

9. On the Maintenance and Use of Heritage Finnish among Today's North American Finnish Migrants: A Survey¹

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Heritage Finnish – Then and Now

In this chapter, I discuss the maintenance of the Finnish language among today's North American ethnic Finns, those who have migrated from Finland into North America relatively recently, and, most pronouncedly, after the Great Migration years from Finland during the transition to the twentieth century. I am specifically interested in the patterns of the use and maintenance of Finnish among this group of new migrants, whose life circumstances are drastically different from the lives of the old migrant population (for accounts of the latter, see, e.g., Virtanen 1975; Virtaranta et al. 1993; Kero 1996; Alanen 2012; Kostiainen 2014; for studies on contemporary Finnish North Americans, see, e.g., Korkiasaari & Roinila 2005; Kiriakos 2014; Leinonen 2011a, 2011b, 2012, 2013, 2014a, 2014b).

The pattern of the old-wave migrant population typically showed strong maintenance of Finnish by the first generation and speedy linguistic assimilation to the mainstream (i.e., acquisition of English) by the second generation (cf., e.g., Valdés 2005, 2006). Describing the situation of old-wave Finnish migrants, Martin and Jönsson-Korhola (1993) argue that the command of Finnish was not regarded as important; sometimes

¹ I want to thank the Finns in North America who gave their time to participate in this study and thus made it possible. I also acknowledge the editors, Johanna Leinonen and Auvo Kostiainen, as well as two anonymous reviewers, for their valuable comments. I, however, am solely responsible for the remaining weaknesses.

it was considered even embarrassing.² What this chapter begins to explore is whether the higher socioeconomic status and higher education levels of the recent Finnish migrants (see Leinonen 2011a; Habti & Koikkalainen 2014; Warinowski 2016) may have influenced a change in how the command of Finnish is regarded. Is there, for instance, an articulated effort to pass heritage Finnish on to the next generation? With a limited population, this exploratory study contributes to the larger field of heritage language maintenance by looking at what ethnic Finns in North America — a minority within minorities — think about their heritage language and what measures they take to try to pass that language to the next generation (on heritage languages and their maintenance in North America, see, i.a., Fishman 1991; Kainulainen 1993; Peyton, Ranard & McGinnish 2001; Valdés 2005, 2006; Polinsky & Kagan 2007; Kelleher 2010).

This chapter also contributes, in a modest way, to recent research on the North American Finnish population, including language issues (e.g., Kainulainen 1993; Martin & Jönsson-Korhola 1993; Virtaranta, Jönsson-Korhola, Martin & Kainulainen 1993; Leinonen 2011a, 2011b, 2012, 2013, 2014a, 2014b; Remlinger 2016; Warinowski 2016). Studies of expatriate Finns elsewhere include Heimo (2016), Lammervo (2011), and Watson (1997) for Australian Finns, and Braun (2017) for Finnish mothers in the United Kingdom, to mention a few (see also Korkiasaari 2003). This study draws survey information from a small number (n=253) of North American Finns who are social media users. The main goal is to describe how these Finnish migrants use their language repertoire on a daily basis and what measures, if any, they take to facilitate the transmission of heritage Finnish to their children.

The term heritage language is relatively new (see, e.g., Peyton, Ranard & McGinnis 2001; Valdés 2005; Polinsky & Kagan 2007; Brinton, Kagan & Bauckus 2008; Kelleher 2010). It came to use with the widening realization and acceptance of the fact that maintaining migrant and other minority languages is difficult unless some measures are taken to increase the input in those languages. The fact is that by the third generation, the migrant language has, in most cases, changed to the language of the surrounding majority culture (Valdés 2006, 39). This shift may happen even earlier: the second generation is often more fluent in the societal majority language than in their home, heritage language (Virtaranta 1993, 25).

Among the second generation — the children of today's migrants — Finnish, indeed, is in danger of being quickly replaced by English, despite the Finnish-speaking parents' efforts (Halmari 2005). Finnish, however, prevails among the survey respondents, thanks to electronic and social media, which have come to form a new, virtual ethnic "village" (cf., e.g., Navarrete & Huerta 2006; Skop & Adams 2009; Komito 2011). For contemporary North American Finns, the Internet offers a daily opportunity to be exposed to their native tongue, and for parents, who are eager to pass heritage Finnish to the next generation, these virtual groups may offer subtle encouragement and support by their mere existence.

² "Suomen kieltä ei pidetty tärkeänä, vaan joskus jopa hävettävänä" (Martin & Jönsson-Korhola 1993, 19).

Throughout this chapter, comparisons are made between the situations of today's highly-skilled Finnish migrants and their compatriots from a century ago. For the migrants of a hundred years ago, life was materially challenging, but Finnish had a theoretical chance of being transmitted because of the support from the strong Finnish communities that surrounded the Finnish-speaking families. However, the surrounding English-speaking majority did not support migrant languages in any official manner, and despite rich exposure to Finnish, the second generation adopted English as their stronger language (see, e.g., Kainulainen 1993).

For the recent migrants, life is materially easier, and, in today's North America, preservation of heritage languages is relatively widely accepted, and sometimes (albeit not universally) it is even a laudable goal. However, what makes the intergenerational transmittal of heritage Finnish more difficult is, ironically, migrants' own good command of English. The supporting Finnish network no longer consists of a tight web of neighbors, relatives, stores, churches, and Finnish halls. Today's Finns, therefore, resort to virtual networks to cater for their Finnish-language needs (cf. Navarrete & Huerta 2006; Skop & Adams 2009).

Data and Limitations

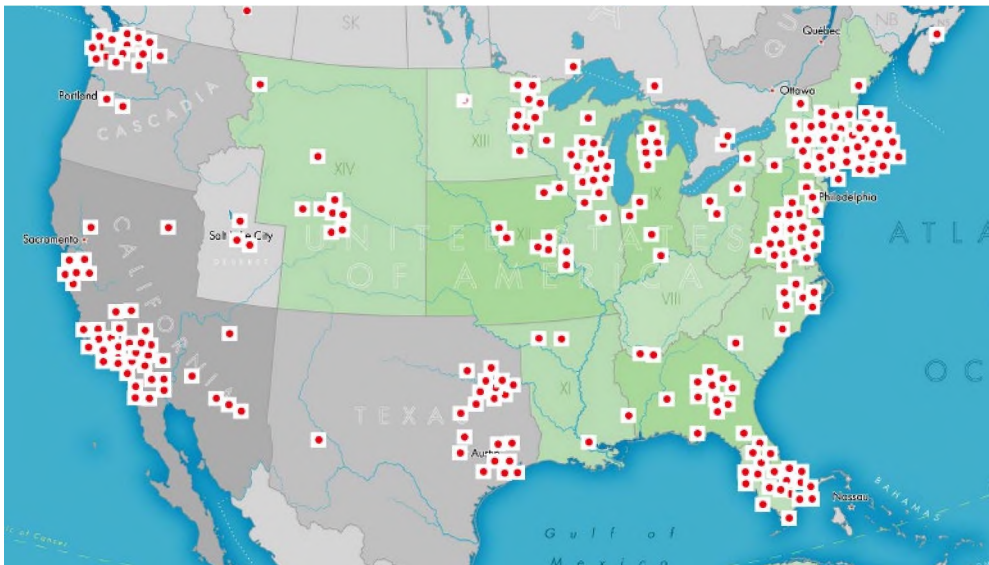
This chapter is based on an online language survey, administered to a small, self-selected group of Finnish North Americans. The survey questions addressed heritage Finnish maintenance and attitudes about passing Finnish to the second generation. The survey was titled "Use of Finnish vs. English among Finnish Americans," and it was posted during the fall of 2016 on three closed Facebook groups: *USA:n suomalaiset* (Finns in the USA; 2,500 members); *Finns in America – Suomalaiset Amerikassa* (1,400 members), and *Ellit Amerikoissa* (Ellis in America; 600 members). I received 253 responses to the survey from Finnish North Americans (5.6 % of the total membership of these online groups) who by responding agreed to be anonymous participants in this study. In addition to answering questions about their language-use patterns, the participants also provided basic demographic data. The information was gathered from the participants through the survey tool SurveyMonkey.

