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10 Bilingualism, ideology and identity

Change in the Finland-Swedish variety

J.A. E. Strandberg and C. Gooskens

10.1 Introduction

Finland has two national languages; Finnish and a variety of Swedish known as Finland-Swedish. Throughout most of the country's history, Swedish and Finnish were spoken side by side in largely distinct linguistic communities. Yet, with the urbanisation of southern Finland, which began in the late nineteenth century and continues to this day, regions that were historically monolingually Swedish are becoming majority Finnish-speaking. After the country's independence in 1917, Finnish was established as the main language of Finland, and over the course of the twentieth century the position of Swedish came to resemble that of a minority language, rather than a national language (Lindgren, Lindgren and Saari 2011). In 2018, only 5.2 percent of the Finnish population, i.e., fewer than 300,000 individuals, spoke Swedish as their first language (Statistikcentralen 2018).

As Finnish is the dominant language in the country, urbanisation and increased intergroup communication mean that bilingualism is increasingly demanded from Swedish native speakers in everyday social interactions. Linguistic exogamy (i.e., marriage occurring between speakers of different languages) has become progressively more common since the 1950s, with many individuals growing up in bilingual Finnish- and Swedish-speaking homes (see Finnäs 2015). In spite of this changing linguistic situation, relatively little research has been conducted on the extent of bilingualism within Finland or on the linguistic and social consequences of it. This chapter discusses the ideological and practical issues surrounding the two national languages of Finland, exploring how increasing bilingualism and frequent translanguaging in Finland-Swedish communities may lead to phonetic and lexical changes in the Finland-Swedish variety.

10.2 A brief history of Swedish in Finland

As early as AD 1000, speakers of Old East Norse, a language that later diverged into Swedish and Danish, established substantial settlements on the southern and western coast of Finland (Ivars and Huldén 2002). During the Swedish

rule of Finland, from the twelfth until the nineteenth century, Swedish was the language of the state. It also continued to be used as the administrative language even after the 1809 annexation of Finland by Russia, until the country's independence in 1917 (Wide and Lyngfelt 2009). Standardised Finland-Swedish was generally the language of the upper class, while local Finnish as well as Swedish dialects were spoken by the lower social classes. Since Finnish was not used in high society or education, it remained unstandardised throughout most of the nineteenth century, and was seen as a social marker separating the Finnish-speaking lower classes from the Swedish-speaking elite (Saari 2012). In the late nineteenth century, the Finland-Swedish elite began promoting the use of the Finnish language through the *Fennomanian* movement. This National Romantic movement encouraged the use of Finnish in the higher social classes, simultaneously endorsing linguistic standardisation and education in Finnish. Many originally Swedish-speaking families began using Finnish at home and fennicised their surnames by translating or transliterating their name to Finnish; an example of this is how the Swedish surname Strengman was transliterated into the Finnish-sounding name Renkonen¹ (Di Luzio and Kotta 2012). By the 1900s, Finnish stopped being a social marker, as the language had conquered all domains in society, and internal migration and mass media continued to promote the standardisation of both written and spoken Finnish throughout the twentieth century (Saari 2012; McRae, Helander and Luoma 1997). Today, both Finnish and Swedish are official national languages in Finland, with the vast majority of Finnish nationals from all social circles speaking Finnish as their first language.

Finland-Swedish has only rarely been argued to be a separate language from the Swedish spoken in Sweden, but it is recognised as a separate variety with distinct features of pronunciation, lexicon, syntax and semantics. An example of a well-known distinction is that the majority of Swedish dialects spoken in Sweden make use of pitch accent, using the acute and grave accents to distinguish between homographs in speech; for instance, the acute accent is used in the word *anden* (¹and-en, 'the duck'), while the grave accent is used in *anden* (²ande-n, 'the spirit') (Bailey 1988; Riad 2013). Finland-Swedish, on the other hand, does not use pitch accent, and thus such homographs are also homophones, with the words being distinguished only by the context. The pronunciation of some consonants also differs between the Swedish varieties spoken in Finland and in Sweden: for instance, the *-sj-* combination in *sju* ('seven') is pronounced as the voiceless palato-alveolar fricative [ʃ] in Finland-Swedish, but as the voiceless postalveolar-velar fricative [ɧ] in Sweden-Swedish. Similarly, while a Swedish individual would pronounce *keramik* ('ceramics') with initial [ç], a Finland-Swedish individual would likely use initial [k] (Reuter 2015).

