

BUSINESS STUDENTS' CHOICES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Sabine Grasz & Joachim Schlabach

Sarja/Series KR-1:2011



Turun kauppakorkeakoulu
Turku School of Economics

Copyright © Authors & Turku School of Economics

ISBN 978-952-249-158-9 (nid.) 978-952-249-159-6 (PDF)

ISSN 0357-4687 (nid.) 1459-7632 (PDF)

UDK 800:37

800.7

378.1

378.633

Uniprint, Turku 2011

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to collect and analyze data on business students' language studies at university and the factors involved when choosing certain languages or not choosing other languages. The study also aims to provide a broad picture of different aspects connected with language learning, including students' language backgrounds, their attitudes towards languages, language learning and plurilingualism. The data consists of 2412 questionnaires filled in by students of five Finnish Business Schools.

The study shows that business students have a very broad range of language skills when they come to university and that they consider language studies to be an important part of their university degree. Most students are quite satisfied with the languages offered at their universities and they are in general ready to put a lot of effort into language learning and many of them want to take extra language courses in addition to the obligatory ones. Furthermore, the students' attitudes towards plurilingualism are highly positive. The students' most important factor for choosing a language is prior knowledge. Most of the students continue with languages they have already studied before university. Other important reasons for choosing languages are: usefulness for future profession, studies and studying abroad as well as the status of a language.

Business students are mostly satisfied with the fact that there are several obligatory foreign languages in business studies and that there are courses in both the official languages of Finland. Therefore, changes in study regulations are not recommended. However, students describe problems with integrating their language studies into their time-tables and study-plans. A rather big threat comes from the actual tendency that languages are taken up less and less in schools. In order to avoid the same tendency in business education, stakeholders should be appealing to policy makers, institutions, society, parents and pupils. Earlier language experience is the essential precondition to reach functional language skills at the university.

Keywords: Language learning, language choice, language courses at university level, plurilingualism

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 INTRODUCTION..... 9
- 2 THEORY 11
 - 2.1 Motivation 11
 - 2.1.1 Motivational factors..... 11
 - 2.1.2 Earlier research into content theories of motivation..... 12
 - 2.1.3 Motivation factors in this study 13
 - 2.1.4 Attitudes towards plurilingualism in this study 14
 - 2.2 The situation of languages in academic business education 16
 - 2.3 Methods and conducting of the survey..... 19
- 3 FINDINGS 23
 - 3.1 Background information..... 23
 - 3.2 Language Background..... 26
 - 3.2.1 Question 7: Mother tongue (native language) 27
 - 3.2.2 Question 8: Which languages have you learned / studied before you started your present university studies? For how many years? 27
 - 3.2.3 Question 9: Remarkable language experiences before your present studies (e.g. longer stay abroad, international school)..... 30
 - 3.2.4 Question 10: Evaluate your present language proficiency in the different languages 31
 - 3.2.5 Question 11: What level of proficiency do you aim to reach in the different languages; how well would you like to know the language?..... 32
 - 3.3 Language choice and language studies at the university..... 33
 - 3.3.1 Question 12: Which languages are you studying or have you studied during your present studies?..... 34
 - 3.3.2 Question 13: Which languages do you plan to study, in addition to the languages mentioned in question 12) during your present studies? 37
 - 3.3.3 Question 14: Would you like to have studied other languages, which are not offered, during your present studies? 38
 - 3.3.4 Question 15a: When did you decide which language you would choose at university? 39
 - 3.3.5 Question 15b: Did you use the information / guidance offered by the language centre / language department when you chose the languages? Question 15c: Was the information you received useful? 40
 - 3.3.6 Question 16: Your own effort towards language learning in general..... 40

3.3.7	Question 17: Attitudes towards foreign languages, foreign language learning and communication in foreign languages	42
3.3.8	Question 18: Which factors are important when choosing language courses at the university?	43
3.3.9	Question 19a: Do you have special reasons for not choosing certain languages? and 19b: Why do / did you not choose certain languages?....	54
3.3.10	Summary of findings in question 18 and 19	58
3.3.11	Question 20: Dropout.....	59
3.4	Plurilingualism	61
3.4.1	Question 21: Attitudes towards plurilingualism and question 22: Attitudes towards using and speaking several foreign languages	61
3.4.2	Question 23: Other arguments pro and contra plurilingualism	64
3.4.3	Question 24: Do you have any concrete suggestions on how to make choosing languages easier?	65
4	SYNTHESIS OF RESULTS.....	69
5	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	75
5.1	Language policy recommendations.....	76
5.2	Language education in business education	76
5.3	Further studies	77
	REFERENCES	79
	APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE	82

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Overview of factors for choosing certain languages	14
Table 2: Overview of statements on attitudes towards plurilingualism	16
Table 3: Language requirements at Finnish universities; credit points	18
Table 4: Languages on offer (status 2009)	19
Table 5: Universities, number and percentage share of respondents	24
Table 6: University and response rate	24
Table 7: Starting year of present study	25
Table 8: Major subject / study programme	26
Table 9: Mother tongue of the students	27
Table 10: French, Spanish and Italian learners (distributed by sex)	29
Table 11: International Business students' languages before university.....	29
Table 12: Language experiences before university	30
Table 13: Languages taken in the different majors	36
Table 14: Languages taken at the different universities	37
Table 15: Languages, students plan to take	38
Table 16: Languages students would like to take which are not offered	39
Table 17: When did students decide which language they choose?	39
Table 18: Students' effort for language learning	41
Table 19: Attitudes towards foreign languages	43
Table 20: Factors for choosing language courses at the university	45
Table 21: Why do / did you not choose certain languages?	56
Table 22: Course dropout in relation to languages taken	60
Table 23: Attitudes towards plurilingualism, median	62
Table 24: Attitudes towards plurilingualism, median	63

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Length of study of different languages before university	28
Figure 2: Self-evaluation of language proficiency	31
Figure 3: Which level of proficiency do students aim at?	33
Figure 4: Languages taken at the university	35
Figure 5: Factors for choosing language courses at the university	44
Figure 6: Factors for choosing English	46
Figure 7: Factors for choosing Swedish	47
Figure 8: Factors for choosing German	48
Figure 9: Factors for choosing French	49
Figure 10: Factors for choosing Spanish	50
Figure 11: Factors for choosing Russian	51
Figure 12: Factors for choosing Italian	52
Figure 13: Factors for choosing Japanese	53
Figure 14: Did the students not choose certain languages. If yes, which?	54
Figure 15: Reasons for not choosing certain languages	55
Figure 16: Attitudes towards foreign languages	71

1 INTRODUCTION

Functional language skills in multiple languages are a key feature both in educational contexts and in working life. At university level language studies are an important part of the curriculum, providing students with qualifications recognized in international study or work contexts. It is obvious that students come to university with a wide variety of language skills and language experiences. Until now there has not been any broad survey of the language background of university students. Teachers in university language centres / departments often use inquiries at the beginning of their courses to collect information on the prior language knowledge of their students, but there is no full picture of the language backgrounds of the students available.

The aim of this study is to collect and analyze data on business students' language studies at university and the factors involved when choosing certain languages or not choosing other languages. The study also aims to provide a broad picture of different aspects connected with language learning, including students' language backgrounds, as well as their attitudes towards languages, language learning and plurilingualism.

The findings of the survey should provide answers to the following questions:

- What is the status quo of language competencies and motivation to learn language of business students?
- What are the threats and obstacles concerning language education and language objectives?
- What are the influential motivational factors of business students when they choose certain languages and do not choose others?

We hope that the findings of this study can help to further develop language training in business studies in order to more effectively meet the demands of students and their working lives. The findings will hopefully also be useful for developing study guidance and information provided by the language centres / language departments.

We would like to thank:

- Liikesivistysrahasto for supporting this project with a grant
- Our colleagues in the Language Centre of the University of Oulu and in the Language Department of the Turku School of Economics for their feedback to the questionnaire and their support
- Colleagues at the Helsinki School of Economics, Lappeenranta University of Technology, University of Jyväskylä, and University of Kuopio for the contact addresses / postings for the questionnaire and their comments on the study
- Prof Paula Rossi (University of Oulu) and Prof Pauli Kaikkonen (University of Jyväskylä) for their feedback on the aims of the study and the questionnaire
- Taina Saarinen (Centre for Applied Language Studies at University of Jyväskylä) for her detailed feedback on the report
- Teija Kyllönen and Ari Huhta (Centre for Applied Language Studies at University of Jyväskylä) for their references on interpreting some of the data
- Jussi Haario † (Turku School of Economics) for gathering statistical data from TSE's student register
- Students at Helsinki School of Economics, Turku School of Economics, Lappeenranta University of Technology, University of Oulu, University of Jyväskylä, and University of Kuopio for answering the questionnaire

2 THEORY

2.1 Motivation

The main focus of the study is to find out the reasons for choosing certain languages and for not choosing others. In this chapter we will give an overview of the main theoretical outlines and related studies conducted earlier.

2.1.1 Motivational factors

The research concerns motivation and the aims of motivation in order to find reasons for people's choices and behaviour. It is about the individuals' reactions to different offers and their concrete actions based on their experiences within a given social context (List 2002). Research into motivation and foreign language learning focuses on two main areas: On one hand there are *content theories of L2-motivation*, which mainly deal with motives for choosing to learn (certain) languages. On the other hand there are *process theories of L2-motivation*, which focus more on the process of learning and on the variables supporting or hindering this process (cf. Riemer 2011). The present study concentrates on content theories and its purpose is to find out the reasons for choosing certain languages and not choosing others.

Theories on motivation have gone through different phases over the last 40 years or so. At the beginning of the 1970s the social psychological studies of Gardner and Lambert were highly influential and their dichotomized model of integrative and instrumental motivation is still very important, but in general is now considered too simple. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972) success in foreign language learning is determined by the learners' attitudes towards the language and the people speaking it. The learners are the more successful the more they are interested in the language, the people and the culture of the language area. These positive attitudes and the will to identify with the culture of the foreign language are important characteristics of integrative motivation. Motivation is in this case described as intrinsic, which means it comes from "inside" the learner. Instrumental motivation on the other hand is based on extrinsic factors, which means that they are influenced more by factors lying outside of the learner and their personal interests, for example connected with the demands of working life. Empirical studies showed that more instrumental

orientated learners can be as successful as integrative orientated and that learners are not usually only intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, but influenced by both factors. In the 1990s the process character of motivation came more into focus and Gardner / Lambert's model was expanded by cognitive, affective, and learning situation-specific factors of motivation (Williams & Burden 1997; Dörnyei 1990, 1994, 1998, 2001).

Motivation includes both individual and collective factors. Individual components can be

- general personal premises of the learner (such as willingness to learn)
- attitudes towards the foreign language
- learning objectives
- earlier experiences
- assessment of prospects
- contact with the language (Riemer 2002, 74f).

Collective factors are often connected with the status a language has in a given community. The status of a language can be influenced by

- economic strength
- the size of the language area
- the position of the language in an international context
- cultural richness of the speech community
- informational richness of the texts in this language
- touristic attractiveness
- accessibility of the territory
- promotion policy for this language (Ammon 2009)

Usually it is said that learners are more motivated the more valuable the goal appears and the likelier it is to reach this goal.

2.1.2 Earlier research into content theories of motivation

There have been several studies concerning motivation in foreign language learning in Finland. These studies mostly deal with learning motivation but they also tackle motives for choosing languages / a certain language. There have been studies, mainly masters' theses, on learners at different school stages or in different educational contexts (Rossi 2003; Karppinen 2005; Hankila 2007; Tuokkala 2007; Maijala 2007). The common aspect of them all is that they concentrate on one language. There are only very few studies where several languages were involved. One important work in this context is Julkunen (1998), who studied 11 year old pupils' reasons for choosing languages and their motivation at the beginning of foreign language studies in Finnish schools.

In this context Claudia Riemer's study, "Motivationsforschung Deutsch als Fremdsprache – Länderstudien", where she collected data on motives for learning German through learner-biographies in 19 countries, including Finland, is also important (preliminary results in Riemer 2011). Again, this study concentrates only on German and includes no other languages. One aspect which is also usually absent, and which was important for us to include in our survey, is the motives and factors for not choosing certain languages.

2.1.3 Motivation factors in this study

In the survey a list of possible factors (overview of the factors see Table 1) for choosing or not choosing a language was given and the respondents were asked to tick the ones applying to them. The factors given refer to the level of the learner, the language itself and the learning situation (Dörnyei 1994) and represent different motivational aspects, formulated according to Riemer's study (2002, 12) and the concrete institutional context at Finnish universities. One important factor could be earlier knowledge. If one has already studied a language the motivation is very likely to be quite strong since it might appear easier to continue studying a familiar language than to start a new one. This trait of motivation is often connected with the learners' goals and the perceived difficulty of a language. Languages are often seen as a tool which is useful in different contexts, such as studies and professional life, but also leisure time. Therefore, the instrumental side of language learning can be a strong factor when choosing one language and not choosing another. In addition, the study refers to institutional factors such as whether the language is obligatory, recommendations of the department or other practical factors, for example whether the schedule of a certain language fits into the time-table. Other factors concerning the learning context could be an attractive course offer and the role of the teachers. In addition, a number of affective and cultural factors were presented in the study.

Table 1: Overview of factors for choosing or not choosing certain languages

<i>Earlier knowledge</i>	
	I studied this language already earlier.
<i>Learning goals</i>	
	I can't reach a high enough level in this language during my studies at the university.
<i>Usefulness (for studies, professional life and spare-time)</i>	
	This language is important for my studies.
	I need this language for studying abroad.
	This language is important for my future profession / job.
	This language is not important for my professional life.
	This language is important for my spare-time (e.g. travelling, hobbies).
<i>Institutional factors</i>	
	This language is obligatory for my studies.
	Recommendations of the study guidance / students / tutors.
	I didn't choose the language because of the information / guidance I got at the university.
	The course schedule of this language fits into my time-table.
<i>Language internal factors</i>	
	This language is too difficult.
<i>Learning context</i>	
	This language has interesting courses on offer.
	The course offer in this language is not attractive.
	Nice / good teachers.
	I don't like the teacher(s) of this language.
<i>Affective factors</i>	
	I like this language.
	I don't like this language.
	I don't like the language area or the people living there.
<i>Culture motives</i>	
	I am interested in the culture of this language area.
<i>Contact motives</i>	
	I want to live in this language area in future.
	I have personal contacts with people speaking this language.
<i>Collective factors</i>	
	It is seen as important to speak this language in Finland.
	The language is in general not seen as important.
<i>Social factors</i>	
	I chose this language because my friend chose it too.