The study has obvious and serious limitations, and the results are not generalizable to the larger North American Finnish population beyond the social media groups to which the respondents belong. The survey shows a strong self-selected bias as the participants are avid social media users who were also interested in responding to a language questionnaire. In a more ideal study, people would be recruited also through other means than social media, and the sampling would need to ensure that responses are drawn from a wider range of demographic groups (i.e., not only from highly-skilled migrants). A more even distribution of men and women should be aimed at. As one of

the most pressing concerns is the transmission of Finnish competence to the second generation of Finnish migrants, a longitudinal, follow-up study should be carried out to address questions of language transmission, and empirical data (e.g., language tests) rather than self-reports should be collected. At the moment, this study remains merely exploratory and descriptive. In the form of ethnographic survey data, it does provide small vignettes to the daily struggles of 253 North American Finns to keep up with their Finnish and to pass it on to their children as well.

Participants: Who Responded to the Survey?

The respondents are found all over in North America, and they tend to conglomerate in large cities (see Map 10):



Map 10. Survey respondents in North America (n=253)

The dots in the map show the locations where the respondents live (cf. also Raento 2005, 6). This map differs essentially from the familiar maps indicating the traditional concentrations of Finnish ethnicity according to U.S. census data.³ While strong concentrations of ethnic Finns in the United States are found in the upper Midwest (Minnesota and Michigan), for instance, in so-called “Finnish American nesting place[s],” such as the Keweenaw Peninsula in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (Remlinger 2016, 168–169), the respondents to the present survey are scattered all over the United States, specifically

³ See, e.g., http://www.finncamp.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/pct_finnish.pdf.

in large cities on both coasts: the Seattle area, San Jose, Palo Alto, Los Angeles, and San Diego on the west coast and New York and Washington, D.C., in the east. Many are located in Atlanta and in South Florida, and some in Texas, in the Dallas-Austin-Houston triangle. There are still many respondents who come from the traditional Finnish centers around the Great Lakes, but the respondents here now tend to live in large cities such as Minneapolis. Figure 1 lists the participants according to state.

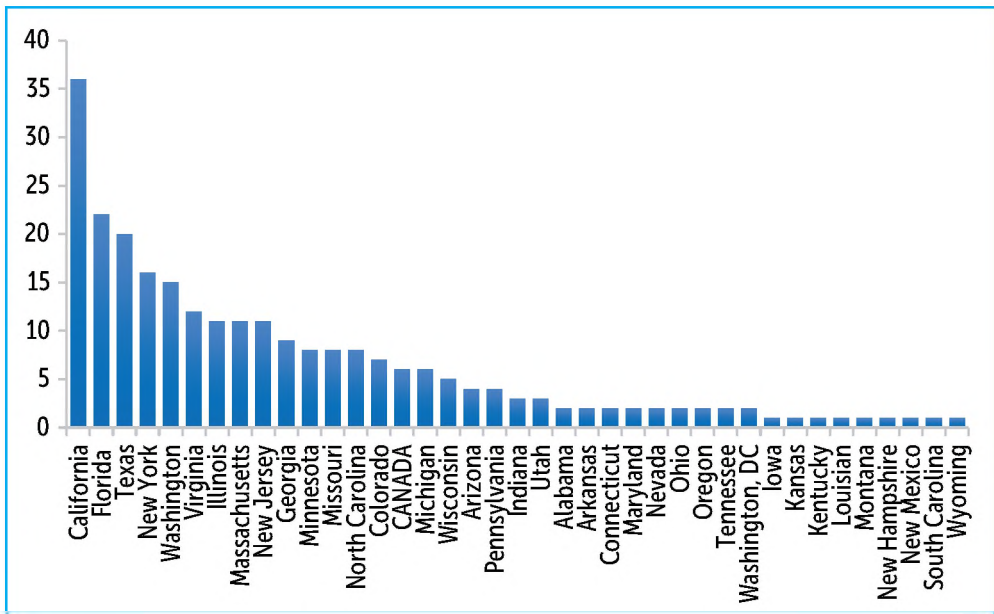


Figure 1. The states of the respondents (n=252)⁴

Altogether 252 participants indicated the state in which they lived. Only six participants lived in Canada. Thirty-eight U.S. states were represented, but not evenly, as 31 percent (n=78) of all the participants came from only three states: from California (36), Florida (22), and Texas (20). Over 60 percent of the participants (154) came from only nine states (California, Florida, Texas, New York, Washington, Virginia, Illinois, Massachusetts, and New Jersey), and eighteen states were represented by only one or two participants each.

An overwhelming majority of the respondents (n=242, or 98 % of the 247 who answered the question “Where were you born?”) were born in Finland. Only four had been born in

⁴ California (36), Florida (22), Texas (20), New York (16), Washington (15), Virginia (12), Illinois (11), Massachusetts (11), New Jersey (11), Georgia (9), Minnesota (8), Missouri (8), North Carolina (8), Colorado (7), Michigan (6), Wisconsin (5), Arizona (4), Pennsylvania (4), Indiana (3), Utah (3), Alabama (2), Arkansas (2), Connecticut (2), Maryland (2), Nevada (2), Ohio (2), Oregon (2), Tennessee (2), Washington, D.C. (2), Iowa (1), Kansas (1), Kentucky (1), Louisiana (1), Montana (1), New Hampshire (1), New Mexico (1), South Carolina (1), Wyoming (1). In addition, there were 6 responses from Canada.

the United States and one in Canada. Thus, almost all participants were first-generation migrants. They were born between the years 1935 and 1996, and their age range was thus between 81 for the oldest and 20 for the youngest, with the average age at 47–48 years (the average birth year was 1968). To the question “About how long have you lived in the USA or Canada?” the answers ranged from four months (the respondent had just arrived) to seventy-five years (this respondent was born in Canada and lived there all his life).