Because of its geographical separation from the Swedish spoken in Sweden, Finland-Swedish has retained certain archaic features of pronunciation and vocabulary (Reuter 1977). Additionally, as a result of the long history of Finnish and Swedish being spoken side by side in Finland, the two languages have also influenced each other. In the last century in particular, an increasing number of

Finnish words and phrases have been borrowed into Finland-Swedish (Clyne, Norrby and Warren 2009; Jamrowska 1996). Finnish loanwords are common in everyday Finland-Swedish, and include nouns as well as adjectives and verbs; common examples include *juttu* ('thing, story'), *kiva* ('nice, fun'), and *håsa* ('to rush'). Loan-translations occur as single words or phrases, such as *med långa tänder*, a calque of Finnish *pitkin hampain* (lit. 'with long teeth'), which suggests doing something with aversion.

10.3 Language policy and identity

Finland-Swedish is only spoken by approximately 290,000 native speakers in Finland today, but still retains its position as one of the two national languages. In theory, the language rights of both linguistic communities are equal: in bilingual municipalities, all Finland-Swedish and Finnish individuals have the right to education and public services in their native tongue. However, in practice, in many regions it is challenging for Finland-Swedes to obtain healthcare or other official services in Swedish, and they often have to settle for services in Finnish. As the predominance of Finnish keeps growing steadily, it is becoming increasingly difficult to work or access services without Finnish, even in regions that until recently were Swedish-dominant (McRae et al. 1997).

Despite Swedish being a *de facto* minority language with relatively few native speakers in Finland, Finland-Swedes have traditionally upheld a strong linguistically anchored ethnic identity, and tend to be defined as a group mainly by their native tongue, *finlandssvenska*, 'Finland-Swedish' (af Hällström-Reijonen 2012; Skutnabb-Kangas 1999). While always claiming a Finnish national identity (Lojander 2008), Finland-Swedes often take great pains to distinguish themselves from Finnish-speaking Finns (frequently referred to as *finnar*, literally 'Finns'), by self-identifying as *finlandssvenskar* ('Finland-Swedish') or *finländare* ('Finnish'). While the terms *finlandssvensk* and *finne* are used to differentiate between Finland-Swedish and Finnish speakers, *finländare* can be used to refer to Finnish individuals of any language background. The relationship between Finland-Swedes and Finns can thus be compared to that of anglophones and francophones in Canada, where, according to Heller (1999: 144) 'language is the principal characteristic differentiating between groups which clearly think of themselves as distinct.' The fact that language is the main inter-group distinction between Finns and Finland-Swedes means that occasional fennification of Finland-Swedish cultural heritage is often met with harsh criticism. For instance, films narrating the lives of historic figures such as composer Jean Sibelius or the painter Helene Schjerfbeck have been criticised by the public and by Finland-Swedish media for ignoring the Swedish-language heritage of the individuals, instead depicting them as Finnish-speaking.



Figure 10.1 Map of Finland highlighting bilingual municipalities with Finland-Swedish minority (light grey) or Finland-Swedish majority (dark grey), as well as monolingual Finland-Swedish municipalities on the Åland islands (black). Data source: Kuntaliitto 2017.

10.4 Urbanisation of southern Finland

The linguistic climate in Finland has been strongly influenced by considerable internal migration during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Due to the urbanisation of the capital city of Helsinki, located in southern Finland, Finnish native speakers have migrated in great numbers to traditionally Swedish-speaking regions on the southern coastline. As a result, the Greater Helsinki Area, and the southern coast of Finland in particular, have witnessed a rapid rise in bilingual speakers (Tandefelt 1996; Finnäs 2015).

Helsinki is located in the southern province of Uusimaa (Sw. *Nyland*), which hosts approximately 30 percent of the 5.5 million inhabitants of Finland, compared to 3.3 percent of the population in Ostrobothnia or 0.5 percent on Åland (Statistikcentralen 2018). As such, Uusimaa has the highest population density at 182 inhabitants per square kilometer. Due to urbanisation, the population in Uusimaa changed from being majority Swedish-speaking in 1880 to having only 11 percent of native Swedish-speakers in 1990 (Henning-Lindblom and Liebkind 2007). Similarly, coastal municipalities such as Porvoo, Kauniainen, Kirkkonummi and Hanko² had a Swedish-speaking majority until the 1970s, when a vast number of Finnish-speakers moved from the inland to the southern coast (Finnäs 2012). As Figure 10.1 demonstrates, while the island of Åland is monolingually Swedish-speaking, there are no longer any monolingual Swedish-speaking municipalities on the Finnish mainland.