2.1.4 Attitudes towards plurilingualism in this study

Plurilingualism is seen in Europe as a key feature. Knowing foreign languages enhances the understanding of other cultures and facilitates work, travel and study (Special Eurobarometer, European Commission 2006). This view is

promoted, for example, by the long-term objective for all EU citizens to speak two languages in addition to their mother tongue. Not least for the business world plurilingual skills are of high importance, which has been shown by several studies (ELAN 2006; EK-report 2010). Finnish business schools seem to understand the importance of skills in multiple languages. This is shown by the fact that the business schools either demand or strongly recommend that the students take language courses in at least two foreign languages (beside the second official language) and offer the opportunity to study minor packages in languages.

It was important for us to choose the term plurilingualism instead of multilingualism even if this term is very seldom used in everyday language and not that well-known outside of linguistics. The Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) uses the term plurilingualism and makes the following distinction between plurilingualism and multilingualism: “Plurilingualism differs from multilingualism, which is the knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a given society. [...] Beyond this, the plurilingual approach emphasises the fact that as an individual person’s experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, [...], he or she does not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact.” (CEFR 2001, 4)

In the study we have tried to find out the students’ attitudes towards plurilingualism and their plurilingual practices. There can be different focuses on approaching plurilingualism. Plurilingualism is important for the individuals themselves, but also has collective factors on a local and global scale and is an object of language policy. Table 2 shows an overview of the statements we used for collecting data on the students’ attitudes towards plurilingualism:

Table 2: Overview of statements on attitudes towards plurilingualism

<i>General attitudes towards plurilingualism</i>	
	It is desirable to speak several languages.
	When / if I have children, they should also learn several foreign languages.
<i>Instrumental aspects of plurilingualism</i>	
	One has better chances to get a job when speaking several languages.
<i>Aspects of learning several languages</i>	
	Knowing one foreign language helps to learn other foreign languages.
	I choose deliberately languages from the same language family because this way it is easier to learn them.
	I choose deliberately languages from different language families.
<i>Using several languages / acting in a multilingual context</i>	
	I like to act / work in multilingual situations.
	I switch without difficulties from one language to another in a multilingual situation.
	I am actively looking for situations where I can use the languages I know.
	It is difficult to keep the languages apart when knowing several languages.
<i>Multilingualism as a means for internationalisation</i>	
	Speaking several languages supports international cooperation.
<i>Multilingualism as part of curriculum policy</i>	
	In my opinion it is good that there are courses in both official languages in business studies.
	In my opinion it is good that there are several obligatory foreign languages in business studies.
<i>Global English vs. plurilingualism</i>	
	It would be enough if everybody in Europe could speak English.
	I prefer to speak English because I am insecure in other languages.

2.2 The situation of languages in academic business education

The linguistic situation in Finland is determined by two important factors. The country is officially bilingual; hence the other national language is compulsory for all pupils. Finnish is the mother tongue for the majority and Swedish the second national language. Secondly, foreign languages and foreign language learning play an integral role, since Finnish is spoken almost exclusively in Finland. Internationalization, the Internet and migration increase the use of

foreign languages. Additionally, part of the globalization of the Finnish economy is dependent on foreign trade, with the most important trading partners being Russia, Germany and Sweden.

Language learning has been very important in schools. In the “golden period in the 1960s and mid 1980s” with strong optimism and intensive development work (Takala 2008, 2009) all pupils started to study two or three languages. Nowadays, after some educational reforms, language learning has constricted dramatically. Almost all languages have been affected, mostly German and French, but also Swedish. The number of students taking German in the matriculation exams has fallen sharply, by nearly two thirds since 1980 and in French by almost 40% since 1997, for example (Takala 2008). Furthermore, in lower grades of compulsory schools the participants in optional language course are few (Opetushallitus 2009). Just a quarter of grade five pupils take a second foreign language (A2-language). *Helsingin Sanomat* headlined this fact with “Peruskoululaisten kielivalinnat ovat köyhtyneet reipasta vauhtia” - The language choice in comprehensive schools worsens rapidly (Helsingin Sanomat 31.09.2009). According to Takala, Finland has lost its leading position in language education (2009). At present, discussions about language education policies are taking place in politics, the media and in academia.

University education, and business education in particular, is orientated towards internationalization, urging students to go abroad for one or two terms. Student mobility is nowadays an integral part of business education. Around half the students go abroad. In 2009 the outgoing students from Finnish universities headed mostly to Germany, France and Sweden. Spain follows after Great Britain and the USA, but before Russia (Garam 2010, 26). Since the university education system in Europe has been harmonized according to the so-called Bologna Process in 2005, degrees are internationally recognized, which offers working opportunities in most European countries.

The curricula of the language courses for business education refer to language needs’ studies, which have been conducted in Finland regularly since 1971 (cf. overview in Huhta, M. 2010, 36). The Confederation of Finnish Industries, Elinkeinoelämän keskusliito EK, is also an important contributor to such studies, regularly stressing the importance of language competence for job applicants in Finnish industries. According to the most recent study, referring to informants in medium-sized and big enterprises, the most needed languages are English as the dominant language (around 95%) and Swedish (~45%) followed by Russian and German. Other languages important for industries are below 10%, such as French, Chinese, Spanish, Italian and Norwegian (EK 2010, 5f). EK gives a distinct message: “English alone is

insufficient for professional life. Language education needs renovation” (headline of EK’s press release 2010).

The requirements for language education in academic education are determined by law: courses in Finnish and Swedish and at least one foreign language at the level of professional and international use are compulsory (§6, decree 794 / 2004 University law).

The framework for language education at Finnish universities differs to some extent. Table 3 gives a brief overview of the credit points (opintopiste, equal to ECTS-point) required in languages for business and economic studies at the universities involved in this study.¹ In general languages are placed mostly or only in Bachelor studies. Only at the University of Jyväskylä are language studies equally spread over Bachelor and Master levels.

Table 3: Language requirements at Finnish universities; credit points

		<i>HSE</i>	<i>TSE</i>	<i>LUT</i>	<i>UoO</i>	<i>UoJ</i>
Languages at BA	Finnish	3	3	5	5	4
	Swedish	3	6	2	4	3
	Foreign language 1	12	6	9	16*	6
	Foreign language 2	6	6	- / 9**		5
	Optional language	6	3			2
Bachelor total		30	24	16 / 25	25	20
Master languages		-	10***	5-11	-	20
Bachelor + Master total		30	34	21 / 26	25	40

Remarks: * 16 points in one or several foreign languages; ** only for International Business; *** 6 points in a foreign language studied at Bachelor + 4 points in an unpredefined language

Besides the two official languages, Finnish and Swedish, all universities offer courses in English, German, French, Spanish and Russian. Table 4 shows the offered languages in detail.

¹ HSE: Helsinki School of Economics, TSE: Turku School of Economics (Turku and Pori), LUT: Lappeenranta University of Technology, UoO: University of Oulu, UoJ: University of Jyväskylä and University of Kuopio. The regulations were valid as of spring 2009. Kuopio is not quoted due to low number of respondents.

Table 4: Languages on offer (status 2009)

	<i>HSE</i>	<i>TSE</i>	<i>LUT</i>	<i>UoO</i>	<i>UoJ</i>
Finnish / mother tongue	x	x	x	x	x
Swedish	x	x	x	x	x
English	x	x	x	x	x
German	x bo	x b	x b	x b	x b
French	x bo	x b	x b	x b	x b
Spanish	x bo	x b	x b	x b	x b
Russian	x b	x* b*	x b	x b	x b
Italian	x b			x b	b
Japanese	x b	x* b*		x b	b
Chinese	o bo		x b	o bo	b
other	Esto- nian				Slovak, sign lang.

Remarks: x: language courses, mostly specific for business communication;
b: courses at beginner's level; bo: courses at beginner's level at Open University;
o: courses at Open University; * at TSE in Pori no Russian and Japanese courses

There are two language majors at the Helsinki School of Economics; International Business Communication (in English) and Business Communication (in Finnish). A minor in languages *en bloc* (including several languages) is offered at the University of Oulu and the Helsinki School of Economics, and a minor in one of the offered languages is possible at the Turku School of Economics, each of these with 25 points.

Furthermore one foreign language or Swedish is one part of the entrance exam for the major in International Business at the Turku School of Economics.

At the universities the language courses are offered by the language centres. At the business schools, departments like the Department for Languages and Business Communication offer language courses. In general the courses' aims and contents are orientated towards professional business communication. Usually there are courses covering the mandatory programme but there are optional courses as well.

2.3 Methods and conducting of the survey

The approaches and tools used in this survey were selected to best serve the aim of the study, which was to discover more about our students' language

backgrounds, language attitudes and factors for language choice, as well as to improve the language curricula and courses and the study guidance available.

In order to follow one of the core ideas, getting answers from all types of business students and not just from the active language course takers, we needed a tool which reaches a rather large number of students, also outside the language classes. The professional online survey tool Webropol fulfils these requirements; it offers a broad set of questioning tools but sets some limitations too.

Webropol surveys can handle a huge amount of information about the number of participants and questions. We used the Webropol basic devices with closed questions (single choice and multiple choice), the device for scaling attitudes and open-ended questions.

When designing the questionnaire we followed the approved standard structure, asking first for background information, then in the centre part addressing language choice and plurilingualism and closing with open-ended questions covering items not yet considered.

The questions dealing with background information of the students have been adapted from other surveys. Language background questions have been used in earlier surveys dealing with language needs and plurilingualism (Ruska-Becker & Schlabach forthcoming).

We paid most attention to the development of diagnostically conclusive verbalization of motives and attitudes towards language choice and plurilingualism. To this end we collected different motives and attitudes for language use and language learning given in theoretical studies and other related surveys. This collection has been grouped and evaluated. For the most important motive bundles a sample of positive and negative motivational factors has been chosen. Through different procedures for formulating and grouping, four sets of questions have been shaped: question 16, as the first question in this core area, deals with the effort of language learning in general (cf. Appendix p. 82ff), followed by question 17, focusing on attitudes towards foreign languages in general. Questions 18 and 19 had to be answered for eight different languages - the former asking for motivational factors for choosing the particular languages and the latter for motives against.

Since knowing several languages is an integral part of business education, students are expected to be in some way plurilingual. Some attitudes towards plurilingualism have been deduced from recent studies and papers (Commission of the European Communities 2008; Maalouf 2008) or have been taken from earlier surveys (Schlabach & Boström 2008).

There are three questions (17, 21 and 22) asking directly about attitudes. We used a four-point Likert scale as a forced choice method without a middle option such as 'Neither agree nor disagree'. The scaling options are: 1

‘Completely agree’, 2 ‘Partly agree’, 3 ‘Partly disagree’ and 4 ‘Disagree completely’.

We presented and discussed the questionnaire in several stages during its development. Some of the most important steps were a presentation at the XXIX Vakki-symposium “Language and Power” conference, translation into Finnish and language control, a considerable number of discussions with language teacher colleagues and external experts and, finally, a two-step pilot survey with colleagues and a small group of business students testing the technique and the quality of the questions.

The survey has been conducted at five universities namely business schools focusing on the Bachelor and Master degree students of Business Administration and Economics: Helsinki School of Economics, Turku School of Economics (at Turku and Pori), Lappeenranta University of Technology, University of Oulu, University of Jyväskylä, and University of Kuopio.

In order to get as many answers as possible we announced a small award: cinema tickets for the first 400 respondents. For that specific purpose the respondents had to give their contact information in a specially-tailored form. This information has been stored separately so that the answers remain anonymous.

The survey started on 16.4.2009 with the mailing of the invitation letter. On 27.4.2009 a reminder was posted and on 6.5.2009 the survey was closed. 6963 invitation letters were sent successfully. We got 2412 answers, so the response rate amounted to 34.6%.

For the statistical evaluation, statistics tools have been used for analyzing the closed and scaling questions. The answers from the open-ended questions have been read and grouped into content-related bundles. As a further step, relations between results of background factors like sex, major² or university have also been examined.

² Only the four biggest majors, Accounting, Marketing, Management and International Business were included.

3 FINDINGS

In this chapter we present the findings of the survey following the sequence of questions in the questionnaire (see Appendix p. 82ff). The questionnaire consists of four areas: background information, language background, language choice and language education at university, and plurilingualism.

3.1 Background information

Gender: 57% of the respondents state female, 43% male (from a total of 2407), which corresponds roughly with the distribution in business education.

University: Table 5 shows the list of all universities involved in this study, the number of respondents and their quota in this study. The students are affiliated to five different universities. The biggest groups are the students from Helsinki School of Economics HSE with one third of all respondents, followed by Turku School of Economics TSE (Turku and Pori) (31%). Lappeenranta University of Technology LUT is represented with 15%, University of Oulu UoO and University of Jyväskylä UoJ with 10% each. The number of contacted students at University of Kuopio UoK is rather low.

Table 5: Universities, number and percentage share of respondents³

<i>University</i>	<i>Full name</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Share of respondents</i>
HSE	Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu Helsinki School of Economics	794	33%
TSE	Turun kauppakorkeakoulu Turku School of Economics	750	31%
LUT	Lappeenrannan teknillinen yliopisto Lappeenranta University of Technology	367	15%
UoO	Oulun yliopisto University of Oulu	247	10%
UoJ	Jyväskylän yliopisto University of Jyväskylä	231	10%
UoK	Kuopion yliopisto University of Kuopio	17	1%
- not specified -		6	
		2412	

In Table 6 the basic numbers are shown including the response rate per university, ranging from almost 40% at the two business schools to 22% at UoO.

Table 6: University and response rate; n: 2406

<i>University</i>	<i>Contacted students</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Response rate</i>
HSE	2007	794	39.6%
TSE	1915	750	39.2%
LUT	1088	367	33.7%
UoO	1125	247	22.0%
UoJ	776	231	29.8%
UoK	52	17	32.7%
- not specified -		6	
		2412	34.6%

Compared with surveys of similar scale, the response rate is rather high. One reason for this is presumably the promised reward of a cinema ticket for the fastest respondents, which obviously paid off. In addition to this, the

³ Some universities merged in 2010: HSE → Aalto-yliopiston kauppakorkeakoulu / Aalto University School of Economics; TSE → Turun yliopiston kauppakorkeakoulu / Turku School of Economics at the University of Turku; UoK → Itä-Suomen yliopisto / University of Eastern Finland.

subject of the questionnaire, languages and language choice is an important issue for the business students.

