Englannin käyttö ei kuitenkaan ole syrjäyttänyt suomen asemaa työkommunikaation kielenä jääkiekko-organisaatioissa, vaan kieliä käytetään rinnakkain. Esimerkiksi molemmat haastatelluista valmentajista kertoivat valmentavansa pääasiallisesti suomeksi ja odottavansa, että joukkueen suomenkieliset pelaajat kääntävät viestin tarvittaessa ulkomaalaispelaajille. Apuvalmentajana toimiva S2 kuitenkin kertoi, että hänen joukkueensa päävalmentaja käyttää usein valmennuskielenä englantia viestiäkseen suoraan kaikille pelaajille.

Yleisesti ottaen haastateltavien mielipide oma työympäristönsä monikielisyydestä oli positiivinen. Englannin käyttö yhteisenä viestintäkielenä vaikutti luonteelta ratkaisulta, mutta myös suomen kielen tai pelaajien muiden äidinkielten käyttö sen rinnalla nähtiin hyväksyttävänä. Suomenkieliset haastateltavat nostivat esiin ajatuksen siitä, että on luonnollista, että valtaosa kommunikaatiosta tapahtuu maan valtakielellä. Suomalaisen jääkiekon kansainvälistymisen takia englannin kielen lisääntynyttä käyttöä pidettiin kuitenkin väistämättömänä, eikä sen pääasiallisesti katsottu olevan negatiivinen kehityssuunta, etenkin, jos suomen kieli säilyttää asemansa sen ohella. Osa haastateltavista piti jopa positiivisena sitä, että englannin käyttö työympäristössä tarjoaa säännöllisen mahdollisuuden harjoitella kieltä, ja tämän seurauksena kohentuneesta englannin kielitaidosta voi olla hyötyä jääkiekkouran ulkopuolella ja sen jälkeen. Pääasialliset huolenaiheet monikielisyyden suhteen liittyivät mahdollisiin kielitaidon vajavaisuudesta johtuviin kommunikaatiohaasteisiin, pelaajien joutumiseen epätasa-arvoiseen asemaan suhteessa toisiinsa valitun valmennuskielen takia sekä useamman kielen rinnakkaisesta käytöstä seuraaviin viiveisiin kommunikaatiossa.

Jääkiekko-organisaatioissa työskentelevien englannin kielitaitoa pidettiin yleisesti ottaen riittävänä työtehtävien hoitamiseen. Haastateltavien mielipide oli, että

esimerkiksi toimitsijoista on vuosien myötä jättäytynyt pois niitä toimijoita, joiden englannin kielitaito ei ole riittänyt kommunikointiin ulkomaalaisten pelaajien kanssa. Ulkomaalaispelaajien osalta haastateltavat olivat sitä mieltä, että kotimaansa ulkopuolelle pelaamaan pyrkivät urheilijat tietävät tulevansa tarvitsemaan englannin kielitaitoa uudessa elin- ja työympäristössään, ja siksi ulkomaille pyrkivät lähinnä pelaajat, joiden kielitaito on riittävä. Sama pätee myös ammattitason valmentajiin ja toimitsijoihin, sillä alalle pyrkivät ovat tietoisia vieraskielisten pelaajien kasvavasta määrästä. Näin ollen kielitaidon suhteen tapahtuu alalla eräänlaista esikarsintaa eri toimijoiden arvioidessa omia mahdollisuuksiaan pärjätä ammattijääkiekon työympäristössä, ei ainoastaan lajiosaamisensa vaan myös esimerkiksi kielitaitonsa puolesta. Rekrytoinnissa ei ainakaan haastattelujen perusteella arvioida mahdollisten uusien pelaajien kielitaitoa, vaan siinä luotetaan pitkälti nimenomaan pelaajien omaan etukäteisarvioon riittävästä englannin kielitaidosta. Kielitaidon merkityksestä rekrytointipäätöksessä oli jakautuneita mielipiteitä: osa haastateltavista oli sitä mieltä, että mahdollisen rekrytoitavan kielitaito organisaatiossa käytössä olevissa kielissä vaikutti rekrytointipäätökseen, kun taas toisten mielestä kielitaidolla ei ollut vaikutusta ratkaisuun. Koska kielitaidosta ei eksplisiittisesti keskusteltu osana rekrytointipäätöstä, voi olla, että myös jälkimmäisessä tapauksessa se vaikutti päätökseen, mutta vaikutus ei ollut näkyvä kaikille osapuolille. Kukaan haastateltavista ei ollut kohdannut tilannetta, jossa riittämätön kielitaito englannissa tai suomessa olisi ollut ratkaiseva tekijä, jonka takia potentiaalinen pelaaja olisi jätetty palkkaamatta.