Although the majority of the Finland-Swedish population continues to live in southern Finland, today this area mainly consists of Finnish-majority bilingual municipalities,³ where knowledge of Finnish is crucial. Meanwhile, in areas such as Ostrobothnia, on the western coast of Finland, Swedish is still the majority language in many places. In this region, many districts are still monolingually Swedish-speaking, and knowledge of Finnish may not be necessary for daily life. Research into the language use of Finland-Swedish university students in southern Finland and Ostrobothnia has revealed differences between the two regions: while 84 percent of Ostrobothnian students used mostly or only Swedish on a daily basis, only 60 percent of Swedish-speaking participants from southern Finland used Swedish as frequently as, or more often than, Finnish (Leinonen and Tandefelt 2007).

A natural consequence of the increase of bilingual municipalities, particularly in southern Finland, has been the rise of bilingual marriages. Linguistic exogamy has increased steadily in Finland since the 1950s due to growing urbanisation and the resulting language contact and bilingualism (McRae et al. 1997). Since the 1970s, the yearly number of marriages between a Swedish native speaker and a Finnish one has been higher than the number of marriages in which both parties are Swedish-speaking (Finnäs 2012). As the Finnish native speakers far outnumber the Swedish native speakers, linguistic exogamy influences the Finland-Swedish community as a whole a great deal more than the Finnish-speaking community (McRae et al. 1997). In 2012, in southern Finland, as many as three out of four marriages involving a Swedish-speaking

individual were between a Finnish and a Swedish speaker. By contrast, in Ostrobothnia, less than one fifth of marriages involving a Swedish-speaking individual were bilingual (Finnäs 2012).

The Finnish state has documented the mother tongue of its citizens since 1865. Today, the linguistic affiliation of censused individuals is gathered in the Population Information System, which is handled by the Digital and Population Data Services Agency (DVV). Information about a child's full name, along with their registered native language, must be sent to the DVV within three months of the child's birth. Only one language can be entered as the individual's native language, but the person in question may change their preferred language at any time. Nevertheless, because it is currently only possible to report one language as an individual's mother tongue, data collection on bilingualism or multilingualism is difficult (Palviainen and Bergroth 2018).⁴ In spite of the challenges of gathering precise data, the extent of native Finnish and Finland-Swedish bilingualism varies greatly across the country. It has been estimated that, out of all children born to a Finland-Swedish parent in the urban Greater Helsinki region between 2006 and 2011, 70 percent had another parent who was Finnish-speaking (Finnäs 2012). The corresponding numbers in relatively urbanised areas in western and eastern Uusimaa were between 50 and 60 percent. In comparison, fewer than one in five of the children born to a Finland-Swedish parent in the rural areas of Ostrobothnia and the Åland islands came from mixed-language backgrounds (Finnäs 2012).

10.5 Language ideology

Since it is only possible to report one native language per child in Finland, the concept of a single 'mother tongue' is socially enforced, and is often strongly connected to a person's experiences and identity (Palviainen and Bergroth 2018). In a study on the linguistic identities of parents in exogamous Finnish and Finland-Swedish families, Palviainen and Bergroth (2018) found that, whilst being effectively bi- or multilingual, most parents expressly identified themselves as either Finnish or Finland-Swedish. This shows that, while individuals are often functionally bilingual, the concept of language is a deeply ideological and political factor in Finland, as linguistic identities are performed and negotiated on the basis of language ideologies out of the socio-cultural context. Deciding which one of a bilingual child's two languages should be their official native language effectively requires their parents to take a political stance.

The conventions for choosing the mother tongue of the child within an exogamous marriage in Finland seem to have shifted over time. Until the 1980s, children from mixed Finnish and Swedish-speaking families were usually registered as Finnish-speaking. Conversely, according to demographic data, in 2012 as many as two-thirds of children from mixed Finnish and Finland-Swedish families were registered as Swedish-speaking (Finnäs 2012). In families where the mother is Swedish-speaking, her linguistic identity seems to be a

deciding factor when choosing a child's registered native language; in 2011, more than 80 percent of families where the mother was Swedish-speaking registered their children as Swedish-speaking. The corresponding number for families in which the mother was Finnish-speaking was approximately 50 percent (Finnäs 2012).

Although the language of education may be determined by external factors, such as the proximity of schools in the desired language, the language of education of a child is usually the same as their official first language. A study by Lojander-Visapää (2008) indicated that the language in which bilingual children were educated had a large impact on their eventual language use, meaning that the language choice that the parents make for the child is also likely to determine the child's future linguistic identity. The study showed that bilingual children who went to Swedish-speaking schools also spoke Swedish regularly at home (Lojander-Visapää 2008). These students also used both Swedish and Finnish outside of the home, alternating between languages according to the communicative context. Bilingual children attending Finnish-language schools, on the other hand, were less likely to use Swedish at home and almost never used it elsewhere (Lojander-Visapää 2008). The choice concerning the official mother tongue and the language of education for a bilingual child may thus determine whether he or she becomes a *social bilingual*, using both the minority and majority languages in different social spheres, or a *private bilingual*, using the minority language only inside the home (Lojander-Visapää 2008).