Study year: The numbers of respondents per study year slightly decrease from 23% of first year students (starting year 2008) to third and fourth year student with 18% each (see Table 7).

Table 7: Starting year of present study; n: 2392

<i>First study year</i>		
before 2005	512	21%
2005	432	18%
2006	430	18%
2007	467	20%
2008	543	23%
2009	8	0%

First year students have a stronger representation, but every year is nevertheless well represented in the study.

39% of the students are enrolled in Bachelor's study programmes and 61% in Master's study programmes.

The distribution of the major subjects, see Table 8, is roughly representative. The big subjects in business administration and economics education appear frequently. Accounting comes first, second is Management and Organization (including Leadership and Entrepreneurship) followed by Marketing. Nearly a tenth of the respondents haven't chosen their major yet.

Table 8: Major subject / study programme; n: 2392

<i>Major subject</i>		
Accounting	498	21%
Management and Organization / Entrepreneurship	392	16%
Marketing	353	15%
International Business	228	10%
Economics	201	8%
Finance	154	6%
Information Systems / Knowledge Management	89	4%
Business Law	83	4%
Logistics, Supply Management	72	3%
Economic Geography	22	1%
Business Technology	21	1%
International Business Communication	21	1%
- Not yet chosen -	224	9%
Other	34	1%

At TSE the major in International Business is more strongly represented (19%)⁴ and at HSE the major in Finance (12%).

The teaching language in the major subject is mostly Finnish. 1981 respondents (82%) indicate Finnish, while 412 / 17% state English. At HSE, English is more strongly represented.

3.2 Language Background

Section 2 on Language Background consists of five questions. Questions 7-11 deal with the language background of the students before they started their university studies.

In this section students were asked about their mother tongue (question 7), about the languages students have studied before their university studies (question 8) and whether they had other important language experiences outside the classroom (question 9). In addition, students were asked to evaluate their language skills in the languages they know (10a and b) and to declare the level of proficiency they would like to reach in the different languages (question 11).

⁴ At Turku School of Economics (in Turku and Pori) the biggest majors are Accounting (25%), International Business (16%), Marketing (15%), and Management and Organization / Entrepreneurship (15%).

3.2.1 Question 7: Mother tongue (native language)

Table 9 shows that 96% of the students have Finnish as their mother tongue, only a few Swedish or a language other than Finnish or Swedish, for example Russian, English, Estonian and Chinese. 2.5% of the students declare themselves to be bilingual; most of them are Finnish / Russian, English / Finnish or Swedish / Finnish speakers. There are no significant differences between female and male students or between the universities. Concerning the majors of the students, only students from the International Business programmes differ from the others. Finnish is the native language of 93% of the International Business students and 5% of them are bilingual.

Table 9: Mother tongue of the students; n: 2409

<i>Mother Tongue</i>		
Finnish	2322	96%
Swedish	3	0%
Russian	11	1%
Other	12	1%
Bilingual	61	2%

The high number of Finnish native speakers is not surprising, because the survey was conducted only at the Finnish-speaking business schools (and not at the Swedish-speaking). Most of the involved business schools do also offer study programmes in English or English / Finnish and do have a considerable number of international students. Because the questionnaire was in Finnish only those students with rather good Finnish skills could participate.

3.2.2 Question 8: Which languages have you learned / studied before you started your present university studies? For how many years?

Almost all of the students studied English before their university studies, two thirds of them for longer than 9 years and one third for 6-9 years (see Figure 1, page 28). Most of the students also took Swedish before university, the majority of them for between 4 and 9 years. In Finnish schools English is chosen as the obligatory foreign language by most pupils and Swedish is obligatory for everybody. Additional foreign languages are usually offered in most of the schools, but the students can choose whether to take them or not. Business students who participated in the survey also actively chose additional languages. The most popular other languages are German, which two thirds of

the students studied earlier, French and Spanish, the latter only becoming popular in the last few years. Russian, Italian and Japanese were taken by only a few students.

Around 6% studied languages other than those mentioned, for example Chinese, Latin, Portuguese, Finnish (presumably Finnish as a foreign language) or Estonian. Only a small minority studied only one or two foreign languages before their university studies. Most of the students studied three or more different languages, and around 40% even took four or more.

Compared with official statistics, when counting upper secondary school pupils passing whole language courses, it seems that business students take more languages at school than the average (or they studied languages outside of school): in 2008 many students studied only two languages (45%) in upper secondary schools, a bit less three languages (41%) and only every seventh student took four or more (14%) (cf. Opetushallitus 2009, 62).

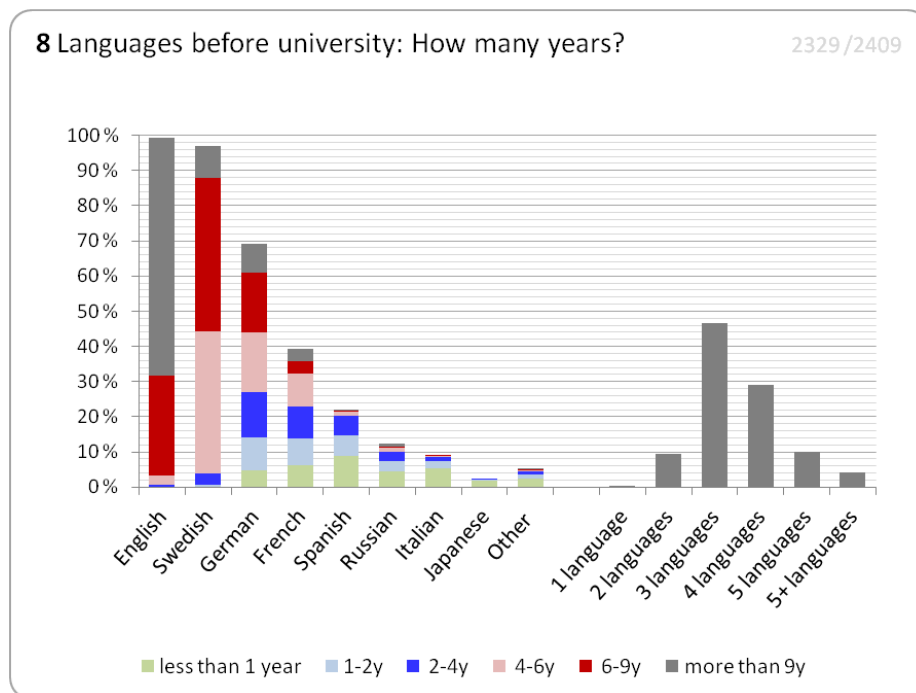


Figure 1: Length of study of different languages before university studies;
n: 2329 / 2409

There are some interesting differences when looking at the results of male and female students, the different universities and major studies. When looking at the answers of men and women, the number of students who have studied English, Swedish, German, Russian and Japanese are almost identical.

But there are rather big differences between men and women in the Romance languages, as shown in Table 10:

Table 10: French, Spanish and Italian learners (distributed by sex)

	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>all</i>
French	50%	23%	39%
Spanish	27%	14%	21%
Italian	12%	3%	8%

Looking at the different major studies (see Table 11), International Business students studied more languages before their studies than students from other majors. They have a lower percentage regarding the most popular languages English, Swedish and German, but higher percentages regarding the other languages, such as French, Spanish, Russian and Italian. The higher numbers in the Romance languages correlate with the higher number of women studying International Business. Also, the number of students who studied other languages than those mentioned, is much higher for International Business students than for students of other majors.

Table 11: International Business students' languages before university

	<i>International Business</i>	<i>other majors</i>
English	95%	98-99%
Swedish	90%	94-95%
German	57%	62-68%
French	56%	31-45%
Spanish	31%	14-24%
Russian	14%	7-10%
Italian	12%	6-10%
other languages	14%	4-8%

Looking at the differences between the universities, only one significant difference can be observed: only 6% of students at the TSE studied Russian before they came to the university compared to 23% of students at LUT, which can be explained by different language focuses at schools in West and East Finland.

3.2.3 Question 9: Remarkable language experiences before your present studies (e.g. longer stay abroad, international school)

Over 70% of students indicated that they had not acquired significant language experiences before their present studies. One quarter had some experiences (see the numbers in Table 12), a number of students also in more than one foreign language, mainly because of exchange studies abroad. More than half of the students with such experiences gained them in English, mainly through exchange studies, international schools in Finland or abroad, living in an English-speaking country and through working. The second biggest group is students with experiences in German. They also gained relevant experiences mainly through exchanges, working and living in a German-speaking country or related education. After German comes French, and then, with about the same number of students, Spanish and Swedish. Only a few students have experiences of the large neighbouring country's language, namely Russian.

Table 12: Language experiences gained before university studies in different languages; n: 632

<i>Language</i>	<i>respondents</i>
English	385
German	113
French	72
Spanish	47
Swedish	41
Russian	17

There are differences between women and men: 30% of women, but only 21% of men have relevant experiences. There are also differences between the majors. Students of Accounting (16%) have the fewest experiences. On the other hand, as many as 60% of International Business students already have relevant experiences. Looking at the results of the different universities, it is noticeable that the students of UoO and LUT have fewer experiences than their fellow students at other universities, namely only 21% in comparison to the average of 26%. Over the average are HSE (29%) and TSE (28%).

3.2.4 Question 10: Evaluate your present language proficiency in the different languages

The students were asked to self-evaluate their present language proficiency in the different languages they know. They were asked to use the global scale for language proficiency of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR 2001), which was introduced recently and a link was provided to a more detailed description. The CEFR levels are already widely used at Finnish schools and universities and the students are broadly familiar with them.

English is the language with the highest proficiency in the self-evaluation (Figure 2). The biggest group of students believe that they are at C2 level (1003 students), 765 students say C1 level and 371 students B2 level.

In Swedish, the majority of students are spread between A2 and B2, with the biggest number at the level B1. The majority of the students who studied German put themselves at the A2 level, followed by B1 and A1. In the other languages the level of proficiency goes gradually down, with the majority of French and Spanish learners at A1, and Italian and Japanese learners having weaker skills than A1.

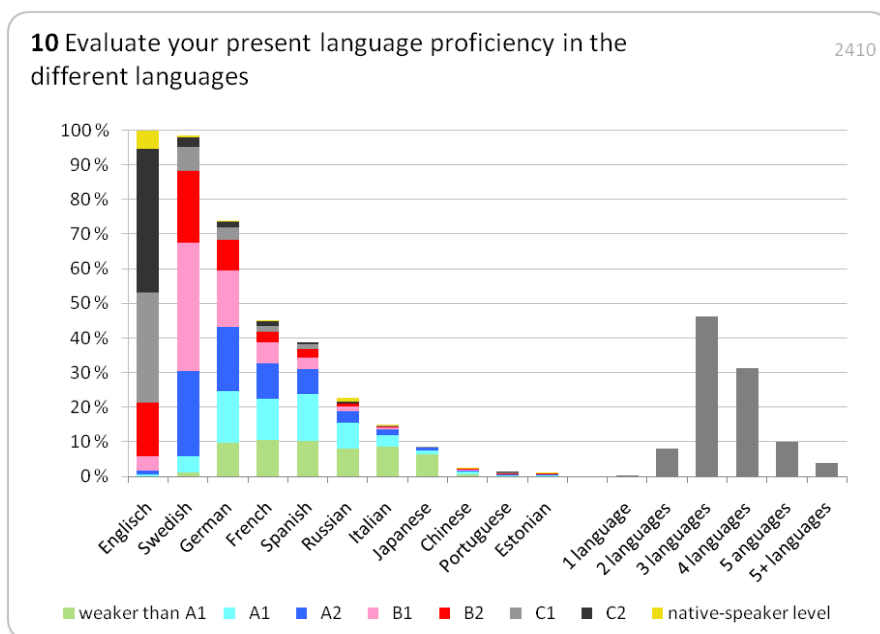


Figure 2: Self-evaluation of language proficiency in the different foreign languages; n: 2410

Looking at the differences between men and women, the analysis shows that male students evaluate their English skills to be slightly better than

female. In all other languages female students evaluate their skills better. Considering the majors of the students there are no significant differences in Swedish, Italian or Japanese. In the remaining languages International Business students evaluate their skills better than students from other majors. Students from UoJ and LUT evaluate themselves slightly lower than the average.

This type of self-evaluation delivers only an approximate value since it has been done without any training. Little research has been done comparing learner's self-evaluation with their actual skills, but with some reservations it illustrates the range of languages and language levels. We find the given levels in English somewhat suspect. According to this self-evaluation the English skills of the students are rather high. Even if the students' skills are without doubt quite good, it is perhaps somewhat questionable that they are so high. There could be a tendency towards overestimation in English (cf. Huhta, A. 2010).

3.2.5 Question 11: What level of proficiency do you aim to reach in the different languages; how well would you like to know the language?

As a whole, students aim towards higher proficiency than their present level in all languages. In English the vast majority would like to reach level C2 or native skills, as shown in Figure 3. In Swedish and German the majority aims at level B2, in French, Spanish, Italian and Russian at B1 and in Japanese A1 level. In other languages than those mentioned, the majority aims only at basic skills.

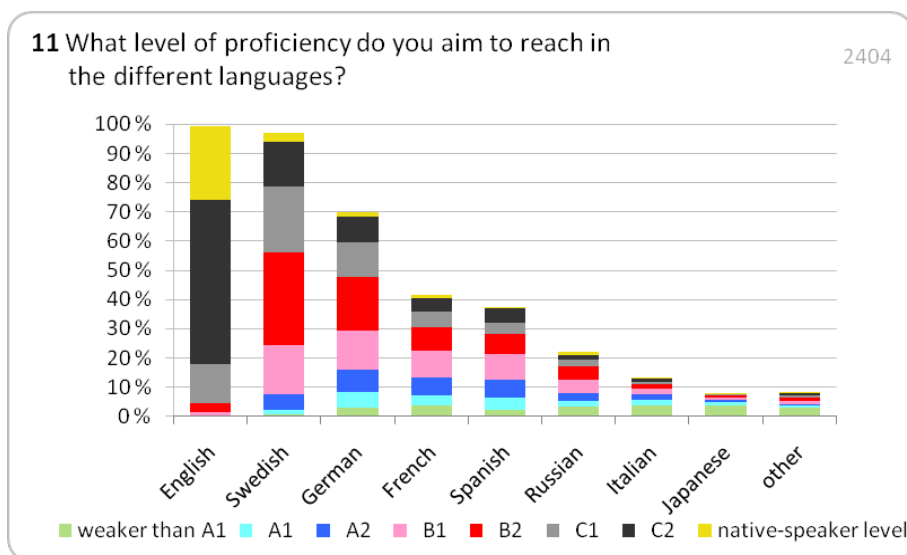


Figure 3: Which level of proficiency in the different foreign languages do students aim at? n: 2404

Men have higher aims than women only in English. In all other languages women strive for a higher proficiency level. The differences between the sexes are smallest in Russian and Japanese. The aims regarding English, Swedish and German are quite similar in all majors. Students of International Business differ in their aims for French and Spanish from other students. In both languages they strive for higher skills than students of other majors. International Business students are also the only group which strives for higher skills in Spanish than in German and French, and in French higher than in German. The students from UoJ have slightly lower aims than students from other universities. Students from LUT also have slightly lower aims in all languages, except in Russian and Japanese, in which they have higher aims than students from other universities.