Only 12 percent of the respondents were male; 88 percent were female (of 252 replies). This skewed gender distribution is likely to result from the fact that one of the groups surveyed — a very active social network — was a women-only group. Also, women in general are more active on social media (Finn 2011; Greenwood, Perrin & Duggan 2016) and, in addition, perhaps more inclined to reply to a survey about language, posted by a researcher who is also a woman.

As one of the demographic questions, the respondents were asked to indicate their educational background; 246 people replied. The answers are summarized in Table 4, which shows the distribution of the respondents' educational background earned in Finland and in the United States or Canada. The respondents were asked to indicate all choices that applied, and, therefore, the percentages add up to over one hundred:

Table 4. What is your educational background? (Indicate all choices that apply) (n=246)

	%	n
IN FINLAND		
Less than nine grades	2.0	5
Nine grades or <i>keskikoulu</i>	12.6	31
High school diploma (<i>ylioppilastutkinto</i>)	31.3	77
Vocational school (<i>ammattikoulu</i>)	10.6	26
Vocational college (<i>ammattikorkeakoulu</i>) or other 2- or 3-year college (e.g., <i>kauppaopisto</i>)	20.7	51
Some university, but no degree	8.5	21
BA-level degree (e.g., HuK)	13.8	34
MA-level degree	18.7	46
Licentiate degree	2.0	5
Doctoral degree (e.g., FT)	2.0	5
IN USA/CANADA		
Less than high school diploma	0.4	1
High school diploma	5.7	14
Vocational degree	2.8	7
Associate's degree	7.7	19
Some university, but no degree	4.9	12
BA-level degree	17.1	42
MA-level degree	13.8	34
Doctoral degree (e.g., PhD)	5.3	13

In her dissertation, Leinonen (2011a, 52–53) used U.S. census data from the year 1940 to the early twenty-first century in order to show convincingly the steadily rising edu-

cational attainment of Finnish-born migrants. Leinonen's results are corroborated strongly by the numbers in Table 4 (bolded for clarity). My participants, indeed, are also highly educated: 31 percent (n=77) have a high school diploma (*ylippilastutkinto*) from Finland; 21 percent (n=51) have a Finnish vocational college degree; and almost 19 percent (n=46) have a Finnish Master's degree. The respondents have earned degrees also in North America: 17 percent (n=42) list a BA-level degree and almost 14 percent (n=34) have earned a Master's degree. Five percent (n=13) had earned doctorates in the United States or Canada; another five respondents had doctorates from Finland.

Table 4 hence confirms Leinonen's (2011a) results, showing the overall high level of education of recent Finnish Americans, thus distinguishing them from the migrants a hundred years ago. This has obvious repercussions for the next two questions: "Which of the following best describes your current occupation?" and "What is your approximate household income?"

Table 5. Which of the following best describes your current occupation? (n=190)

Answer Choices	%	n
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	18.4	35
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	12.1	23
Sales and Related Occupations	12.1	23
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	11.1	21
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	10.5	20
Management Occupations	7.9	15
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	7.9	15
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	7.4	14
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	4.2	8
Healthcare Support Occupations	4.2	8
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	3.7	7
Legal Occupations	3.2	6
Community and Social Service Occupations	2.6	5
Transportation and Materials Moving Occupations	2.6	5
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	2.1	4
Personal Care and Service Occupations	2.1	4
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	1.1	2
Protective Service Occupations	0.5	1
Construction and Extraction Occupations	0.5	1
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	0.5	1
Production Occupations	0.5	1
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	0.0	0
Total Respondents 190 (N.B.: some respondents listed more than one choice.)		219

One hundred and ninety respondents reported their current occupation (see Table 5 above). For this question, instead of self-reported occupations, the demographic categories predetermined by the survey tool, SurveyMonkey, were used. Table 5 shows that the

most often reported occupations were in Education, Training, and Library Occupations (over 18 % of the respondents), with Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations, as well as Sales and Related Occupations following on the shared second place (12 % for each). Manual labor and service occupations, typical of the old-wave migrants, were not strongly represented. Note that some respondents listed more than one occupational category in which they worked — hence the discrepancy between the number of respondents (190) and listed occupations (219).

Table 6. What is your approximate average household income? (n=235)

Answer Choices	%	n
\$0–\$24,999	3.8	9
\$25,000–\$49,999	10.6	25
\$50,000–\$74,999	12.8	30
\$75,000–\$99,999	14.9	35
\$100,000–\$124,999	16.2	38
\$125,000–\$149,999	11.5	27
\$150,000–\$174,999	6.0	14
\$175,000–\$199,999	6.4	15
\$200,000 and up	17.9	42
	100.0 ⁵	235

The question about the average household income was answered by 235 respondents. As Table 6 shows, the fewest (n=9 or 4 %) of the respondents earned less than \$25,000.⁶ Depending on their household size (which was not included in the questionnaire), these nine respondents may (or may not) fall below the poverty line, as defined by the Department of Health and Human Services (see the Federal Poverty Level Chart, 2016, according to which the annual income of \$24,250 marks the poverty line). Two thirds of all respondents (n=155 or 66 %) fell within the mid-level income categories, between \$25,000 and \$150,000. Nearly 18 percent (n=42) of the respondents reported the highest level of household income (\$200,000 and up). The median income for the respondents fell into the category of \$100,000–\$124,999. In 2015, the United States median income was \$55,775 (the United States Census Bureau 2016), and thus the survey participants, on an average, can be categorized as economically well-to-do. This is a significant change when compared to the life situation of the Finnish migrants a hundred years ago.

⁵ In all tables, the percentages have been rounded and do not necessarily add up exactly to 100 percent.

⁶ Note that this relatively low income level does not necessarily correlate with the respondents' social status: these respondents may have been, for instance, graduate students, working on a modest graduate stipend, or recently arrived migrants who had not yet had time to establish their lives and secure a higher income level.

The question “Are you in the USA or Canada permanently?” shows that over 82 percent (n=206) of the 251 respondents for this question do not have plans to return to Finland. Only less than five percent (12 people) indicated that they were not in North America permanently. Thirty-three respondents (or 13 %) said that they were in the United States or Canada “more or less permanently.” In this sense (i.e., the majority’s decision to stay permanently in North America and not to return to Finland), the respondents resemble the old-wave migrants. Their reasons for leaving Finland, however, are different: for the new migrants, an escape from poverty, unemployment, or the tsar’s oppression has not been among the push factors (see, e.g., Kero 1996; Niemi 2003; Leinonen 2011a, 36).

An indication of the permanence of the move to North America is that 50 percent (n=127) of all the respondents had acquired dual citizenship. Forty-four percent (111) were citizens of Finland, and only five percent (13) were citizens of the United States solely. Only one was a Canadian citizen, and one preferred not to answer. Those who had dual citizenship or solely Finnish citizenship constitute 94 percent of all respondents.