10.6 Bilingualism in action

While the Swedish-speaking community in Finland is small in number, it is not always seen as an underprivileged minority, but rather often argued to be 'an indigenous ethnic group with a strong position in society' (Saarela and Finnäs 2014: 79). Unlike most minority groups, the language of the Finland-Swedes has – in theory – an equal standing to the Finnish language. Nevertheless, this is not always reflected in inter-group communication; although primary education in both Finnish and Swedish involves schooling in both national languages, far fewer native Finnish than Finland-Swedish speakers tend to be functionally bilingual. Although it is possible to exclusively use Swedish both in- and outside the home in certain communities (mainly in the regions of Ostrobothnia and on Åland; see Figure 10.1), Swedish monolingualism among individuals is limited to certain regions and certain jobs. Although proficiency in Swedish may be considered an advantage or even a requirement for certain (mainly government) jobs, due to the dominance of Finnish, many Finland-Swedish individuals use primarily Finnish in their professional life. Thus even an individual with a monolingual Swedish-speaking background may develop into what Lojander-Visapää (2008) refers to as a private bilingual, speaking Swedish only with family or friends.

For the Finland-Swedish bilingual, the choice between using Swedish or Finnish in a specific public setting may depend on a number of factors. Even

for social bilinguals, one of the most important factors for language use is geographical location. For instance, a social bilingual Swedish native speaker is relatively likely to initiate a customer service interaction in Swedish in Porvoo, a formerly Swedish-majority coastal municipality which retains a high percentage of Swedish-speaking inhabitants to this day. On the other hand, they are less likely to try to use Swedish in Mikkeli, a monolingual Finnish municipality in central Finland. In general, it is notable that both social and private bilingual Finland-Swedes have a strong tendency to initiate interactions with strangers in the majority Finnish language, unless the area is well-known for having a large Swedish-speaking population.

Because it is often considered easier to initiate conversations in Finnish, rather than to try in Swedish and possibly have to switch to Finnish regardless, it may occasionally transpire halfway through an interaction that both parties are, in fact, native Swedish speakers. While the predisposition for bilingual Finland-Swedes to automatically switch to Finnish can be viewed as a direct result of the ongoing language shift in Finland, this behaviour is also often denounced for further weakening the position of Swedish. McRae et al. (1997) state that most Finland-Swedes are resigned to using Finnish in public spaces and adjusting to the dominant Finnish language. If a group of Finland-Swedes are having a conversation in Swedish, the language is likely to change to Finnish as soon as a single Finnish speaker joins the conversation. According to McRae et al. (1997), this behavioral mode may well lead to the eventual disappearance of Swedish in Finland, as 'among older [Finland-Swedish] informants there is occasionally wistful regret for a more comfortable past, while younger ones adjust more pragmatically to contemporary conditions' (1997: 432).

Whether or not the dominance of Finnish will eventually lead to the disappearance of Finland-Swedish remains unclear, but the increased influence of Finnish is evident in the high number of instances of translanguaging that take place in interactions of bilingual Finland-Swedish individuals. The concept of translanguaging relies on the idea of fluid use of linguistic resources, defining bilingualism not as a parallel use of two autonomous language systems, but rather as one linguistic repertoire (Pennycook 2017). The theory of translanguaging posits that it is not the prescribed and taught language of monolinguals that is the global norm, but rather the bilingual practice of strategically using features from a single repertoire in order to communicate effectively (García and Li Wei 2014). Translanguaging is often witnessed in interactions between Finland-Swedish individuals, in situations where both parties know each other to be bilingual speakers of Swedish and Finnish. The practice often occurs due to the ease and practicality of both speakers being fluent in the same languages, resulting in communication in which language features from either language are used regardless of the communication-related task or context. As such, translanguaging cannot be argued to be a result of a specific language being tied to a specific use. However, Henricson (2015) argues that shifting between Swedish and Finnish is often done to structure the conversation, for instance when changing topics or when indicating a change of speaker in the retelling

of a story. Additionally, as translanguaging requires all parties in the conversation to share the same linguistic background, this type of language practice can be used to strengthen or maintain bi- or multilingual social networks and groups.

In spite of the frequent use of translanguaging among Finland-Swedish individuals, on a conscious level many speakers frown upon this type of communication. Translanguaging, as well as the use of borrowed Finnish words and phrases in Finland-Swedish, is considered incorrect use of language, and it is often argued to be a threat to the existence of the Finland-Swedish variety. Yet, the recent studies presented below suggest that, even when using only a single language in speech, bilinguals seem to be developing converging vowel systems for Finland-Swedish and Finnish.