3.3 Language choice and language studies at the university

The third complex of the questionnaire (questions 12-20) deals with the language choice and availability of language studies at the university. We inquired about the languages the students had already taken (question 12) or which they plan to take at the university (question 13) and whether there are languages that they would like to study, but which are not on offer (question 14). We also wanted to know when they decided to choose certain languages (question 15a) and did they use the information provided by the language

centres / language departments (question 15 b), and if they used it, did they consider the information they obtained as useful (question 15c). In question 16 we wanted to know the effort the students were ready to put into language learning and in question 17 we wanted to check on the attitudes in general towards language learning and using foreign languages. Question 18 and 19 asked for the factors which are important for choosing certain languages and for not choosing other languages. In question 20 students were asked whether they started foreign languages or foreign language courses at the university but from which they subsequently dropped out.

3.3.1 Question 12: Which languages are you studying or have you studied during your present studies?

Most of the students were already taking English at university. A rather large group also took Swedish. Swedish comes at some universities a little later in the curriculum, which could explain that 20% didn't take it, even though it is obligatory for almost all of them. Nearly half of the students took German language classes at the university, which means that German is clearly the most popular foreign language after English. Among the respondents of this study Spanish had already overtaken French, which was traditionally the third strongest foreign language after English and German at Finnish universities. Spanish courses were taken by almost a third of the students and French classes by a quarter. Russian follows with 14% and Italian, Japanese and other languages were each studied by between 3 and 4% of the students. In other languages Chinese is the strongest language, which 43 students have studied at the university.

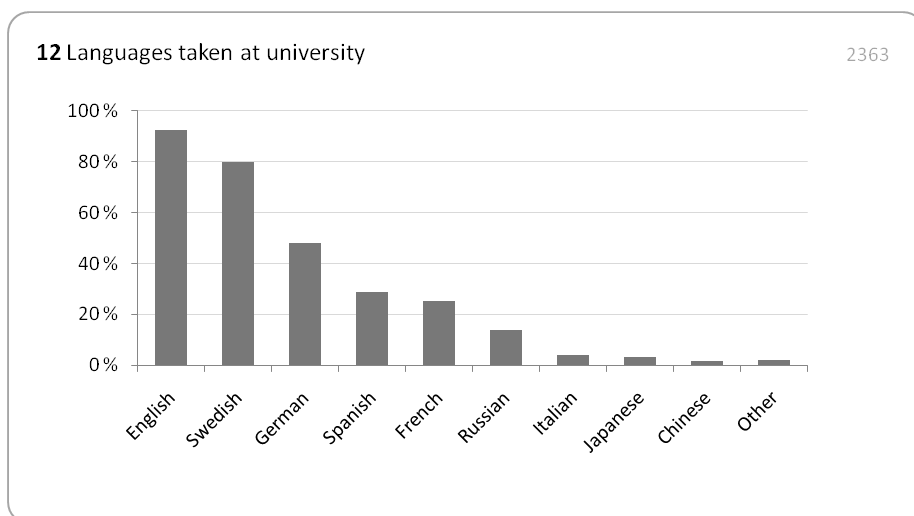


Figure 4: Languages taken at the university; n: 2663

Looking at the responses of men and women, the same trend as with the languages studied before university studies can be seen. There are no significant differences in the cases of English, Swedish, German, Russian and Japanese, but rather big differences with the Romance languages, especially French, which was taken by 33% of women but only by 15% of men. Differences, though much smaller, can be found also with Spanish and Italian. Spanish was studied by 31% of women and 26% of men and Italian by 5% of women and 3% of men.

Looking at the different majors / study programmes (see Table 13), the following points are of interest: English courses were taken already by around 95% of the students of Accounting, Management and Marketing but only 84% of International Business students took English courses. One possible explanation could be that the teaching language of their major is English and they focus on other languages in their language studies. Students of International Business took German, French and Spanish almost equally often. In all the other majors German was, after English and Swedish, the most popular language. Russian was taken by more of the International Business students than by students from other majors.

Table 13: Languages taken in the different majors

	<i>all</i>	<i>International Business</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Accounting</i>	<i>Marketing</i>
English	92.5	83.6	93.7	95.3	95.2
Swedish	79.9	77.3	78	86.6	82.9
German	48	40.4	47.6	54.7	49
French	25.1	38.7	24.3	20.4	30.5
Spanish	28.9	43.1	27.7	25.7	33.3
Russian	13.9	20	10.7	15.4	12.5
Italian	3.9	3.6	4.5	3.4	4.8
Japanese	3.1	5.3	3.4	1.4	2.8
others	3.7	7.6	4.2	2.8	3.4

In percent; **highest value / language in bold red**; *lowest value / language in italics green*

There are some differences between the universities which can be due to the different curricula and the offer of different languages (see Table 14). Students at HSE take less German and Russian than the average and more Spanish and Italian. At TSE, students are above the average in all languages except Italian (which is not offered by the Language Department) and Japanese, where they are under the average and Russian where they are exactly the same as the average. In some languages, such as Swedish and German the difference is quite high. At UoO students more often take German and Italian than the average, but less French and Spanish. At the UoJ all languages except English and ‘other languages’ are lower than the average. At LUT English, Swedish, German and French are lower than the average. Russian on the other hand is almost twice as high as the average as well as ‘other languages’, mostly Chinese and Portuguese.

Table 14: Languages taken at the different universities

	<i>all</i>	<i>HSE</i>	<i>TSE</i>	<i>LUT</i>	<i>UoO</i>	<i>UoJ</i>
English	92.5	92.9	97.9	<i>73</i>	95.9	98.3
Swedish	79.9	81.4	89.9	<i>61.7</i>	79.3	71.3
German	48	40.4	59.7	<i>37.4</i>	56.4	42.2
French	25.1	27.2	31.1	<i>15.7</i>	18.3	22.2
Spanish	28.9	32.9	34.9	25.5	<i>13.7</i>	18.3
Russian	13.9	<i>9.2</i>	13.9	24.3	16.2	10.9
Italian	3.9	7.2	<i>1.1</i>	1.2	6.2	4.3
Japanese	3.1	4.6	2.7	<i>1.7</i>	2.1	2.2
others	3.7	3.5	<i>1.7</i>	6.7	3.7	7

In percent; **highest value / language in bold red**; *lowest value / language in italics green*

3.3.2 Question 13: Which languages do you plan to study, in addition to the languages mentioned in question 12) during your present studies?

608 students stated in this open-ended question that they planned to study other languages in addition to those mentioned in question 12. 443 of the respondents only want to take one more language and 165 mentioned more than one language. Many of the respondents relativise their answers and add 'maybe' or 'probably'. The following table shows which languages the students plan to take in addition to those they mentioned in question 12.

Table 15: Languages, students plan to take; n: 608

	<i>all</i>	<i>HSE</i>	<i>TSE</i>	<i>LUT</i>	<i>UoO</i>	<i>UoJ</i>
Russian	143	47	51	25	9	11
Spanish	130	43	37	19	22	9
Swedish	127	54	8	28	19	18
German	104	37	23	22	5	17
French	94	36	29	7	15	7
Italian	49	21	17	2	2	7
English	47	2	3	40	2	0
Japanese	28	18	8	1	1	0
Chinese	26	14	7	3	1	1
Portuguese	11	2	8	1	0	0
Korean	5	0	1	4	0	0

3.3.3 Question 14: Would you like to have studied other languages, which are not offered, during your present studies?

84% of the students would not like to have studied other not offered languages during their present studies, in comparison to 16% who would like to have studied other languages. It is noticeable that the students quite often mentioned languages which are already offered at their universities. This can probably be explained through the comments of some students who want to have more courses in those languages or courses at lower proficiency levels (for example in German and Swedish) or at higher proficiency levels or language courses for special purposes (for example in Chinese or French).

Table 16: Languages students would like to take but which are not offered;
n: 388

<i>Language</i>	<i>respondents</i>
Italian	105
Chinese	59
Russian	45
Arabic	23
Japanese	23
Estonian	16
Spanish	15

3.3.4 Question 15a: When did you decide which language you would choose at university?

Most of the students make their decision when starting at university, but they claim that the information they receive at university (e.g. information and guidance for new students) was not decisive. Only 10% say that they made their decision after they obtained such information. 27% made their decision long before starting their university studies. One fifth of the students made their decision during their first year of university studies and 13% decide at the start of a new semester.

Table 17: When did students decide which language they choose at university?
n: 2398

	<i>respondents</i>
When starting at university	841
Long before starting at university	649
During the first year of studies	479
I decide every semester	319
After the information I got at the university (e.g. information and guidance for the new students)	236
A couple of weeks before starting at the university	21
Some other time	50
I haven't yet decided	41

More women (31%) than men (22%) already made their choice long before their present studies started. On the other hand, more men (12%) than women (8%) made their choice following the information they received at the universities or during the first year (men: 23%, women: 18%). In the matters of majors, the majority of Accounting, Marketing and Management students

made their choice at the beginning of their studies at the university as the overall majority. But the majority of the International Business students had already made their choice long before their present studies started.

3.3.5 Question 15b: Did you use the information / guidance offered by the language centre / language department when you chose the languages? Question 15c: Was the information you received useful?

Only a quarter of the students claim that they used the information / guidance offered by the language centres / departments. On the other hand, around 80% of the students who used the information / guidance thought that it was useful.

More women (23%) than men (19%) used the information / guidance offered by the language centres / language departments and they were also more satisfied (women: 84%, men: 76%). Students from UoO and UoJ were most satisfied with the guidance they got. Students from TSE, HSE and LUT were least satisfied. Unfortunately, the students didn't give any more detailed information as to why they think that the guidance was not useful. About the same number of students from all majors did use the information / guidance offered by the language centres / language departments, however the least satisfied are students from International Business.

3.3.6 Question 16: Your own effort towards language learning in general

Half of the students are ready to put a lot of effort into language learning and agree with the statement 'I put effort in my language studies and I plan to take also additional language courses'. 38% stated that they take only the obligatory courses, but they do them properly and only less than 10% will use as little time and effort as possible for language studies. 75 students chose the alternative 'other', where a lot of them stated that their effort depends on the language and they are ready to put (a lot of) effort in learning certain languages, but not in all or that it depends on the courses. Some students also mentioned that they would like to put more effort in language learning, but they don't have enough time for it:

Riippuu kielestä miten paljon panostan ja luenko ylimääräisiä opintoja. ■ It depends on the language whether I put effort into studying and whether I take extra courses. (TSE)

Kielestä ja kurssista riippuen panostan vaihtelevasti. ■ I make an effort depending on the language and the courses. (LUT)

Haluan panostaa kielten opiskeluun, mutta pelkään, että aikaa on niukasti käytettävissä siihen. ■ I would like to make an effort, but I fear that there is too little time for it. (TSE)

Table 18: Students' effort for language learning; n: 2392

	<i>Percentage</i>
I put effort into my language studies and I plan to take also additional language courses	51%
I take only the obligatory courses, but I do them properly.	38%
I will use as little time and effort as possible for language studies	8%
Other	3%

More than half of the female students (57%) stated that they were ready to put an effort into their language studies and that they will take also additional courses. Furthermore, the majority of the male students gave this answer, but the percentage is lower (42%) and only slightly higher than in the second statement 'I take only the obligatory courses, but I do them properly'. 13% of the male students do as little as possible for the language studies, whereas only 5% of the female students agreed with this statement.

In the answers to this question some differences can be found between the universities. The biggest group (47%) of students at HSE agreed with the second statement 'I take only the obligatory courses, but I do them properly' and 44% with the first 'I put effort into my language studies and I plan to take also additional language courses'. The same situation can be found at LUT, where more students want to take only the obligatory courses, but do them properly (46%) and fewer students want to put an effort into their language studies and take also additional language courses (40%). Also the number of students, who will use as little time and effort as possible for language studies is a bit higher than the average at LUT. At UoO on the other hand the percentage of students who declare that they put effort in their language studies and that they will take also additional courses is quite high (54%), the agreement with the second statement (to take only the obligatory courses) is about the average, and only about half of the average (4.5%) use as little time as possible. Also in UoJ the percentage of students who agree with the first statement 'I put effort in my language studies and I plan to take also additional language courses' is high (58%), but there the third statement 'I will use as

little time and effort as possible for language studies' falls above the average (11%) and the second one 'I take only the obligatory courses, but I do them properly' under the average (28%). The highest percentage of students who want to put an effort into their language studies (60%) can be found at TSE. There are less respondents than the average who agree with the second statement 'I take only the obligatory courses, but I do them properly' (29%) and about the same number as the average (8%) agree with the third statement 'I will use as little time and effort as possible for language studies'.

Most of the International Business students (72%) stated that they are ready to put an effort into their language studies and that they will take also additional courses. Furthermore, the majority of the other majors gave this answer, but the percentage is lower (Marketing: 52%; Management: 47% and Accounting: 46%).

3.3.7 Question 17: Attitudes towards foreign languages, foreign language learning and communication in foreign languages

In question 17 a four-point Likert scale was used to find out the students' attitudes towards foreign languages and foreign language learning. The options given were 1 Completely agree, 2 Partly agree, 3 Partly disagree and 4 Disagree completely.

The students' attitudes are very positive. Almost all think it is important to know foreign languages and most of them also like to use foreign languages outside the classroom. The majority of the students also think that they are talented in language learning and like to learn foreign languages. But language learning is seen as a hobby by only 40%.