To investigate the strength of ties to Finland (beyond the preserved citizenship), the respondents were also presented the question “How often do you visit Finland?” Here it is possible to see a clear difference between my current research participants and the old-wave migrants: unlike earlier migrants, who came to North America to stay and never (or extremely rarely) visited “the Old Country,” the recent migrants visit Finland often:

Table 7. How often do you visit Finland? (n=248)

Answer Choices	%	n
More than once per year	12.1	30
Once a year, on an average	36.7	91
About every other year	27.0	67
About every fifth year	10.9	27
I do not visit Finland regularly	13.3	33
Total	100.0	248

As Table 7 shows, almost half of the respondents (n=121 or 49 %) visit Finland once a year on an average or even more often:

- Joka toinen kuukausi (Every other month)⁷
- 5 times a year
- 1–2 x yr
- We currently plan to visit at least once a year for Christmas but I would prefer to visit twice.

⁷ The cited examples are direct quotations from the participants’ responses. If the response was given in Finnish, an English translation follows in parentheses. Note also that the responses have not been edited for grammar or spelling. However, if the spelling error might affect the understanding of the example, it is signaled by *sic*.

Another 27 percent (n=67) visit Finland about every other year. Only 11 percent (n=27) of the recent migrants visit Finland as rarely as every fifth year; only 13 percent (n=33) report that they do not visit Finland regularly at all. For students or for older respondents, visits to Finland become rarer:

- Used to go every other year but it has been 3 years since i went there the last time (went back to school and student budget is tight)
- [...] last visit 2011, looks like last one, age is greeping [*sic*] on you.
- Nuorempana joka toinen vuosi, nyt ehkä joka kolmas (Every other year when I was younger, now perhaps every third)

The research participants' relatively frequent visits to Finland stand in contrast to the earlier migrants, many of whom never went back to Finland after emigrating (see also Leinonen 2011a, 147, 176).

Findings on Language

The Respondents' Competence in and Use of Finnish

Many of the survey questions focused on the language use patterns of the respondents. First, they were asked which of their languages was stronger. Table 8 presents this information:

Table 8. Which language would you name as your strongest language? (n=248)

Answer Choices	%	n
Finnish	56.5	140
English	20.6	51
Another language	0.4	1
Depends on the situation	22.6	56
Total	100.0	248

As Table 8 shows, only one fifth (n=51 or 21 %) of the respondents deemed English stronger than Finnish: for more than half of the respondents (n=140 or 57 %), Finnish was the stronger language. This is not, of course, surprising because the majority was born in Finland. In the comments section, several respondents underscored the fact that both Finnish and English were equally strong: "I would say Finnish and English are just as strong." Others expressed this same sentiment in Finnish: "Puhun sekä suomea

että englantia yhtä sujuvasti” (I speak both Finnish and English as fluently) and “Yhtä vahvat molemmat” (Both equally strong).⁸

Fifty-six respondents (23 %) pointed out that which language is stronger depends on the context and the features of the speech situation. This seems to have led to a somewhat diglossic situation (Ferguson 1959), where the use of Finnish and English in the respondents' lives rarely overlapped: Finnish was reserved for certain spheres of life and English for clearly different communicative tasks. Examples from the comments follow:

- Professional language is harder for me in Finnish
- Some vocabulary is easier to produce in English; I don't have all the current Finnish terminology though I've kept up very well.
- Some work vocabulary I know only in English
- My business language is English only, but I like conversing [about] casual topics in Finnish
- Työasioista puhuessa meinaa suomen sanasto välillä olla hukassa, kun vaikka ala on sama kuin Suomessa, tilanteet ja rakenteet ja siten sanastot ovat yllättävän eroavia. (When talking about job-related things, Finnish vocabulary tends to be lost at times because even though my field is the same as in Finland, the situations and structures – and, thus, vocabularies – are surprisingly different.)

The survey contained three questions or statements that sought to find out the respondents' level of competence in Finnish (“How easily can you have conversations in Finnish?”; “I can read Finnish easily”; “I can write Finnish”). Over 90 percent (n=228) claimed that they do not have any trouble having conversations in Finnish; eight percent (n=21) felt that sometimes their conversations are limited to certain topics; and less than two percent (n=4) said that they struggle to speak Finnish (Table 9).

Table 9. How easily can you have conversations in Finnish? (n=253)

Answer Choices	%	n
I don't have any trouble having conversations in Finnish.	90.1	228
Sometimes I feel my conversations are limited to certain topics.	8.3	21
I struggle to speak Finnish.	1.6	4
Total	100.0	253

Sixteen respondents elaborated. Some commented that they are fully bilingual (“I consider myself completely bilingual, 50/50”), but many reported word-finding difficulties and some language mixing:

⁸ The respondents used mostly English in their open responses, but Finnish was used as well. The following prompt for replying to the comments was given: “You may write your comments either in English, in Finnish, or in a combination of both. Voit kommentoida suomeksi tai englanniksi.”

- I often forget words when talking to my family
- I usually use some English words in Finnish conversations though because I've forgotten many Finnish words and learnt some words only in English.
- Joskus täytyy hakea yksittäistä sanaa, jos puhe on aiheesta, josta ei ole pitkään aikaan puhunut. Puheeseen hiipii myös englannin rakenteita ja joskus huomaa kääntäneensä suoraan jonkin englannin kielen idiomin. (Sometimes I have to look for an isolated word when talking about a topic I haven't talked about in a long time. English structures also sneak into my language, and sometimes I realize that I have translated an English idiom directly.)
- Jotkut sanat tuppaa unohtuun ja joistain aiheista on vaikeampi keskustella tai joskus kaytan ns. suoria kaannoksia enkusta suomex mitka huvituttaa kavereita. (Some words tend to be forgotten and some topics are more difficult to discuss. Sometimes I use so-called direct translations from English into Finnish, which amuse my friends.)
- Vähän kangerteleee aluksi kun menen Suomeen, mutta sitten alkaa luistaa! (I stumble a bit in the beginning when I go to Finland, but then it becomes fluent!)

Only one person commented that he cannot “speak Finn.”

Ninety-seven percent of the respondents said that they could both read and write Finnish easily. This, again, is not surprising because of the respondents' origin in Finland. However, even though almost all respondents can read Finnish easily, based on the comments there obviously is some variation in the level of the reading competence:

- Love to read in Finnish
- That's as easy as reading English
- I read Finnish daily
- But not as easily as before
- Slower than English
- I still read finnish [*sic*] novels at times, reading newspaper feels funny because the way they say some things sounds so awkward and funny, kind of cumbersome compared to english.
- Certain topics. Also don't recognize words introduced since 1990s.

A respondent who had spent fifty-nine years in Canada and had been a one-year-old toddler when the family migrated, commented: “I can read fairytale books and some dialect writings. Simple clear language.”

Almost all the respondents (97 %) could write Finnish — again, not a surprise, as most had completed their schooling in Finland. The only comment to this question was provided by a Finnish American woman who had been six years old when she arrived in the United States twenty-seven years ago: “[I can write Finnish] with some case ending difficulties.”

Answers to the question “Finnish is spoken at my home regularly” begin to show the contexts in which Finnish Americans strive to keep up their (and their children's) com-

petence in Finnish. In almost half of the homes (48 %), Finnish is not spoken regularly. In her dissertation, Leinonen (2011a) has analyzed the language use in families where one spouse was Finnish and the other American. My survey results reflect Leinonen's findings closely. The reasons for not speaking Finnish were understandable: "Mieheni ei puhu Suomea lainkaan" (My husband does not speak Finnish at all); "My husband and step kids are American."