10.7 Language contact and phonetic change

Phonetically, Finland-Swedish and Finnish are relatively similar, more so than Finnish and Sweden-Swedish. The only phoneme that is found in Finland-Swedish but not in Finnish is /ɥ:/ (Kuronen 2000), although, overall, Finnish has fewer allophones than Swedish. For instance, both Swedish and Finnish make use of the phoneme [ø] for the grapheme <ö>, but in Swedish the phoneme usually has two allophones in complementary distribution, i.e., [ø] (as in *öga*, ‘eye’) and [œ] (as in *öra*, ‘ear’).

Some earlier scholars have suggested that the similarities of Finnish and Finland-Swedish are not a consequence of the geographical vicinity of the two languages, but of Finland-Swedish developing independently from Sweden-Swedish on the other side of the Baltic Sea (see Niemi 1981; Ahlbäck 1971). Niemi (1981) argues that the two linguistic groups have been culturally and linguistically separated throughout most of history, and that the existing changes are too small to suggest change due to language contact. However, Kuronen (2000) counters that it is precisely because the differences between the languages are small that we can presume that some adjustment towards Finnish has taken place in Finland-Swedish.

Kuronen (2000) also argues that phonetic changes are currently occurring in Finland-Swedish due to increased contact with the Finnish majority language. In a 2000 study, he compared vowel formant frequencies of four native and four childhood bilingual Finland-Swedish participants from Helsinki and Tampere, four monolingual Finnish participants from Tampere, and four monolingual Swedish participants from Sweden (Kuronen 2000). The participants were all males aged 17 to 18. Kuronen focused on the first formant (F_1), which relates to the height of the tongue in the mouth, and on the second formant (F_2), which relates to the frontness or backness of the tongue. Six out of eight bilingual Finland-Swedish participants in the study demonstrated use of largely the same vowel system for both Finnish and Swedish (Kuronen 2000). These bilingual participants did not break any norms of either Standard Finland-Swedish or Standard Finnish, but their Finnish did not include some dialectal phonetic features that were found in monolingual Finnish speakers (Kuronen 2000). For

instance, the bilingual participants' Finnish pronunciation of [y:] had higher F₂ values than that of the monolingual Finnish-speakers from the same region, while their pronunciations of [e:] and [ø:] had comparatively lower F₁ values (Kuronen 2000). According to Kuronen, this suggests that bilingual people who are fluent in both Finnish and Finland-Swedish may struggle to separate the qualitatively similar vowel systems, especially when using either vowel system is communicatively sufficient for both languages (2000: 60).

In a more recent apparent-time study on the vowel production of Finland-Swedes, Strandberg (2018, 2019) explored the influence of native or early childhood bilingualism on the pronunciation of the variable /ø/ in Finland-Swedish. In Swedish, the phoneme /ø/, indicated by the grapheme <ö>, occurs either as the close-mid front rounded vowel [ø], or as the open-mid front rounded vowel [œ] (Leinonen 2010; Riad 2002). The allophone [ø] occurs in most speech contexts, while [œ] only occurs before /r/ (compare *öga* [ø:ga], 'eye', and *öra* [œ:ra], 'ear'). As the open-mid front rounded vowel [œ] is notoriously difficult for Finnish native speakers to master, it is often replaced by the allophone [ø], leading to the latter being considered a linguistic marker for Finnish natives speaking Swedish as a second language. Due to evidence from previous studies such as that of Kuronen (2000), which suggests that bilingual Finnish and Finland-Swedish speakers may have converging vowel systems, Strandberg (2018, 2019) explored whether the increasing dominance of the Finnish language is affecting the pronunciation of [œ] in Finland-Swedish bilinguals. The hypothesis of the study was that, considering that [œ] rarely occurs and does not have phonemic status in Swedish, the increased influence from the Finnish majority language and increased use of translanguaging would cause [œ] to be pronounced more like [ø] (Strandberg 2019). The acoustic analysis consisted of examining differences in Hz values for the F₁ and F₂ formants of allophones [œ] and [ø] in fourteen speakers. In addition, the perception of the allophones and speakers' abilities to identify them in target words was explored in a nation-wide survey.