Table 19: Attitudes towards foreign languages, foreign language learning and communication in foreign languages; n: 2411

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Median</i>
Speaking foreign languages is important.	89%	7%	1%	3%	1
I also like to use the languages outside the language courses.	51%	35%	11%	3%	1
In my opinion I am talented in languages.	31%	43%	19%	7%	2
I like to learn foreign languages and learning is easy for me.	27%	44%	25%	5%	2
I like to learn foreign languages, even though it is sometimes difficult.	22%	45%	26%	7%	2
Language learning is my hobby.	14%	27%	36%	23%	3
Language learning is too laboured.	5%	23%	44%	28%	3
I don't like language learning.	3%	9%	23%	66%	4

1: completely agree; 2: partly agree; 3: partly disagree; 4: disagree completely

The attitudes of the female students are slightly more positive than those of the male students. Female students also like to use languages outside the classroom more than male students do. Looking at the universities no big differences can be observed, however at LUT all factors are slightly more negative than at the other universities. The biggest difference can be found with the statement 'I also like to use the languages outside the language courses', LUT's median here is 3, whereas it is 2 at all other universities. The attitudes of the International Business students are slightly more positive than those of the other students. They also agree most with the statement that they also like to use foreign languages outside the classroom. Between the other majors there are no significant differences.

3.3.8 Question 18: Which factors are important when choosing language courses at the university?

The students should tick the boxes on a list with 16 statements concerning those factors which are important for choosing a certain language (a list of 8 languages was provided). When looking at the result of all languages together, the most important factor for choosing a language at university is prior knowledge of this language. The second most important factor is that the language is obligatory for studies and the third most important factor is usefulness for future profession / job. Affective factors, collective factors and usefulness in spare-time and for studies are also rather important for the

students. Obviously the students make their own decision regarding which language to choose because recommendations of the study-guidance / students / tutors and their friends' choices don't play an important role.

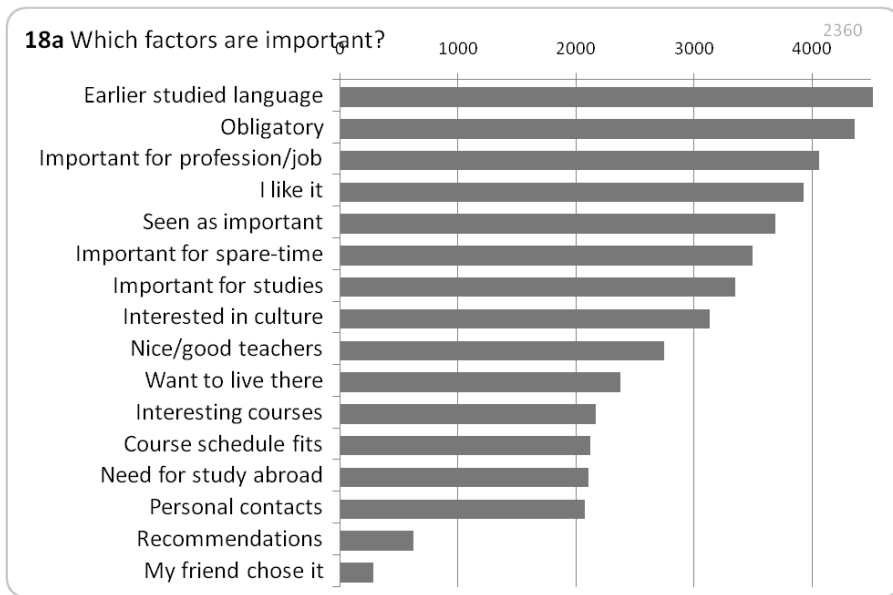


Figure 5: Factors for choosing language courses at the university; n: 2360⁵

Table 20 gives an overview of which factors are important for the different languages. It shows already that the factors for choosing certain languages differ a lot on one hand but that there can be seen also some more general traits in the language choice of the students on the other.

⁵ This and the following charts contain shortened text. The full text statement of question 18 is given in Table 20.

Table 20: Factors for choosing language courses at the university; n: 2390

		EN	SE	GE	FR	SP	RUS	IT	JA
		2313	2116	1287	718	761	421	167	116
I studied this language already earlier.	4721	69% 1594	59% 1238	79% 1010	67% 478	31% 235	25% 105	28% 46	14% 16
This language is obligatory for my studies.	4366	76% 1762	84% 1773	34% 440	24% 172	19% 144	13% 56	7% 12	8% 9
This language is important for my future profession / job.	4065	84% 1936	42% 880	43% 550	32% 226	23% 177	59% 249	13% 22	22% 25
I like this language.	3934	60% 1398	32% 679	44% 567	60% 428	69% 521	43% 181	62% 104	48% 56
It is seen as important to speak this language in Finland.	3691	74% 1703	60% 1260	27% 347	9% 67	6% 45	63% 264	1% 1	3% 4
This language is important for my spare-time (e.g. travelling, hobbies).	3500	72% 1664	21% 445	34% 438	43% 305	57% 433	23% 95	47% 78	36% 42
This language is important for my studies.	3349	79% 1822	30% 635	33% 426	21% 147	15% 117	42% 175	6% 10	15% 17
I am interested in the culture of this language area.	3132	39% 891	18% 378	37% 475	60% 434	71% 538	46% 192	74% 123	87% 101
Nice / good teachers.	2749	32% 744	31% 652	42% 541	35% 254	46% 343	34% 144	29% 48	20% 23
I want to live in this language area in future.	2378	45% 1051	14% 293	26% 339	32% 228	41% 310	15% 64	32% 53	35% 40
This language has interesting courses on offer.	2165	35% 814	16% 342	29% 371	27% 194	34% 262	26% 110	22% 36	31% 36
The course schedule of this language fits into my timetable.	2119	29% 681	21% 447	30% 387	28% 202	30% 229	26% 110	22% 36	23% 27
I need this language for studying abroad.	2104	51% 1178	7% 151	24% 304	23% 167	27% 203	14% 58	14% 24	16% 19
I have personal contacts with people speaking this language.	2071	35% 802	20% 412	26% 326	23% 163	26% 197	23% 97	31% 52	21% 24
Recommendations of the study guidance / students / tutors.	619	10% 241	5% 104	7% 93	6% 46	6% 48	18% 77	3% 5	4% 5
I chose this language because my friend chose it too.	280	2% 52	2% 31	4% 51	4% 27	10% 79	6% 26	3% 5	8% 9

Legend: Column 1 shows the factors as they were given in the survey; column 2 gives the number which indicates how often the factors were chosen altogether. Columns 3 to 10 give the information for each language. Row 2 shows the number of respondents per language. For each factor the percentage based on the number of respondents per language is given in bold italics and the lower cell gives the number of marks.

Below is more detailed information for each of the languages.

English

Almost all respondents, 2313, answered this question for English. In the case of English almost all factors are seen as important. The most important factor for choosing English is that English is considered important for one's future profession / job, followed by the importance of English for studies. The third most important factor is that English is obligatory for studies. English is generally considered an obligatory language, which it is *de facto* not (except UoJ). Most students can choose which language they take as their obligatory foreign language. English also plays an important role for the students' spare-time and about 60% of the respondents who answered for English like the language. Around half of the respondents consider English important for studying abroad and slightly less would like to live in the language area. Fewer than 40% are interested in the culture of the language area or have contacts with people speaking this language. The role of institutional factors such as teachers, interesting courses or time-tables is a little smaller when choosing English.

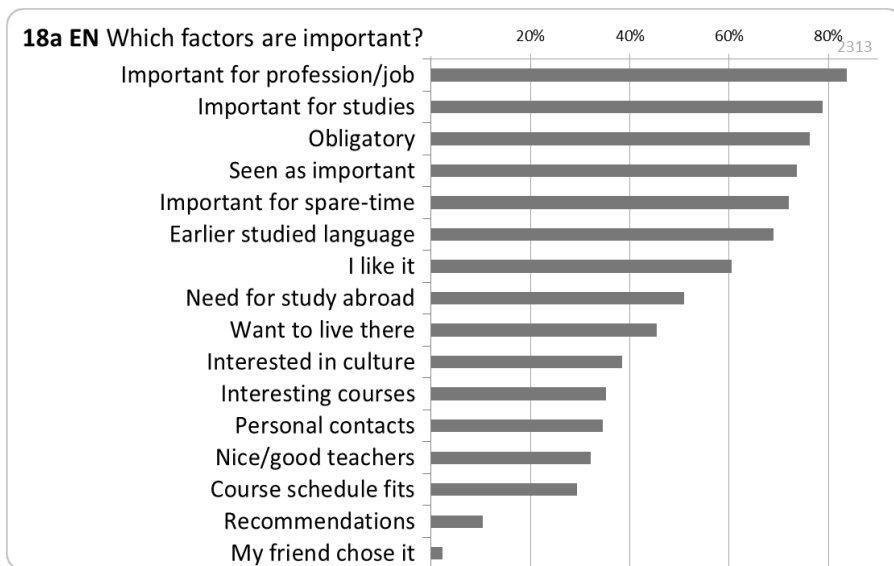


Figure 6: Factors for choosing English; n: 2313

The results for men and women do not differ much. For both sexes the importance for profession / job is the most important factor. For men the second most important factor is that English is obligatory, which was for women only the fourth important factor. For all universities the most important factor for choosing English is that it is seen as important for future

profession / job, except at UoJ, where the most important factor is that it is obligatory.

Swedish

The most important factor for the 2116 respondents answering for Swedish is that it is obligatory for the studies. The second most important factor is that Swedish is seen as important in Finland and the third that the students had already studied the language earlier. Around 40% of the respondents in Swedish think that Swedish is important for their future profession / job and around 30% like the language, think that the teachers are good and that Swedish is important for their studies. Spare-time, culture and contacts with Swedish speaking people don't play an important role and neither does the course offer itself.



Figure 7: Factors for choosing Swedish; n: 2116

German

1287 respondents, the biggest group after English and Swedish, answered this question for German. The most important factor by far for choosing German (79% of the respondents) is that the students had already studied this language earlier. The three next most important factors (each mentioned by a little more than 40% of the students) are that the students like the language, that it is important for their future profession / job and that there are nice / good teachers for this language. All the other factors are almost of the same

importance for nearly one third of the students. Around 300 students (24%) think they will need German for studying abroad.

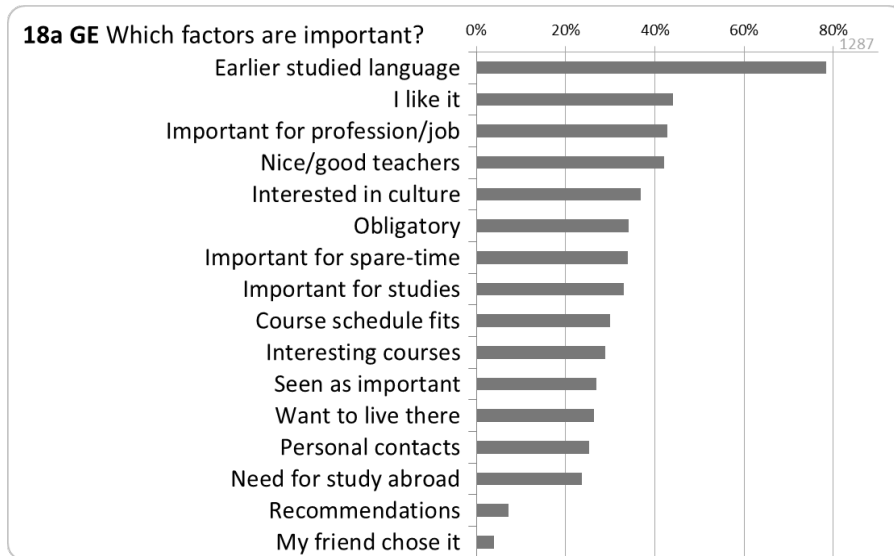


Figure 8: Factors for choosing German; n: 1287

The first two reasons are the same for both men and women. But women put the fact that they like German on the third place, while for men the fact that German is obligatory for them comes third. There are only small differences between the universities. At UoO the factor ‘Nice / good teachers’ is the second most important and at HSE it is the third most important. At all other universities this factor comes later. There are no differences between the students’ majors.

French

There are 718 respondents for French. Around two-thirds of the students chose French because they had studied it earlier. Around 60% chose French because they are interested in the culture of the language area or because they like the language. More than 40% think that French is important for their spare-time. Around one third of the respondents chose French because there are nice teachers, they want to live in the language area or because French is important for their future profession / job. Between 20 and 25% of the respondents chose French because it is important or obligatory for their studies, they need it for studying abroad or because they have personal contacts with people speaking this language. Quite low, only 9%, is the proportion of respondents who chose French for the reason that it is seen as important to speak the language in Finland.

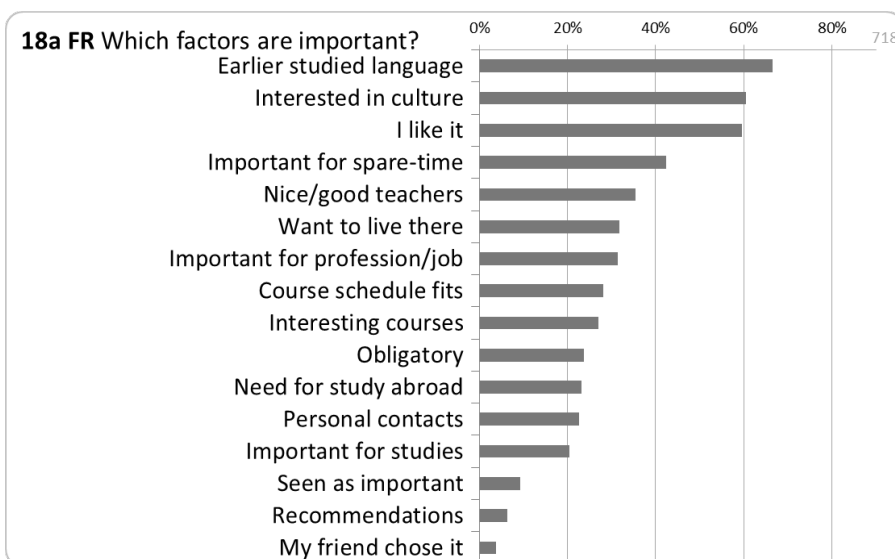


Figure 9: Factors for choosing French; n: 718

There are no differences between the most important factors for choosing French if we compare men's and women's answers. At the UoJ the most important factor for choosing French is that the students like the culture of the language area. At all other universities prior studies is the most important factor.