Those who do not have immediate family members with whom to speak Finnish look for other opportunities: "puhelimessa päivittäin" (daily on the phone); "I live alone but speak Finnish to my cat :)"; "But I have lots of Finnish [sic] speaking friends, and keep in touch with family and friends in Finland"; "In my mother's home when I visit her usually once a day."

The question about the use of Finnish at home elicited many comments, which reflect the commitment of the respondents to pass the Finnish language to their children by using it in the interactions with them:

- with my 19 year old son, daily
- My children are adults. I speak Finnish with them when I see them.
- I speak always Finnish to my son.
- Puhun tyttääreni kanssa Suomea. (I speak Finnish with my daughter.)
- I speak only Finnish to my children, who [were] born in the USA.
- I try to speak only Finnish to my 1-year-old.
- I talk Finnish to my newborn baby girl

But some comments also reflect the decline in the use of Finnish by the next generation (for a case study on intergenerational language shift, see Halmari 2005):

- Me and husband speak Finnish, kids English.
- I speak Finnish with my two kids. They used to answer in Finnish when younger, now they are teens and usually reply in English. Their Finnish was better when we were able to go to Finland more often but 3 years has had its effects.

Language shift (Fishman 1991) is a natural process among migrant populations, and it is only relatively recently that the importance of heritage language maintenance has become a focus of rigorous research (Peyton, Ranard & McGinnish 2001; Valdés 2005, 2006; Polinsky & Kagan 2007; Kelleher 2010). The changes in the structure of the heritage language and the reluctance of its use by the second generation tend to catch the migrant parents by surprise. The first step to any remedy of heritage language loss is the parent's conscious knowledge of this distinct possibility, and language use surveys like the present one may help to raise this consciousness.

When the spouse or children are interested in learning Finnish, survey participants usually mention this:

- my husband is learning Finnish though

- Not much but my daughter attempts to learn it.
- My boys have learned all the bad words!?? We can use simple sentences like *lisaa mehua, mina haluan jaatelo* (more juice, I want ice-cream)...

Eighty-nine percent of the respondents (n=222) have family members and relatives who speak Finnish, but most of them live in Finland. People use phone, Skype, and e-mail to keep in touch with them. This also provides opportunities for the participants to use Finnish, but it is not daily. Eighty-four percent (n=212) also report that they have friends who speak Finnish; most of these Finnish-speaking friends, however, live – quite predictably – also in Finland. One respondent says that she speaks Finnish face-to-face one to two times per month (“Puhun suomea kasvotusten täällä 1–2 kertaa kuukaudessa”). Sixteen percent (n=40) do not have Finnish-speaking friends in North America.

The participants were also asked not only to report with whom they use Finnish but also to estimate the daily quantity of how much Finnish they use (Table 10):

Table 10. Estimate how much Finnish you use daily (n=253)

Answer Choices	%	n
Most of my communications (more than 50% on an average day) are in Finnish.	14.2	36
25–50%	24.1	61
less than 25%	17.8	45
less than 10%	24.5	62
I do not use Finnish daily.	19.4	49
Total	100.0	253

On an average day, almost one fifth (19 %, n=49) did not use Finnish at all: “Sometimes 0%.” Only 14 percent (n=36) of the respondents estimated that they used Finnish during more than half of their communications per day; the reason for that much use of Finnish was to talk with their children:

- I speak Finnish only with my 10-year-old son. He is fluent in both English and Finnish.
- I speak it only with my daughter unless I’m on the phone with my mother.
- I talk a lot to my kids. So that will make it about half or more.
- Speak Finnish with 5 yr daughter
- Ever since I stayed at home with my daughter, although for now communication is pretty much one-directional with a 1-year-old :)
- Puhun lapsille suomea, vaikka he vastaisivat englanniksi. (I speak Finnish to the children, even if they were to reply in English.)

It is the children who motivate (and give an opportunity for) the respondents to speak Finnish, as the following comment indicates:

- Workdays without the company of my son, I rarely speak Finnish. Weekends with my son, 75–80% of conversations are in Finnish.

For many, electronic and social media provide a chance to use Finnish. Facebook comes up often: “I communicate in Finnish daily in several Finnish fb groups.” The following comments reflect the importance of these forms of communicating in Finnish and getting exposure to it:

- I’m in one FB group that writes in Finnish
- I watch a lot of Finnish TV like Salatut Elämät etc.
- Texting daily. Actual speaking not every week.
- Valtaosa suomen käytöstä arjessa on sosiaalisen median tai pikaviestien lukemista tai kirjoittamista. (Most of my use of Finnish in everyday life consists of reading or writing on social media or texting.)
- Some days Finnish only used online/social media

The respondents were also asked to report if they read Finnish books on a regular basis, watched Finnish movies, followed Finnish news on the Internet, or listened to Finnish music. The results are summarized in Table 11:

Table 11. On a regular basis, I... (check all that apply) (n=228)

Answer Choices	%	n
read Finnish books	56.1	128
watch Finnish movies	23.3	53
read Finnish news on the Internet	94.3	215
listen to Finnish music	56.6	129

It turns out that while the participants did at least occasionally read Finnish books (n=128 or 56 %) and magazines (one mentions *Kotiliesi*) and listen to Finnish music (n=129 or 57 %; “Auran Aallot hyvä siivotessa ;-) – tykkään kuunnella mainoksia” [The Waves of Aura is good when cleaning the house ;-) – I like to listen to the ads]), most of them reported that they followed news in Finnish on the Internet:

- I sometimes read Finnish news on the internet.
- Turku newspapers
- Read Iltasanomat online
- I read Finnish news and blogs daily, and watch more Finnish TV than American

Social media, especially Facebook, surfaced again as a source of Finnish:

- talk on social media — skype/whatsapp... emails
- I read Facebook updates in Finnish.
- Use Finnish on FB Finnish groups

Some also like to watch Finnish news and other Finnish TV programs and shows online, as this has become more and more convenient during the past few years. One respondent commented, "Kuuntelen suomenkielistä musiikkia silloin tällöin, mutta siitä tulee helposti koti-ikävä!" (I listen to Finnish music every now and then, but it makes me easily home-sick!).

The Respondents' Competence in and Use of English

The respondents clearly differ from the old-time Finnish migrants in their knowledge of English: today's migrants to North America arrive with a good competence in English. Some comment on their formal education in English: "I have a Master's in English"; "I'm a college English teacher in the US." Two comments reflect the typical Finnish modesty: "Kind of fluent but not without errors"; "Jos puhe on vieraasta aihepiiristä, oikeaa sanaa tai ilmausta joutuu joskus hakemaan" (If the discussion topic is unfamiliar, I sometimes have to look for the right word or phrase).