In order to collect the phonetic data, interviews with nine female and three male Finland-Swedish individuals between the ages of 5 and 84 with different levels of bilingualism were recorded. All speakers were from one extended family, which was expected to limit social or regional variation in their speech. However, the speakers differed when it came to fluency and age of acquisition of Finnish. The six participants from the two older generations of speakers, aged 51 to 84, had acquired Finnish as a second language in school, after the age of 10. On the other hand, three of the four third-generation speakers, aged 32 to 37, were mostly early childhood bilinguals, having been exposed to Finnish in kindergarten from the ages of 1;0 and 2;0 onwards. The fourth third-generation participant, aged 28, had acquired Finnish in kindergarten after the age of 5;0, thus being on the border between an early and late childhood bilingual. Finally, the four fourth-generation participants, aged 5 to 10 years old, were native bilinguals, having been exposed to both Finnish and Swedish from birth. Samples of speech of all participants were collected through

photo-elicited interviews (PEIs), which involved asking participants to describe images involving target words. This elicitation method was chosen in order to sample target words in a similar fashion from both adult and child participants. The F_1 and F_2 formants produced by each participant for both the allophones [œ] and [ø] were then sampled in the acoustic analysis software Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2016).

The findings of the acoustic analysis indicated some differences in vowel production between older participants, who had learned Finnish in later childhood, and younger participants, who were early childhood or native bilinguals. Although no apparent-time generational change was evident for F_2 , the F_1 measurements of [œ] and [ø] showed considerably more convergence for the seven participants aged 5 to 37 who were early or native bilinguals. The results suggest that age of acquisition of Finnish correlates with the discrimination of the allophones in relation to the height of the tongue, as native and early bilinguals were more likely to have converging F_1 values for [œ] and [ø]. On the other hand, the seven participants who acquired Finnish after the age of 5 produced significantly different mean values for the two formants (Strandberg 2019).

In addition to studying production, the study by Strandberg (2018, 2019) also explored the perception of the allophones [ø] and [œ] in Finland-Swedish. In a survey, 281 participants were asked to match target words containing either the [ø] or [œ] allophone to four other words containing the grapheme <ö>; for instance, the vowel in the target word *ö* ([ø:], 'island') could be matched to the <ö> vowel in *öga* ([ø:ga], 'eye'), *öra* ([œ:ra], 'ear'), *smör* ([smœ:r], 'butter'), or *bröd* ([brø:d], 'bread'). The participants could indicate that the target word vowel was the same as the vowel sound in one, two, or three of the other words, or that all the words contained the same vowel sound. Alternatively, the participants could indicate that the vowel in the target word did not match any of the other words. Overall, the participants were quite accurate in matching target words to other words containing the same allophone. When misidentification occurred, the errors were more likely to appear when identifying a target word containing the allophone [œ]. The data thus indicated that speakers are more likely to perceive an expected [œ] allophone in a word as [ø], rather than the other way around. This suggests that there is more variation in the production of /ø/ before /r/ than in any other context in Finland-Swedish. In spite of this, open-ended responses in the survey suggested that the use of [ø] in the place of [œ]⁵ was highly marked and stigmatised, since several survey participants remarked that the inability to pronounce [œ] is considered a native Finnish-speaking trait.⁶ Interestingly, although the Finland-Swedish participants considered the replacement of the allophone [œ] by [ø] to be a stigmatised feature (often suggesting a Finnish second-language speaker of Swedish), the participants themselves only correctly identified <ö> as the allophone [œ] in words such as *öra* and *smör* between 64 and 77 percent of the times (Strandberg 2018).

A notable finding from the data was the difference between perception results of native monolingual and bilingual Finland-Swedish participants.

A Chi-squared test of independence found a highly significant difference ($\chi^2(2) = 36.93, p < .000$) when comparing the abilities of monolingual and bilingual speakers in matching allophones [œ] and [ø] to target words (Strandberg 2018). While monolingual Finland-Swedish speakers were able to match the target words containing [œ] to other words containing the same allophone 79.8 percent of the time, the corresponding accuracy for bilinguals was only 56.6 percent. Moreover, although bilingual speakers did perform better (at 80 percent accuracy) with allophone [ø] than with [œ], monolinguals still outperformed bilinguals with a mean percentage of identification accuracy of 92.1 percent (Strandberg 2018: 49). These findings support the production data, suggesting that highly proficient native or early bilinguals are less likely to clearly differentiate between the two allophones, both during perception and production of language (Strandberg 2018).