Spanish

761 respondents answered for Spanish. The two most important factors for choosing Spanish is that the students are interested in the culture of the language area and that they like the language. Also, over 50% chose Spanish because it is important for their spare-time, while about 40% chose Spanish because they want to live in this language area. Quite important are, in addition, institutional factors such as nice / good teachers, interesting course offer and that the course-schedule fits into the students' time-table. Earlier studies is a factor for about one third of the respondents. Around a quarter of the students mention the importance for future profession / job and studies, and only 6% think that Spanish is seen as an important language in Finland.

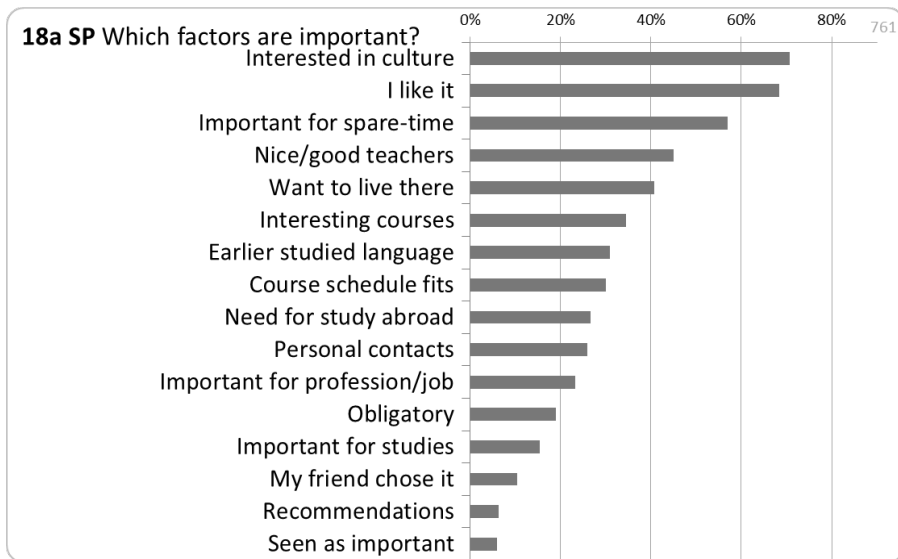


Figure 10: Factors for choosing Spanish; n: 761

Russian

421 respondents answered for Russian. The most important factor for choosing Russian is that in Finland it is seen as important to speak Russian. Over 60% chose this factor and a bit less students chose the factor that Russian is important for their future profession / job. Over 40% are interested in the culture of the Russian language area, and like the language and think Russian is important for their studies, while for about a third of the respondents nice / good teachers are an important factor when choosing Russian. For about a quarter of the respondents institutional factors, such as time-table and good course offer are important as well as the fact that they had studied Russian earlier. Just over 10% of the students want to live in the language area or think they need Russian for studying abroad.

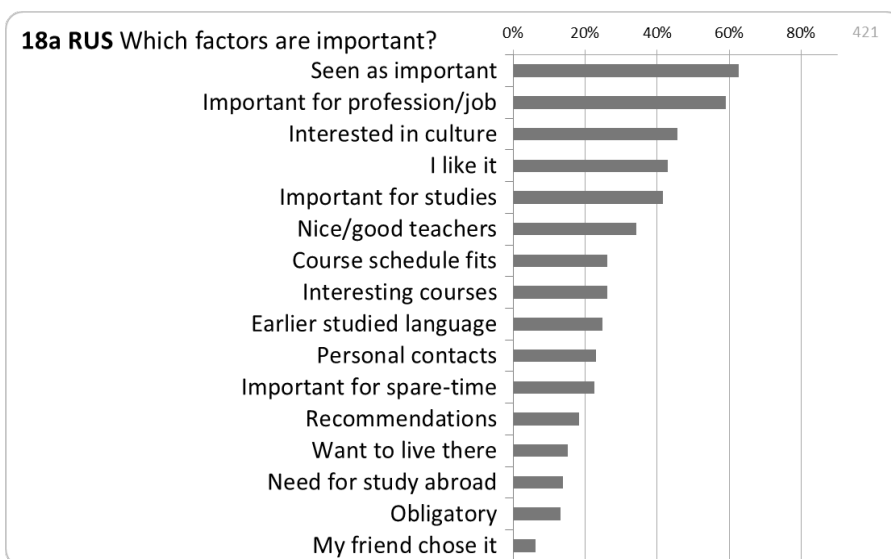


Figure 11: Factors for choosing Russian; n: 421

The most important factor for men is that Russian is seen as important to speak in Finland, while the second most frequent factor is that it is important for their future profession / job. For women it is the other way round. For both, interest in the culture is the third most important factor. Looking at the universities there is only one difference. Students of LUT are less interested in the Russian language area than students of the other universities. On the other hand LUT was the only university where Russian was the fourth most often studied language. There are no differences between students of Accounting and Management. International Business students chose as the second most important factor that Russian is important for their studies, and Marketing students put ‘Nice / good teachers’ as their third most important factor, neither of which were that important for the students of the other majors.

Italian

167 respondents answered this question for Italian. The most important factors for choosing Italian are interest in the culture of the language area and that the students like the language. Importance for spare-time was also chosen by almost half of the respondents. Around 30% of the respondents want to live in the language area and have personal contacts with Italian speaking people. About the same amount chose Italian because of nice / good teachers or because they had already studied Italian. For a quarter, institutional factors as convenient time-table and good course offer are important. The relevance for studies, studying abroad and future profession / job is rather small, 7-14%.

Only 0.6% of the respondents think that Italian is seen as an important language in Finland.

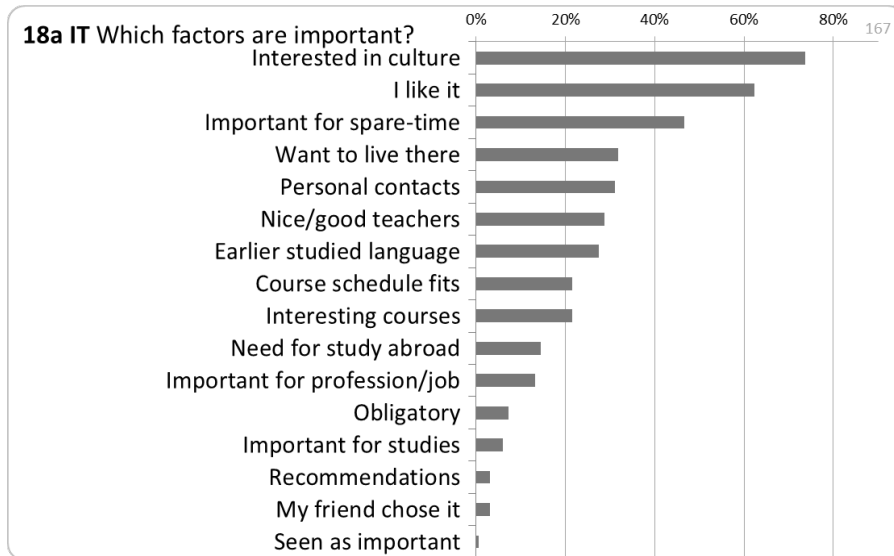


Figure 12: Factors for choosing Italian; n: 167

Japanese

116 students answered this question for Japanese. By far the most important factor here is that the students are interested in the language area (almost 90% of the respondents). About 50% chose that they like the language. Around a third of the students think Japanese is important for their spare-time, and that they want to live in the language area, or that there is an interesting course offer in Japanese. For 20-25% of the respondents, time-table, good / nice teachers, contacts with Japanese speakers and importance for future profession are relevant factors. About 15% think they need Japanese for studying abroad or for their studies, and only 3% think that Japanese is seen as an important language in Finland.

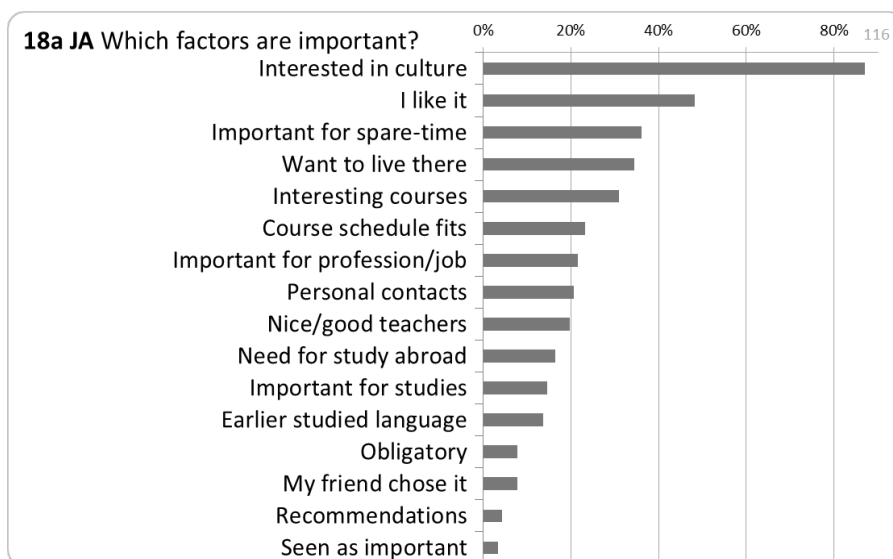


Figure 13: Factors for choosing Japanese; n: 116

Other factors:

The students also mentioned other factors which were important for choosing certain languages. Here are some examples:

Venäjän kielen osaajista on pulaa ja sen merkitys tulee vain kasvamaan tulevaisuudessa. ■ There is a lack of Russian speakers and the importance of Russian will only grow in the future. (TSE)

Espanjaa aloin opiskella suureksi osaksi Serranon perhe-televisiosarjan vaikutuksesta. ■ I started to study Spanish mainly because of the influence of the Serrano family TV-series. (TSE)

Saksa: minun on kohtalaisen helppo oppia kyseistä kieltä – taito kertyy suht. vaivatta. ■ German: It is fairly easy for me to learn this language in question – my skills develop without much effort. (HSE)

HSE:ssä mennään sille kielikurssille, jolle sattuu pääsemään. ■ At HSE you take the language course, where you happen to get a free place. (HSE)

Yksi tekijä valita muita kieliä on englannin kielen tulva. ■ One reason to choose other languages is the flood of English. (HSE)

Teen gradun englanniksi. ■ I write my master thesis in English. (LUT)

3.3.9 Question 19a: Do you have special reasons for not choosing certain languages? and 19b: Why do / did you not choose certain languages?

The majority of the respondents stated that they have no reasons for not choosing certain languages. 29% answered that they do have reasons for not choosing languages. The figure shows which languages these students did / do not chose.

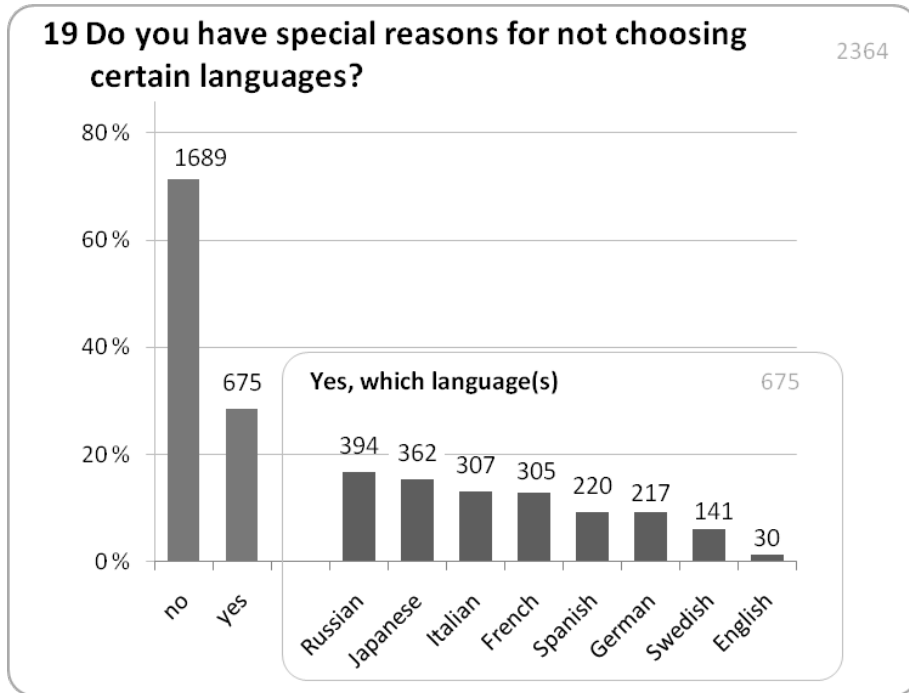


Figure 14: Did / Do the students not choose certain languages. If yes, which?
n: 2364 / 675

Question 19b asked about the reasons for not choosing certain languages. A number of reasons / factors were given in the questionnaire, which correspond with the factors for choosing certain languages in question 18a. Possible reasons can be affective, for example that the students don't like the language or the people speaking this language. These attitudes may be individual or collective. Another collective factor could be that the language is not considered important in Finland. Institutional factors as guidance or an unattractive course offer can be influential. Not choosing a certain language can also have something to do with the language itself, e.g. perceived difficulty.

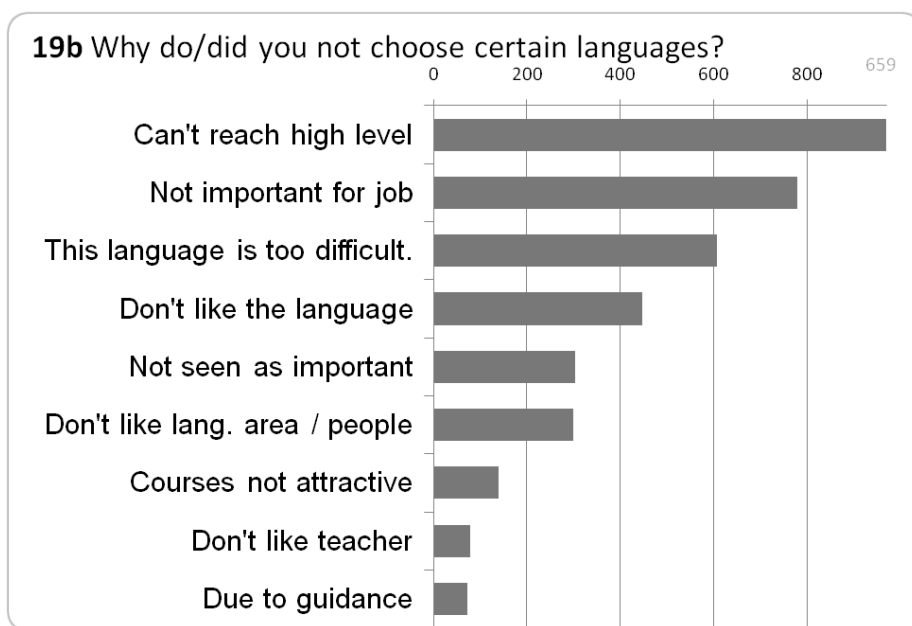


Figure 15: Reasons for not choosing certain languages; n: 659⁶

Table 21 gives an overview of which factors are important for not choosing the different languages. Like in the question 18a special traits in the answers for different languages can be observed. The reason mentioned most frequently is that the students think that they cannot reach a high enough level in this language. The second most important factor – also corresponding with the most important factors for choosing certain languages – is that the students consider certain languages as not important for their jobs. The factor of perceived difficulty is also mentioned by a high number of students, followed by more affective factors. Institutional factors do not seem to be very important for not choosing certain languages.