The prevailing fluency in English is obviously related to the fact that 210 respondents (84 %) speak English daily in their homes: "English is the language of our home." This is often necessitated by the fact that the spouse does not speak Finnish: "My husband only speaks English." Leinonen's research (2011a) shows the increase in international marriages among Finns in the United States, and this fact, obviously, increases the necessity and opportunities to use and practice English. (Simultaneously, this, of course, probably decreases the exposure to Finnish and opportunities to continue to use it.) Accommodating the majority-language speakers other than the spouse is also a natural reason to speak English at home: "We speak English when the kids have friends over.. and that is daily. But when it's family only, we speak Finnish."

The question about the home language, however, triggered a number of comments about the fact that, through the children, English is making an entrance into the participants' homes:

- My daughter will often answer in English or elaborate/explain further, her Finnish is elementary.
- My sons speak mostly English.
- Lapset puhuvat keskenään pääasiassa englantia. (The children speak mostly English among themselves.)

If the respondents' children have retained their competence in Finnish, this is mentioned, with a touch of pride: "I speak only Finnish to my children, now 23 & 25. Both are fluent and have spent several summers in Finland as youngsters and also working there."

Altogether 250 participants responded to the question about the daily use of English in their homes. With 84 percent (n=210) reporting that English is spoken daily, it is

obvious that English is thus a strong influence in the lives of the respondents — and of their children. Only forty respondents (16 %) out of the 250 who replied to this question said that English was not used daily in their homes.

The questions about the use of English were meant to provide a cursory idea about the amount of majority-language exposure in the lives of the research participants. The question, “English is spoken among (some of) my family members and relatives” produced 212 “yes” replies (84 %). These responses correlate with those to the prompt “English is spoken daily in my home,” where also 84 percent answered “yes.” Some comments illustrate:

- All of my Finnish relatives also speak fluent English. They speak English with my husband.
- Step dad is American so he and my mother speak English.
- Mieheni vanhemmat ja sukulaiset puhuvat kanssani Englantia. (My husband's parents and relatives speak English with me.)
- All in laws and [my] American family speak English only.

Some comments include an implied concern of the English take-over (see also above):

- Kids speak English together.
- my 2 boys to each other and with my son's girlfriend, who lives with us.
- Both of my sons speak English only.
- Unfortunately my sister mixes Finnish and English when speaking with my nephew.

The prompt “English is spoken among (some of) my friends” received 99.6 percent of affirmative answers (n=249). The situation is captured by the comment “All my friends in the States speak English.” Only one respondent did not have English-speaking friends.

According to Leinonen (2011b, 90), “ethnic communities of Finns in the U.S.” no longer exist in the sense they did during the old-wave migration. The boundaries between ethnic Finns and native speakers of English have become much more porous. In his classic work on language acquisition, Schumann (1976) points out that the larger and the more cohesive the migrant group is, and the more social distance there is between the migrant group and the majority-language speakers, the more difficult it is to learn the majority language (here, English). From the point of view of heritage language maintenance, the easier it is, under those circumstances, to maintain the native language (here, Finnish). A hundred years ago, despite the fact that the Finnish migrant groups were not very large, they nevertheless were extremely cohesive, and the social distance between the Finns and the mainstream society was large. Today's Finnish migrants are approaching what Schumann would have called an ideal language learning situation: the group is small in numbers; it is not cohesive; and the social distance between the mainstream society and the Finnish migrants has greatly diminished from the days of early Finnish migration. The use of English is becoming

easy through the frequent interactions with English speakers, but the flip side of this equation is that the maintenance of Finnish is, at least theoretically, becoming more and more challenging the less exposure people have to Finnish. The traditional Finnish village has disappeared and is being re-established within the virtual world. Whether this virtual world can provide the cohesiveness necessary for language maintenance is, however, questionable.

English Taking Over as the Default Home Language

Which language becomes the default language of the home is greatly dependent on the native language of the participant's spouse or partner. The pie chart below (Figure 2) indicates that of the 252 respondents who reported their gender, most (56 %, n=140) were married to or lived with native speakers of English. Only 22 percent (n=55) had a Finnish spouse or partner. Twelve percent (n=29) had spouses or partners whose native language was other than English or Finnish: Arabic (2), Arabic/French, Bengali, Farsi, German (4), Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Korean (2), Mandarin Chinese, Norwegian, Polish, Russian, and Tagalog. Nine reported having a Spanish-speaking spouse or partner, and one did not specify.

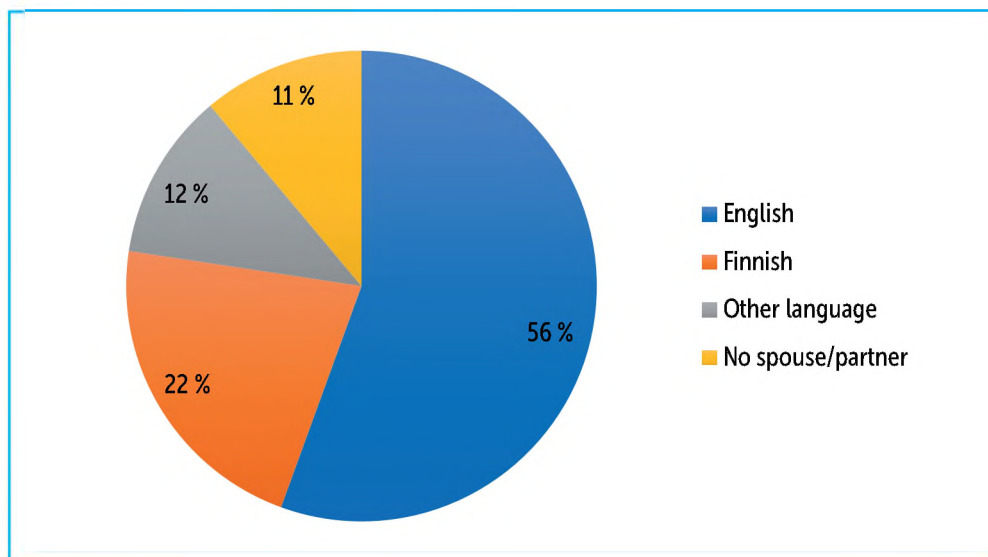


Figure 2. Spouse's/partner's native language (n=252)⁹

⁹ "If you are married/have a partner, what is your spouse's/partner's native language?" English-language spouse/partner (n=140); Finnish-language spouse/partner (n=55); other-language spouse/partner (n=29); no spouse/partner (n=28).

The language background of the spouse or partner differed somewhat according to the gender of the respondent. As pointed out above, many more women participated in the survey (224 female vs. 28 male participants who reported their gender),¹⁰ but proportionately many more women — over half — had partners or spouses who were native speakers of English (58 %, n=129). Only one-fifth of women had Finnish spouses or partners (20 %, n=45). Eleven percent of the women's spouses or partners spoke a language other than English or Finnish (n=24). For men, the numbers were too small to talk about percentages, but the proportions were different from those for women and may be indicative of differential preferences in marriage patterns (see, e.g., Leinonen 2011a, 2011b; Heikkilä, Oksi-Walter & Säävälä 2014). Ten spouses or partners of the male participants were also Finnish (thus, resembling the old-time scenario and making it possible to have a fully Finnish-speaking household). Eleven of male participants' spouses/partners were still native speakers of English, but a few (n=5) spoke another language than English or Finnish as their native language. (In these cases, the question becomes what language is the default family language and what language the father speaks to the children.) Twenty-eight participants did not report a partner or spouse. Table 12 below shows the differences in partners'/spouses' native languages for men and women.