10.8 Loanwords, translanguaging and the Finland-Swedish identity

In addition to exploring phonetic change in Finland-Swedish as a result of increased language contact with Finnish, Strandberg et al. (2022) launched an investigation exploring the use of fennicisms in Finland-Swedish. The term *fennicism* refers to words, calques, or phrases originating in the Finnish language, such as the aforementioned *juttu* and *kiva*. A fennicism is a specific type of *finlandism*, a hypernym which denotes words, phrases, or structures that are either used exclusively in Finland-Swedish or with a different meaning than in Standard Swedish.⁷ Due to the rise of bilingualism among Finland-Swedish speakers, new linguistic items labelled as fennicisms are constantly coined in the form of loan translations or semantic borrowings (Melin-Köpilä 1996). In the Strandberg et al. (2022) survey study, 126 participants were given examples of common fennicisms in the forms of loanwords, loan translations, or translated phrases. The participants were asked to indicate whether or not they had heard other people use these words or phrases, and whether or not they used them themselves. The participants were also asked to give examples of other fennicisms that they had used or heard others use. It should be noted that the words *finlandism* or *fennicism* were not explicitly used in the survey; instead, fennicisms were referred to according to their type (e.g., loanword, loan translation). This was done because, although the participants were expected to be familiar with the common umbrella term *finlandism*, the hyponym *fennicism* was considered a potential source for confusion.

The result of the survey by Strandberg et al. (2022) indicated that, for all types of Finnish borrowings that were investigated in the survey, the participants always reported a higher percentage of being exposed to fennicisms than for using the fennicisms themselves. However, due to the nature of the survey, it is difficult to assess whether people were accurate in self-reporting their use of *versus* their exposure to fennicisms. Based on the survey alone, it is unclear whether most people indeed are aware of and exposed to a much higher

number of fennicisms than they themselves use, or if people under-report their own use of fennicisms due to the stigma related to using non-standard Swedish.

In addition to being asked which fennicisms they themselves used, the survey participants were presented with an open-ended question in which they were asked about their general thoughts regarding the use of Finnish loans or loan translations in Finland-Swedish. Four participants wished to make it clear that, although they were familiar with some or even all of the fennicism examples, they themselves avoided or never used fennicisms. One participant stated that it is 'a pity' that fennicisms are used in Finland-Swedish, and wondered if this was one of the reasons for 'the declining quality of Swedish in Finland' (authors' translation). On the other hand, several comments were also positive regarding the use of Finnish loanwords or calques in Finland-Swedish. Four participants stated that fennicisms may be fun and useful, particularly in situations where the Swedish equivalent is not as precise as the Finnish word. One participant also argued that finlandisms were part of the Finland-Swedish identity, stating:

'Tycker finlandismer är en del av vår 'språkidentitet', som gör att finlandssvenska skiljer sig från rikssvenska. Det finns dock någon, kanske diffus, gräns enligt mig, efter vilket språket blir 'dålig svenska'. '[I] think that finlandisms are a part of our 'language identity', resulting in Finland-Swedish differing from Sweden-Swedish. However, in my opinion, there is still some fuzzy line that can be crossed, resulting in 'poor Swedish'.']

(Authors' translation from Swedish)

Based on the above comment, it is clear that the participant considers words and phrases specific to Finland-Swedish part of his linguistic identity. Although the participant used the hypernym *finlandism*, the fact that the comment was encouraged by a survey on Finnish loanwords and calques suggests that the response refers at least partially, if not exclusively, to fennicisms. Similarly, another participant stated that, as long as the loanwords and phrases were used with 'correct Swedish conjugation, not incorrect Finnish conjugation' (authors' translation), it was acceptable to use them in Finland-Swedish.

Generally, although there were more positive comments about the diversity and uniqueness of using fennicisms than there were negative comments, most participants agreed that this type of language should only be used in informal circumstances, usually only in casual speech. Alongside the quantitative results, indicating a preference for reporting exposure to rather than use of fennicisms, qualitative responses suggest that there is a clear stigma attached to using fennicisms (and, by extension, finlandisms) in Finland-Swedish. The use of fennicisms and finlandisms seems to be persistently deemed incorrect, as even the participants who had positive attitudes towards fennicisms wished to point out that they were aware that these types of words are not considered appropriate Swedish.

10.9 Conclusion

To this day, languages are usually seen as autonomous systems, where multilingualism is only valued as the concept of parallel monolingual proficiency, and hybrid systems of communication are stigmatised (Heller 2006). Translanguaging of any kind, while usually effective in communication between bilingual individuals, is often perceived as detrimental to the standard variety. This is demonstrated in relation to Finland-Swedish by the attitudes of the participants in Strandberg (2018, 2019) and Strandberg et al. (2022), where both marked phonetic and lexical features from Finnish are denounced by speakers of Finland-Swedish. The use of the allophone [ø] in the place of [œ] is condemned on principle, as it is a marked feature of Finnish natives speaking Swedish as a second language. This is in spite of the fact that using [ø] instead of [œ] does not hamper comprehension, and many native Finland-Swedes struggle to match target words with [œ] to other words containing the same allophone. Similarly, in relation to lexical transfer, some individuals argue that the use of fennicisms in Finland-Swedish should be avoided altogether, and even speakers who generally demonstrate positive attitudes towards fennicisms believe that they should be avoided in ‘proper’ Swedish.