⁶ This chart contains shortened text. The full text statement of question 19b is given in Table 21.

Table 21: Why do / did you not choose certain languages? n: 659

		EN	SE	GE	FR	SP	RUS	IT	JA
		30	141	217	305	220	394	307	392
I can't reach a high enough level in this language during my studies at the university.	969	20% 6	25% 35	42% 91	54% 165	59% 129	51% 199	46% 142	52% 202
This language is not important for my professional life.	780	17% 5	44% 62	25% 55	33% 101	47% 103	20% 78	64% 197	46% 179
This language is too difficult.	606	0% 0	12% 17	17% 37	39% 120	7% 15	53% 207	6% 19	49% 191
I don't like this language.	448	13% 4	55% 77	48% 105	22% 66	7% 15	34% 134	5% 16	8% 31
This language is in general not seen as important.	304	0% 0	26% 36	2% 5	6% 17	19% 41	3% 11	40% 123	18% 71
I don't like the language area or the people living there.	299	3% 1	19% 27	12% 26	18% 54	7% 16	37% 144	6% 17	4% 14
The course offer in this language is not attractive.	140	37% 11	22% 31	9% 20	6% 19	6% 13	3% 13	6% 17	4% 16
I don't like the teacher(s) of this language.	78	40% 12	10% 14	6% 14	5% 14	4% 9	2% 7	1% 4	1% 4
I didn't choose the language because of the information / guidance I got at the university.	73	10% 3	5% 7	5% 10	4% 13	3% 7	2% 7	3% 10	4% 16

Legend: Column 1 shows the factors as they were given in the survey; Column 2 indicates how often the factors were chosen altogether. Columns 3 to 10 give the information for each language. Row 2 shows the number of respondents per language. For each factor the percentage based on the number of respondents per language is given in bold italics and the cell below gives the number of marks.

Only 30 students stated that they did not choose English. The two most often mentioned reasons were institutional. They did not like the teachers or the course offer was not interesting. All other reasons were not mentioned at all or only by very few students.

141 students gave reasons for not choosing Swedish. Here the two most important reasons were that they do not like the language and that it is not important for professional life.

Altogether 217 students answered for German. In addition, the most important reason for German was that the students don't like the language. The second reason was that the students think that they cannot reach a high enough level in this language during their studies. Some think it is not important for professional life, but only a few think it is generally not seen as important.

305 students answered this question for French and their most important reason was that they cannot reach a high enough level in this language during

their studies, and that French is in their opinion too difficult. Quite a lot of the respondents also think that French is not important for their professional life and that they don't like the language, or the language area and the people living there.

Spanish, mentioned by 220 students, has the same most important reason as French. The students think they cannot reach a high enough level. The second most important factor is that Spanish is not relevant for their professional life, followed by that it is not seen as important in general. Affective reasons play no role, and Spanish is obviously not seen as a difficult language.

394 students gave reasons for not choosing Russian. The most common reason was that Russian is perceived as too difficult and secondly that they cannot reach a high enough level. In the case of Russian it is interesting that more students state that they don't like the language area or the people living there than the language itself.

307 students answered this question for Italian. Most of them did not choose Italian because it is not important for their professional life. They also think that they cannot reach a high enough level and that the language is in general not seen as important. Only a few think that Italian is too difficult or that they don't like the language.

392 students gave reasons for not choosing Japanese. The most common reason was that they cannot reach a high enough level, and secondly, that it is too difficult. A lot of students also think that it is not important for professional life and that it is in general not seen as important. Affective reasons are not very important for not choosing Japanese.

Other reasons:

114 students gave other reasons also for not choosing certain languages. Most of them (37) mentioned that they don't / didn't have enough time to study any more languages, or that it is too difficult to learn too many languages. In addition, very practical problems with finding the right course or getting a place in the courses of a certain language were also mentioned. Several students mentioned that in their opinion Swedish is not useful to learn.

Ei ole aikaa opiskella enempää kieliä. ■ There is no time to study more languages. (UoO)

Yli neljän kielen taidon ylläpitäminen on vaikeaa. ■ It is difficult to maintain language skills in more than four languages. (HSE)

Oikean tasoisen ryhmän valinta oli vaikeaa. ■ It was difficult to choose a course on the right level. (UoJ)

Venäjän kursseille ei pääse. ■ I couldn't get into the Russian courses. (LUT)

Ruotsin kieli on täysin tarpeeton Suomessa. Kommunikointi ruotsalaisten kanssa onnistuu mainiosti englanniksi. ■ Swedish is totally useless in Finland. Communicating with Swedes works greatly in English. (UoJ)

Vanhoja huonoja kokemuksia jo lukioajoilta, jolloin oli huono opettaja. ■ Old bad experiences from high school, where I had a bad teacher. (LUT)

3.3.10 Summary of findings in question 18 and 19

- The most important factor for choosing a language is prior knowledge. Most of the business students continue with languages they had studied before. This corresponds to the most important factor for not choosing certain languages: ‘I can’t reach a high enough level in this language during my studies at the university’. And as the answers to question 11 show, business students want to develop their language skills and reach functional skills in most of the languages they know. To reach this goal, effort in language learning is needed and it seems that the business students have quite realistic views of what is possible to achieve during the course of their studies.
- The factor ‘I can’t reach a high enough level in this language during my studies at the university’ is often either connected with the perceived difficulty of a language (in the case of Russian, French and Japanese) or with the fact that the students have no prior knowledge. Both factors make it difficult to reach a functional level during their studies.
- Instrumental reasons such as usefulness for future profession, studies and studying abroad are very important for most of the students when choosing a language. They are important factors for example for English, German and Russian. Also, the status of a language – whether the language is seen as important in Finland – is rather important for the respondents. Analogically, the factor that a language is not important for professional life is an important factor for not choosing certain languages, for example in the case of Romance languages.
- For students who choose a language which is rather rare in Finland and which is not often offered at schools, affective factors, interest in the culture and spare-time interests become more important. This is the case particularly for Italian and Japanese, but also for Spanish and French.
- One exception is Russian. It belongs to the group of languages in which only few students have prior knowledge. But for Russian instrumental and status reasons are more important than affective reasons or interest in the culture and language area.

- Institutional factors and the teachers are more important in the “smaller”, optionally studied languages than with the bigger ones.

3.3.11 Question 20: Dropout

Besides language choice, dropout (the cancellation of a course one already has attended) is another negative acting factor. In question 20 the students were asked ‘Have you started with foreign language / language courses at the university, but dropped out?’. If the respondents answer with ‘yes’, they should mention which language(s) and why.

405 respondents, 17% of 2324, confirmed a dropout. 404 named one language, some named more. The languages mentioned most often are Spanish 112, (25% of 446 mentions), French 90 (20%), German 76 (17%) and Russian (7%).

392 students gave one or more reasons (altogether 597) for their dropout. In the analysis these reasons have been grouped into 20 content-related bundles. The four most frequent reasons are as follows:

Reason number one is ‘lack of time’, 171 mentions (29% of 597):

Keskittyminen muihin opintoihin nopeuttaakseni valmistumista ■ Dropout due to wanting to concentrate on others studies to graduate faster (HSE)

It is followed by ‘too difficult’ 112 (19%), ‘problems with time table’ 64 (11%) and ‘interest, motivation, laziness’ 63 (11%):

... Lisäksi aikatauluttaminen on erittäin vaikeaa kun poissaolosäännöt ovat kielikurssien suhteen niin tiukat (toisin kuin normaaleilla kursseilla). ■ ... Additionally it is really difficult to arrange the timetable as absence regulations for language courses are so strict (unlike in normal courses). (HSE)

aika ja mielenkiinto eivät riittäneet ■ time and interest haven’t been enough (LUT)

Suoritin alkeis- ja jatkokursseja kahden vuoden ajan, jonka jälkeen tuntuu loikattavan sen verran edistyneelle tasolle, että omat taidot eivät enää riittäneet. Siksi myös motivaatio ja kiinnostus lopahtivat. ■ I took for two years the beginners and advanced courses, after that it felt like there was a jump to so advanced a level that my own skills weren’t enough. So motivation and interest also flagged. (TSE)

Most noticeable variances are as follows:

The numbers for dropout at LUT, UoJ and HSE are slightly lower, while at UoO and at the TSE the rates are slightly higher. At the Pori branch of TSE, however, the dropout is lowest, supposedly due to a smaller number of

languages on offer. At UoO French has the highest dropout rate. Accounting has less and Marketing the highest dropout rate.

The dropout rate per language, based on the results of questions 20 and 12, is shown in Table 22: Most remarkable are the dropout rates of nearly a third for Chinese and Japanese. Italian is also quite high with a quarter of the informants dropping out. In the mid range there are Spanish, Russian and French, and with distinctly lower rates, German. English and Swedish achieve the lowest values with a number showing almost zero dropout.

Table 22: Course dropout in relation to languages taken; n: 2324 / 2363

	<i>dropout</i>	<i>language taken</i>	<i>col. 2+3</i>	<i>dropout rate</i>
Chinese	20	41.3	61.3	33%
Japanese	34	71.8	105.8	32%
Italian	31	91.5	122.5	25%
Spanish	112	671.7	783.7	14%
Russian	52	322.6	374.6	14%
French	90	583.2	673.2	13%
German	76	1115.3	1191.3	6%
Swedish	10	1857.8	1867.8	0.5%
English	9	2148.9	2157.9	0.4%
Other	11	45.2	56.2	20%

Column 2 shows the number of dropout (question 20), column 3 shows the frequency of the languages taken at the university (question 12, cf. Figure 4, page 35), column 4 shows dropout + language takers as the base for the dropout rate per language in column 5.

The results can be interpreted as follows: Swedish has nearly no dropout due to the obligatory regulations. That is partly also the case for English, although English is not mandatory according to study regulations. Languages which are not taken at the beginner level such as English, Swedish and partly German and French have often lower dropout rates. The factor 'I had studied this language earlier' has surely some effect. English, Swedish and also German and Russian are languages with a strong impact of instrumental motivational factors. They seem to be stronger than leisure orientated factors, which have a slightly higher impact on the Romance languages. Chinese and Japanese are linguistically quite different from the mother tongue or the already familiar Indo-European languages such as English and Swedish, and it takes a lot of effort and commitment to learn them.

3.4 Plurilingualism

Questions 21 to 23 deal with students' attitudes towards plurilingualism. In order to get a basis of common understanding of the term plurilingualism, a short definition, which follows rather closely the definition in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR 2001, 4) was provided. The term is quite differently used even in the research and to avoid for instance a narrowing of plurilingualism as early childhood bilingualism, we presented the following definition in the questionnaire.

Plurilingualism: *An individual's multilingualism, knowledge of several languages, both mother tongue and foreign languages. The competence in the different languages can be on different proficiency levels, beginner's level included.*

The first group of seven statements in question 21 are more general, and deal with plurilingualism as part of language and curriculum policy and instrumental reasons, which speak for multiple language skills. The second group of eight statements in question 22 deal more with attitudes towards using and knowing several foreign languages, with language awareness and cognitive aspects. In the open question no. 23 students could write down other arguments pro and contra plurilingualism. The same four-point Likert scale as in question 17 was used.

3.4.1 Question 21: Attitudes towards plurilingualism and question 22: Attitudes towards using and speaking several foreign languages

Altogether students' attitudes towards plurilingualism are highly positive. Almost all students agree with the statements 'It is desirable to speak several languages', 'Speaking several languages supports international cooperation', 'Skills in several foreign languages improve the chance to get a job' and 'When / if I have children, they should also learn several foreign languages'. Also, institutional aspects such as the fact that several foreign languages and also the second official language are obligatory get much support, though less than the previously mentioned statements. About a third of the students hold that it would be enough if everybody in Europe could speak English.

Even though the attitudes towards the different aspects of plurilingualism are rather positive throughout the statements, it is obvious that linguistic issues and plurilingualism in concrete language use situations are not seen as positive as abstract ideas regarding the importance of plurilingualism: 97% of the students agree completely and partly with the statement that it is desirable to speak several languages, but only 72% really like to act / work in multilingual

situations and only less than half of the students, 48%, are actively looking for situations where they can use the languages they speak. 75% rather speak English, because they feel insecure in other languages.

The positive effect of foreign language learning experiences in the process of learning new foreign languages is widely accepted (91%), but students also perceive it as difficult to keep their different languages apart (50% agree completely or partly, though the biggest proportion by far agree only partly). Language relationships are not important factors in choosing languages; only around 20% take them into account when choosing certain languages.

Table 23: Attitudes towards plurilingualism, median; n: 2404

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>median</i>
It is desirable to speak several languages.	86%	11%	2%	1%	1
Skills in several foreign languages improve the chance to get a job.	81%	16%	2%	1%	1
Speaking several languages supports international cooperation.	80%	17%	2%	1%	1
When / if I have children, they should also learn several foreign languages.	78%	19%	2%	1%	1
In my opinion it is good that there are courses in both official languages in business studies.	55%	31%	10%	4%	1
In my opinion it is good that there are several obligatory foreign languages in business studies.	52%	32%	12%	4%	1
It would be enough if everybody in Europe could speak English.	8%	24%	40%	29%	3

1: completely agree; 2: partly agree; 3: partly disagree; 4: disagree completely

Table 24: Attitudes towards plurilingualism, median; n: 2405

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>median</i>
Speaking one foreign language helps to learn other foreign languages.	43%	48%	8%	1%	2
I rather speak English, because I am insecure in other languages.	38%	37%	18%	7%	2
I like to act / work in multilingual situations.	31%	41%	23%	5%	2
I switch without difficulties from one language to another in a multilingual situation.	20%	38%	33%	9%	2
I am actively looking for situations, where I can use the languages I speak.	13%	34%	42%	11%	3
It is difficult to keep the languages apart when knowing several languages.	8%	42%	41%	9%	3
I choose deliberately languages from the same language family because this way it is easier to learn them.	4%	17%	38%	41%	3
I choose deliberately languages from different language families.	5%	15%	37%	42%	3

1: completely agree; 2: partly agree; 3: partly disagree; 4: disagree completely

Comparing the answers of men and women, the differences are very small. Female students have in all statements slightly more positive attitudes towards plurilingualism than male students. The biggest differences can be found in the answers for the following statements: ‘In my opinion it is good that there are several obligatory foreign languages in business studies’ (median for women: 1; median for men: 2); ‘It is difficult to keep the languages apart when knowing several languages’ (median for women: 2; median for men: 3); and ‘I am actively looking for situations, where I can use the languages I speak’ (median for women: 2; median for men: 3) where the positive attitude of women is a bit higher than men’s.