Table 12. If you are married/have a partner, what is your spouse's/partner's native language?¹¹

Answer Choices	Female Respondents		Male Respondents		All Respondents	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
English	58	129	39	11	56	140
Finnish	20	45	36	10	22	55
Other language	11	24	18	5	12	29
Not applicable	12	26	7	2	11	28
Total	100	224	100	28	100	252

This scenario — the fact that most participants live with spouses and partners whose native language is not Finnish — differs radically from the scenario of a hundred years ago when the spouses of Finnish migrants were almost always also Finnish, and Finnish thus was the language of the family (Leinonen 2011a, 2011b). It was typical that children learned English only when they entered school and then became exposed to it (Martin & Jönsson-Korhola 1993, 18). Now, the family's default language is often English and chil-

¹⁰ The editors point out that this is a reflection of the structure of recent migration from Finland to the United States, where the majority of migrants are women. This pattern, in contrast with the older male-dominant pattern (Leinonen 2011b, 84), and reasons for it, would be worth investigating in a separate study.

¹¹ The percentages have been rounded. Note that the numbers for male respondents are too small for reliable comparison.

dren hear English from the start, even though the Finnish-speaking parent valiantly attempts to expose the children to Finnish as well.

It can be inferred that if only 22 percent of Finns living in North America have spouses or partners who are native speakers of Finnish (Figure 2), and if most Finns are married to English speakers or speakers of other languages (Table 12), for most North American Finns, the language spoken with the spouse/partner will be English. Table 13 verifies this: 56 percent speak English with the spouse/partner; four percent report speaking mostly English, and six percent mix Finnish and English (this with the Finnish-speaking spouse).

Table 13. What language do you speak with your spouse/partner? (n=251)

Answer Choices	%	n
English	56.2	141
Finnish	20.0	50
Mostly Finnish	2.0	5
Mostly English	4.4	11
I mix Finnish and English	6.4	16
Not applicable	11.2	28
Total	100.0	251

The responses to the command and use of English among the participants, their families, relatives, and friends show a heavy, daily influence of English in the respondents' lives. Unlike in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ethnic Finnish communities, where Finnish was spoken among neighbors and friends, today's migrants must resort to other resources in order to communicate in "the Old Country" language.

Passing Heritage Finnish to Children

One of the survey questions concerned the need to use Finnish among the respondents. Table 14 summarizes the results:

Table 14. I need Finnish... (check all that apply) (n=250)

Answer Choices	%	n
for my work	14.4	36
during my weekly hobbies	2.8	7
to communicate with friends and relatives in the USA or Canada	40.4	101
to communicate with friends and relatives in Finland	98.0	245
to feel connected to my homeland	65.6	164

Quite predictably, relatively few (n=36 or 14 %) needed to use Finnish for their work-related activities: “I work as a FI-EN translator”; “I serve as an honorary consul - use a lot of Finnish.” Most people (n=245 or 98 %) needed Finnish to communicate with friends and relatives in Finland — and because of today’s real-time communication options, the upkeep of conversational fluency in Finnish is perhaps more critical than it was among the migrants a hundred years ago, when the language in the letters could be planned and polished before mailing.

Family ties are obviously important (see, e.g., Leinonen 2012). Forty percent of the participants (n=101) needed Finnish to communicate with friends and relatives in the United States or Canada. The comments revealed that most people here referred to the immediate family. One respondent made this clear: “The relative is my daughter.” Especially poignant was this need to communicate, in Finnish, with one’s own children, as well as with other loved ones:

- To teach my kids Finnish
- to speak with my children
- To keep up Finnish language with my children
- For keeping my kids fluent in it
- And to communicate with my fiancé who lives with me in the US.

From this bulleted list, it becomes clear that children emerge as the most often mentioned motivation to speak Finnish. Unlike the migrant a hundred years ago, who often could not speak English, today’s migrants have a choice: they themselves know English, and their children are aware of the parent’s English competence. Both parents and children can choose to use either language, and using Finnish is thus a conscious choice, often against the easiest choice to resort to the majority language. Especially if the other parent does not speak Finnish, the use of Finnish may cause awkward situations within the family (e.g., Barron-Hauwaert 2004, 126–128, 132), but many still choose to speak Finnish to the children (cf. Leinonen 2011a).

The following question was addressed to those respondents who had children: How do you promote knowledge of Finnish with your children? This question yielded 161 replies, reported and discussed in the following section, 4.4.1. In addition, 143 respondents shared strategies that they had found successful in promoting their children’s Finnish competence. These will be presented in section 4.4.2 below.

Promoting the Knowledge of Finnish with Children

An interesting theoretical question to investigate would be the connection between the demographic differences between the two Finnish migrant populations (the early wave vs. the recent) and the transmission of Finnish competence to the next generation. Is it easier or harder for heritage Finnish to prevail among the children of today’s families?

Could Finnish still be passed to third and even fourth generations, as was sometimes the case in earlier times within more isolated, and thus more cohesive, Finnish communities in North America (e.g., Kainulainen 1993)? Today, Finnish language input is very limited, and often only one parent is the main source of this input. With English often taking a large proportion in daily communications at home, with no actual need for the children to speak Finnish to their parents (as these parents also know English), and with few “natural” opportunities for communication in Finnish among friends, neighbors, and the community, what measures do today’s Finns in North America take to pass Finnish to their children? And what measures seem to be working?

Acknowledging that preventing (or at least slowing down) the language shift (Fishman 1991) from Finnish to English will involve a conscious effort, the respondents also shared their strategies to fight the loss of Finnish by the next generation. What is particularly delightful about the survey results is the willingness of the participants to share the means they use in order to pass some level of competence in Finnish to their children.

The results of the question “How do you promote the knowledge of Finnish with your children?” are summarized in Table 15:

Table 15. How do you promote the knowledge of Finnish with your children? (n=161)

Answer Choices	%	n
I provide them Finnish books.	49.1	79
I read Finnish to them.	44.1	71
I encourage them to access Finnish films and other programs on the Internet.	39.1	63
I try to send them to Finland often.	37.9	61
All the above	32.9	53

Books and reading, films and the Internet were popular means of providing children with more Finnish input. In addition, many sent children to Finland for immersion in the language, and many respondents resorted to all these means of increased exposure to the heritage language. The respondents were also asked if there was anything else they did to promote their children’s competence in Finnish, and the list of means provided was long: 73 responses. Clearly, people were interested in sharing their experiences (see also Leinonen 2011a). The following list is only a selection of typical responses to the question “Is there anything else you do to promote your children’s Finnish language?”

- I promote all kinds of exchange programs – summer camps, high school age exchange, university study abroad programs.
- Hired finish teacher during summer for 4 days (3hrs/day) to teach reading and writing.
- We have a Finnish au pair.