Kaikki haastateltavat pitivät viestintätaitoja tärkeinä työssään. Tämä korostui etenkin haastatteluissa valmentajien ja tuomarin kanssa, jotka kaikki olivat sitä mieltä, että kommunikaatio muodosti keskeisen osan heidän työnkuvastaan. Kielitaitoa pidettiin itsessään vähemmän merkityksellisenä jääkiekko-organisaatioiden sisäisessä työskentelyssä, mutta englannin ja suomen kielitaito tunnistettiin tärkeäksi työyhteisön viestinnän välineeksi. Huolimatta näiden taitojen keskeisyydestä, kukaan haastatelluista ei ollut saanut erityistä viestintäkoulutusta tehtävässään toimimiseen. Tärkeimpiä lähteitä viestintäopeille ovat olleet vertaistuki ja neuvot kokeneemmilta valmentajilta tai tuomareilta. Haastateltavat pitivät tätä hyvänä järjestelmänä työympäristössään. Yksi haastateltava kaipasi tarjolle strukturoidumpaa viestintäkoulutusta, mutta ei katsonut sen olevan välttämätöntä tai suoranaisten tarpeellista, ainoastaan hyödyllistä.

Organisaatioissa käytetään monipuolisesti erilaisia keinoja monikielisen arjen navigointiin. Osa käyttää valmennuskielinä sekä suomea että englantia, toisissa joukkueissa valmennuskieleksi on valittu näistä vain toinen. Molempien haastattelussa tarkasteltujen joukkueiden tapauksessa ensisijainen valmennuskieli oli suomi, ja pelaajat käänsivät ohjeet tarvittaessa niille, jotka eivät ymmärtäneet suomea. Valmennettaessa ulkomaalaispelaajia esimerkiksi pienryhmätilanteessa valmentajat käyttivät valmennuskielenä suoraan englantia. Jääkiekossa tapahtuva kääntäminen oli enimmäkseen amatöörikääntämistä, joskin jotkut haastateltavista nostivat esiin mahdollisuuden ammattikäntäjien käyttöön tarvittaessa. Siitä syntyvien kulujen ja yleisesti ottaen suhteellisen hyvän kielitaitotason takia ulkopuoliseen käännösapuun ei kuitenkaan turvauduttu. Sen sijaan kääntäminen tapahtui spontaanisti tarpeen mukaan sosiaalisen kanssakäymisen kautta tai itsekkääntämisenä. Esimerkiksi pelaajasopimusten kääntämisessä heikommin englantia osaavat ulkomaalaispelaajat turvautuivat usein pelaaja-agenttiinsa tai sosiaalisiin verkostoihinsa kotimaassaan.

Kääntämisen lisäksi organisaatioissa käytetään monia viestintää tukevia keinoja varmistamaan viestin välittyminen kielirajojen yli. Haastateltavista ne, jotka olivat epävarmempia omasta englannin kielitaidostaan, käyttivät useampia apukeinoja kuin oman kielitaitonsa vahvemmaksi arvioineet vastaajat. Valmentajat ja tuomari kertoivat kaikki käyttävänsä usein ei-kielellisiä viestinnän keinoja tukemaan puheviestintäänsä. Esimerkiksi valmennustehtävissä videokuvan näyttäminen ohjeistuksen tukena tai kaavioiden piirtäminen koettiin hyödyllisiksi keinoiksi visualisoida se, mitä oli sanottu. Tuomarin työssä tuomarin käsimerkit toimivat hyvänä kielirajat ylittävänä viestintäkeinona. Kielellisistä keinoista mainittiin muun muassa kielen vaihtaminen esimerkiksi suomesta englanniksi, helpomman sanaston käyttäminen tai koko viestin yksinkertaistaminen sekä toisto. Monet haastateltavista mainitsivat myös pyytävänsä tarvittaessa apua muilta joko viestin selittämiseen tai sen kääntämiseen vastaanottajan paremmiin osaamalle kielelle. Useimmiten näitä apukeinoja yhdistämällä kommunikaatio saatiin toimimaan, ja haastateltavat eivät olleetkaan kokeneet työssään kielieroista johtuneita ylityspääsemättömiä viestintävaikeuksia, joita ei olisi pystytty ratkaisemaan.

Pohdinta

Tehtyjen haastattelujen perusteella kielimuurit tai muut kommunikaatiovaikeudet vaikuttavat varsin harvoin aiheuttavan merkittäviä viestintäongelmia suomalaisessa ammattijääkiekossa. Tutkimuksen suppean otannan takia ei voida kuitenkaan sanoa, onko havainto yleistettävissä koko suomalaiseen ammattijääkiekkoyhteisöön vai selviytyvätkö haastatellut yksilöt keskivertoa paremmin monikielisessä työympäristössään. Laajempi tutkimus aiheesta on tarpeen, jotta voidaan kartoittaa alan yleistila monikielisyuden ja kommunikaation suhteen. Vaikka haastateltavat kokivat, etteivät yleensä kohtaa työssään merkittäviä ongelmia viestinnässä, he tiedostivat, että monikielisyys voi lisätä kommunikaatiovaikeuksien riskiä. Tämän takia kieliasioihin kannattaisi kiinnittää nykyistä enemmän huomiota organisaatioissa, ja aihetta olisi syytä tutkia tarkemmin. Haastateltavien esiin tuomien monikielisen viestinnän keinojen ja ongelmanratkaisutapojen tarkastelemisesta voisi olla hyötyä myös laajemmin. Tutkittavat kokivat käyttämänsä keinot toimiviksi omassa arjessaan, joten näiden keinojen kartoittamisesta ja kuvaamisesta voisi löytyä keinoja viestintähaasteiden ratkaisuun myös muissa monikielisissä yhteisöissä.