Many Finland-Swedes take pride in identifying as Finland-Swedish (rather than as Finnish or Swedish), and the distinctive features of the Finland-Swedish linguistic variety are often appreciated by its speakers. Nevertheless, Finland-Swedish is still broadly considered a deviant variety of Standard Swedish. Swedish-speaking children are taught in school that certain words and phrases are only acceptable in the Finland-Swedish narrative, not in ‘proper’ Swedish. Furthermore, since the single-language ideology is persistent in Finland, parents are compelled to choose an official linguistic identity for their child, regardless of the combination of languages actually used within the home. Finland-Swedes, like many other linguistic minorities, thus become doubly stigmatised; from the perspective of the state, they are second-language speakers of the majority language, and, additionally, their variety is considered inferior to the standard variety of that language (Gal 2006). For further reading on ideological standards and legitimacy in pluricentric languages, see, for instance, Ball and Marley (2017) for a comprehensive overview of the French-speaking world; the study by Hawkey and Mooney (2019) on new speakers and standardisation of Catalan and Occitan in France; and the discussion by Li Wei and Zhu Hua (2010) on linguistic standards and hierarchy in the Chinese diaspora.

It remains to be seen to which extent the increasing bilingualism within the Finland-Swedish community will affect the Swedish variety spoken in Finland. Studies by Kuronen (2000) and Strandberg (2018, 2019) suggest that phonetic change may already be occurring among bilingual Finland-Swedish speakers due to the dominance of the Finnish language. Whether the intake of Finnish loanwords and phrases will also increase as the Swedish-speaking population of Finland becomes more bilingual, remains to be explored in future research. However, it is evident that the borrowing of Finnish features into

Finland-Swedish is frowned upon, even though many individuals consider specifically Finland-Swedish linguistic features to be markers of their own ethnolinguistic identity as *finlandssvenskar*. The majority of Finland-Swedes partake in some level of translanguaging, a mode of interaction that mirrors the bilingual reality of most Finland-Swedish speakers in the twenty-first century and facilitates effective and meaningful everyday communication between bilingual individuals. Yet, such language use is often in direct contrast to what the speakers themselves regard as being appropriate or correct. More often than not, the combining of Finnish and Swedish linguistic features continues to be perceived as a threat to the integrity and continued existence of the Swedish variety in Finland.

Notes

- 1 The Swedish name Strengman [strɛŋman] has been transliterated to fit Finnish phonology and phonotactics by replacing the initial consonant cluster *str-* with *r-* to achieve Finnish CVC-structure, and substituting the voiced velar plosive [g] with voiceless [k]. The traditional Swedish ending *-man* has also been replaced with the Finnish diminutive ending *-nen*, thus resulting in the name Renkonen [reŋkonen].
- 2 The Finnish names of these municipalities are translations or transliterations of the original Swedish names, i.e., Borgå, Grankulla, Kyrkslätt and Hangö.
- 3 A monolingual municipality becomes automatically classed as bilingual if the number of individuals with the (local) minority language as their mother tongue rises to a minimum of 3,000 people or 8 percent of the municipality's population. A bilingual municipality remains bilingual until the number of individuals with the minority mother tongue falls below 3,000 or 6 percent of the municipality's population, at which point the municipality may become monolingual again. Additionally, a monolingual municipality can voluntarily apply for bilingual status without the required number of minority speakers (Kuntaliitto.fi, 2017). Bilingualism is immediately visible in the linguistic landscape of a municipality, in that official signs (e.g., street signs, signs of official institutions, traffic signs) are required to be in both Finnish and Swedish, with the dominant language in primary position. However, as Syrjälä (2017) points out, a Swedish majority in the municipality is generally required for Swedish to be visible alongside Finnish in the commercial sphere.
- 4 An investigation into introducing registration of several languages for individuals has been initiated by the Ministry of Justice in 2020 (Tammenmaa, 2020).
- 5 Participants sometimes referred to *öppet ö* (lit. 'open ö') when describing allophone [œ], or distinguished between the ö-sounds by using common words containing that allophone, e.g., *öra* ('ear') or *smör* ('butter').
- 6 None of the participants considered that a difficulty of pronouncing [œ] in Swedish could potentially suggest another language background except Finnish. However, the idea that pronunciation of [œ] as [ø] is a uniquely Finnish trait may reflect the fact that the vast majority of Swedish second-language speakers that Finland-Swedes encounter are native Finnish speakers.
- 7 Whether we as linguists choose to label fennicisms as loanwords or as translanguaging could be discussed at length, but instead we will here focus on the purpose of the investigation, which is to explore how these words and phrases are used and perceived by the Finland-Swedish community.

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