- have Mummo visit
- Was supportive of their decision to do military service in Finland. One stayed in Finland after that.
- Kannustan pitämään yhteyttä suomalaisiin ystäviin ja sukulaisiin. Pelataan paljon suomalaisia lautapelejä ja korttipelejä. Kyselen tyylisiin, keksipäs sanoja joissa on pitkä vokaali tms. Kotona on myös suomalaisia oppikirjoja, etenkin äidinkielen kirjat tarjoavat monipuolisia tekstejä. (I encourage [the children] to keep in touch with their Finnish friends and relatives. We play a lot of Finnish board games and card games, and I keep asking, try to think of words that have a long vowel, etc. At home, we also have Finnish textbooks, especially books of the mother tongue offer varied texts.)
- I try to find other Finnish speaking children of his age that live in the area and arrange playdates. We also go once a week to a Finnish family club.
- I tell them about their relatives and family history and culture
- We talk with Finnish relatives and friends on Skype as often as possible. Listening to Finnish radio.

Some mention the help of formal teaching in Finnish and have enrolled their children in the Finnish online or distance-learning school, Etäkoulu Kulkuri, a program run by *Kansanvalistusseura* (The Finnish Lifelong Learning Foundation). In this program, children can learn Finnish through coursework, and, if need be, they can also complete all basic coursework.¹² Many also mention Suomi-koulu, the Finnish school, if it is available within a reasonable distance:

- Lapset käyvät San Diegoon Suomi-koulua (Children go to San Diego Finnish school)

One parent summarizes the simplest means of language transmission: “Speak Finnish to them.” Another parent elaborates:

- I speak only Finnish to them no matter what. If needed, I will first speak in Finnish and then reiterate words in English if I feel they might not have understood or they tell me they haven't understood.

However, promoting Finnish is not necessarily a priority for everyone. One parent comments briefly: “I don't promote it.” However, from the abundance of responses and the enthusiasm in the respondents' tones, it becomes clear that these migrant parents are quite aware of the fact that the language shift from Finnish to English will happen unless conscious measures are taken to maintain the children's heritage Finnish (cf. Halmari 1997, 221). For most of these highly-skilled migrant parents, promoting some level of competence in Finnish seems to be a priority. The survey yielded 185 responses to the question, “How important is it to you that your children and grandchildren know Finnish?” Only 12 percent (n=22) responded that this is not important; for 25 percent

¹² See <https://peda.net/kulkuri>.

(n=47) it was somewhat important. For most respondents, 63 percent (n=116), the next generation's knowledge of Finnish was very important.

Successful Strategies

The research participants were also asked the following question: "What seems to have helped most in boosting your children's Finnish language?" The list below provides examples of the 143 collected responses:

- Being in Finland around only Finnish speaking people (without me). We did 5 day over night horseback riding camp and that developed their speech immensely.
- Joka kesäinen Suomessa käynti ja kaksikielisyys syntymästä (Visits to Finland every summer and bilingualism since birth), language camp in Minnesota
- Consistency with only speaking Finnish. Also providing fun, interesting and age-appropriate materials. I am actually struggling a bit now because Moomins are getting to be too childish and I have not found anything as frequently appealing to replace them. Aku Ankkas are working now but will not do the trick forever. I try to keep my encouragement for Finnish materials positive so it does not become a chore. It is always wonderful when people provide praise for my son's Finnish skills. He has by now realized it is something positive and important and worthy for him, not only to mom but to himself, as well. :)
- Se, että olen ollut johdonmukainen enkä ole koskaan puhunut heille englantia muuten kuin sosiaalisissa tilanteissa amerikkalaisten kanssa. Kun he oli vielä lukutaidottomia, luin heille jopa englanninkielisetkin kirjat suomeksi. (The fact that I have been consistent and never spoke English to them other than in social situations with Americans. When they were still illiterate, I read even English books to them in Finnish.)
- Pikku Kakkonen app for streaming kids shows and other Finnish apps (Mostly Pikku Kakkonen app)
- Finnish speaking friends. Humor. Music.
- Their mummo (Their grandmother)

From these responses, consistency, persistence, and strong Finnish-speaking support networks emerge as the key strategies. Regular language immersion in Finland or elsewhere (reference to the Salolampi language program in Minnesota); sticking to speaking only Finnish to the children; introducing them to positive experiences that involve Finnish literature and Internet applications – these strategies and approaches have proven successful. Finally, naturally occurring interactions with Finnish-speaking relatives and friends provide concrete proof to the next generation that Finnish is a living language that can be used for social interactions also outside the nuclear family.

In Conclusion: Nurturing the Virtual Finnish Village

Today's Finnish migrants are scattered all over North America. Instead of the small, rural villages in Upper Midwest or New England where a hundred or so years ago Finns could navigate through their lives without necessarily having to learn English, today's North American Finns live among and work with English speakers, often in large urban centers. They have a good education and demanding, often high-paying jobs, where command of English is key. These demands necessarily pose a huge challenge to their maintenance of Finnish. People no longer live in small communities, among their ethnic countrymen, where Finnish was spoken by both parents and could also be heard outside the home. Situations to be exposed to Finnish and for its use often need to be consciously sought after.

Therefore, the small Finnish migrant communities have re-emerged, now transformed into the relatively tight Finnish American social-media "virtual villages." This is not a unique phenomenon, as migrant communities all over the world resort to similar solutions. Navarrete and Huerta (2006) use the metaphor of building "virtual bridges" to maintain a sense of community in the new country. Komito (2011, 1075) claims that social media use in virtual spaces, albeit perhaps passive, still "supports a dispersed community of affinity." According to Skop and Adams (2009), cyberspace allows for the development and celebration of ethnic identities.

It is in these virtual villages where North American Finns of the twenty-first century also can post, chat, and connect with other "Old Country" people and do that in their own language. Old ethnic village stores have been replaced by net stores where one can buy Finnish delicacies, design, and decor. Virtual "yard sales" make it possible to trade pre-used Finnish products (e.g., *Amerikansuomalaisten Markkinapaikka*) and sell and buy gently read Finnish books (e.g., *USA:n suomalaisten kirjakirppis*).

The self-selected nature of the population of Internet-using, highly-skilled Finnish migrants who volunteered to participate in this study poses a severe limitation to the findings reported in this chapter. In addition, the number of participants is small. However, what shines clearly from the enthusiastic responses is that, at least for this group of migrant Finns, the language issue is close to the heart. They face the same fundamental problem of second-generation language loss confronted by their fellow migrant Finns a century ago. Yet, the virtual Finnish "village" provides opportunities to use Finnish, and the determination, consistency, and creativity of today's migrant Finns in exposing their own children to Finnish is admirable. Technology allows the survey respondents and their children to communicate in Finnish even though face-to-face conversations are necessarily limited. People today also have money to travel to Finland (and travel takes less time) — an opportunity few migrants had around the year 1900. What has been lost with the disappearance of the old Finnish ethnic communities has been replaced by a world where connections to Finland are easy and frequent, a world where communication is enabled through virtual spaces.

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