Furthermore, the differences between the students of different majors are very small. Students of International Business have in all statements a slightly more positive attitude towards plurilingualism than students of other majors. The biggest differences can be found in these statements: ‘Knowing one foreign language helps to learn other foreign languages’ (median for International Business: 1, the others: 2); and ‘I like to act / work in multilingual situations’ (median for International Business: 1, the others: 2). Students of

Accounting have the least positive attitudes, but they still tend towards a positive perception of plurilingualism. The biggest differences can be seen in the responses to the following statements: 'In my opinion it is good that there are several obligatory foreign languages in business studies' (median 2, all other majors median: 1); and 'I switch without difficulties from one language to another in a multilingual situation' (median 3, all other majors median: 2). Also in the statement 'I am actively looking for situations, where I can use the languages I speak' Accounting students' median is the same as that of Marketing students, i.e. 3, whereas the median of all the other majors is 2.

Looking at the results of the different universities, we can see differences in several statements: Students of UoO and LUT are slightly more negative (median 2, the other universities median 1) towards the statement 'In my opinion it is good that there are several obligatory foreign languages in business studies'. The students of UoO are also a little more negative towards the statement 'In my opinion it is good that there are courses in both official languages in business studies' (median 2, while the median 1 of all the other universities), and they find it, like the students from HSE, a bit more difficult to keep the languages apart when knowing several languages (median 2 in UoO and HSE, the median 3 of other universities). The students of HSE on the other hand are looking more actively for situations where they can use the languages they speak, than students from other universities (median 2, the other universities median: 3).

3.4.2 Question 23: Other arguments pro and contra plurilingualism

146 students used the opportunity to answer this question, though a lot of them just affirmed their positive attitude towards plurilingualism.

There were 121 statements of students supporting the plurilingual goal. They gave the following reasons:

Kielitaito on oleellinen osa nyky maailmaa, ei sen enempää positiivisia argumentteja tarvitsekaan. ■ Language skills are a substantial part of the present world; you don't need any more positive arguments. (HSE)

Olen kielten osaamisen puolesta ja koen niitä hyvin suurena etuna työelämässä. ■ I am for languages skills and I experience it as a very big advantage in working life. (TSE)

Eri kielten osaaminen avartaa ajattelua. On mukava ymmärtää ihmisiä eri maista. ■ Speaking different languages opens the mind. It is nice to understand people from different countries. (HSE)

Kielten avulla pääsee sisään myös eri kulttuureihin toisella tavalla, kuin vain tutustumalla maahan tai sen ihmisiin. ■ With the help of languages one can get into different cultures in another way, than just through getting to know the country and its people. (HSE)

Kieliopinnot tukevat toinen toistaan. ■ Language studies support each other. (HSE)

Lisää yleissivistystä ja muiden kulttuurien tuntemusta. ■ It adds to general education and getting to know other cultures. (TSE)

There were also twelve statements which show negative attitudes towards plurilingualism. One answer which was typical is as follows:

Liian monien kielten hallitseminen on vaikea ja sanat sekoittuvat. ■ To command many languages is difficult and the words get mixed up. (UoO)

Another 13 answers gave positive and negative arguments. Here two representative examples:

Kielet rikastuttavat elämää, toisaalta käytännön syyt puoltavat englannin käyttöä lingua francana. ■ Languages enrich the life, but on the other hand practical reasons speak for the use of English as a Lingua Franca. (HSE)

Monikielisyyden tavoittelu ei saa olla itseisarvo – on järkevämpää osata yhtä tai kahta kieltä erinomaisesti kuin muutamia keskinkertaisesti. ■ Plurilingualism must not be a value per se – it is more sensible / reasonable to speak one or two languages on excellent level than several on an average. (TSE)

3.4.3 Question 24: Do you have any concrete suggestions on how to make choosing languages easier?

Question 24 as an open ended question is seeking for additional information, which could not be given in earlier questions, and which seems to be important for the respondents.

320 respondents provided information, 24 indicated explicitly no suggestions, and hence answers of 296 respondents (12% of all respondents) have been analyzed and grouped into five content related bundles. This question has been used by the respondents partly to record more generalized criticism on the way of language education, but most answers focus on the language choice.

Often the students ask for more resources for language education:

Lisää tarjontaa useammasta kielestä. ■ More languages on offer. (TSE Pori)

Lisää kielikurssien aloituspaikkoja. Mielenkiinto kielten opiskeluun vähenee, koska kursseilla ei ole tilaa ja vähäiset aloituspaikat menee valmistumassa oleville. ■ More student places in the courses. The motivation for language learning decreases, because there is no place in the course and the few places in beginners' courses were given to students graduating soon. (LUT)

Lisää puhekursseja ■ More oral courses (TSE)

Quite often problems with the timetable of language courses and other administrative issues are mentioned:

Enemmän kursseja ja enemmän aikataulullisia vaihtoehtoja ■ More courses and more options in the timetable (UoO)

Aikataulutus ja järjesteleminen omaan opinto-ohjelmaan tuottaa haasteita. Kyse on todella isosta ongelmasta, joten muita ei tule mieleen. ■ Scheduling and fitting into my own study plan is a challenge. This is a really big problem, nothing else comes to my mind. (UoJ)

Itselläni suurin ongelma kielikurssien luentojen aikataulut: Luennot ovat yleensä aina keskellä päivää mikä on minulle todella hankalaa. Käyn kokopäiväisesti töissä, joten kielten luennot aamulla klo 8 tai iltapäivällä klo 16 olisivat parhaimmat vaihtoehdot. ■ The biggest problem is the timetable of the language courses. The lectures are in general always in the middle of the day, which is really difficult for me. I am working full time and the best time for language courses would be at 8 in the morning or at 4 in the afternoon. (HSE)

Also quite often students suggest better information both about the courses (level, content) and the need for languages in professional life:

Aloittaville ensimmäisen vuoden opiskelijoille olisi hyvä kertoa enemmän kielivaihtoehtoista ja kurssivalintojen aikatauluista (dead lines). ■ It would be good to tell more about language alternatives and dates for course choice (deadlines) to first year students. (HSE)

Selvemmin ilmoitettu millä kielillä voi suorittaa pakolliset kieliopinnot jos se ei tarvitse olla englanti. ■ More clear announcement about which languages are accepted in obligatory language studies, if it does not need to be English. (UoO)

Tarkemmilla kurssikuvauksilla. Jos kielten opiskelun kokee haasteellisena, saattaisi sitä helpottaa sisällön ja tavoitteiden selkeys. ■ More clear course information. If one experiences language learning as a challenge, the clarity of contents and objectives would probably make it easier. (UoJ)

And about language need:

Voitaisiin esitellä, mitä kieliä erityisesti tarvitsee tietyissä ammateissa / tilanteissa. ■ It could be presented which languages are needed for certain professions / situations. (UoO)

Pitäisi tuoda selkeämmin esille mitä hyötyjä kielistä on työelämässä. Esimerkiksi monet eivät tiedä, että ranskan kielen taito helpottaa huomattavasti ainakin EU-viroissa ja juridiikassa. Lisäksi opinnäytetyötä tai muuta tutkimusta tehtäessä kielitaidosta on paljon hyötyä, sillä kykenee käyttämään eri kelisiä lähteitä. Kaikki olennaiset lähteet kun eivät ole englanniksi. ■ It should be presented more clearly what benefits languages have in professional life. For example, many don't know that French language skills help at least in EU-posts and law-affairs. Additionally, for thesis and other research work language skills are very beneficial as they enable the use of sources in different languages. Not all relevant sources are in English. (TSE)

Respondents deal with compulsory vs. voluntary language courses almost equally frequently; a subject dealing mainly with the framework of language education in general. Mostly, the compulsiveness of particular languages was criticized:

pakollisuus pois ■ away with obligatoriness (UoO)

Pakoruotsi pois! Suurimmalla osalla opiskelijoista ei ole mitään halua kielen opiskeluun, se vie ainoastaan resursseja mielenkiintoisten todella tärkeiden kielten opiskelulta. ■ Away with compulsory Swedish! A large part of the students don't want to study the language, it only consumes resources from the interesting and really important language studies. (HSE)

However, some also claim the opposite:

Saksan opinnot pakollisiksi ■ Make German courses obligatory (UoO)

Finally some respondents deal with improvements of particular common practices at their university:

Yliopistossamme kaikki kielten tunnit ajoittuvat samaan kohtaan lukujärjestyksessä. Näin on miltei mahdotonta aloittaa useamman kielen opiskelu ... ■ At our university all language classes are at the same time in the timetable. So it is almost impossible to start several languages... (UoO)

Kurssien aikataulujen parantaminen. ■ Improvement of the courses' timetables. (UoJ)

4 SYNTHESIS OF RESULTS

The following synthesis of results can be drawn from the data gathered by the survey:

Language background / Language studies before university: Business students have a very broad range of language skills when they come to university. Most of them have studied three or more foreign languages. The answers of business students reflect the position of English as number one foreign language in Finnish schools: 99% of the students had studied English before they came to university, followed by Swedish, which had been studied by 94%. One fourth of the students had also gathered significant language experiences in addition to language education at school. They had gained those experiences mostly in English through exchange studies abroad. Business students seem to have also quite good language skills, at least according to their self-assessment. They put their English skills mostly at C-level on the CEFR-scale, and their Swedish skills at B-level.

Until now there has not been any broad survey of the language background of university students. Teachers of the language centres / departments often use inquiries at the beginning of their courses to collect information on their students' prior language studies, but there is no full picture of the language background of the students available. This is also the reason why it is unfortunately not possible to compare these findings with similar data from students in other fields, and thus see if business students have more and better language skills than their fellow students in other academic fields, or whether they represent the average of Finnish university students.

Language studies at the university: Similarly to pre-university foreign language studies and experiences, language studies at the university are also very broad among business students. Almost all students had already taken language courses at the university, most of them at least in English and Swedish, but also a considerable number of students in other languages. German is the most popular foreign language after English and Swedish. Spanish has overtaken French as the fourth most popular foreign language at the university (which was number four under the languages learned before university). Most students are quite satisfied with the languages offered at the universities. 16% would have liked to study other languages than offered at their university.

Services of the language centres / language departments: Interesting for the language centres and language department is how students see the available information / guidance. Only about 20% said that they used the information / guidance offered to them, which seems rather low. Considering that the language centres / language departments usually present their program to all new students, the question arises: why is it so? On the other hand most of the students, who used the information, were satisfied with it. The information / guidance seems to have a considerably high importance because a lot of students make their language choice when starting their university studies or during the first year. But only few of them state that they made it using the information they got, and more men than women did so. When asking the students what improvements could be made; they wish for more concrete information about the courses (for example level and content), the languages and their position and usefulness in different fields of working life.

Effort for language learning and attitudes towards foreign languages, foreign language learning and communication in foreign languages: Business students are in general ready to put a lot of effort into language learning, and a lot of them want to take extra language courses in addition to the obligatory ones. Also, the majority of the students who take only the obligatory language courses are ready to do them properly, and only less than 10% of the students will use as little time as possible for language studies. This conforms to their attitudes towards foreign languages and foreign language learning shown in Figure 16. Almost all respondents think that speaking foreign languages is important and they like to use and learn foreign languages.

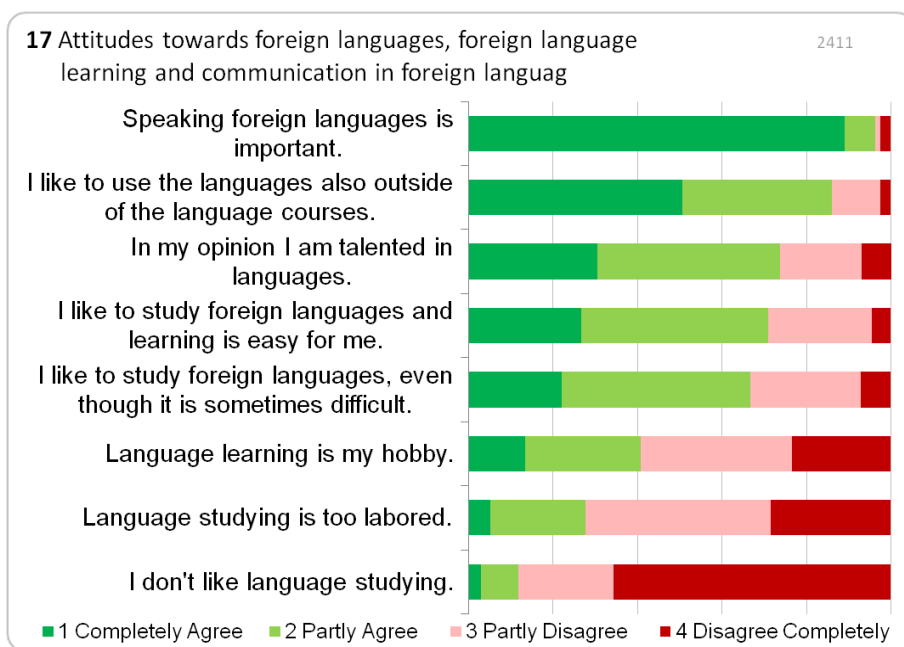


Figure 16: Attitudes towards foreign languages; n: 2411

Attitudes towards plurilingualism: All in all, students' attitudes are highly positive towards plurilingualism but it is obvious that the general positive attitude is stronger than the actual agreement on the concrete use of multiple language skills and enhancing multiple language skills. The students don't agree with the statement that speaking English would be enough, but on the other hand a lot of them are not ready to leave their "comfort zone" and they rather speak English because they feel insecure in other languages, and they have difficulties in switching from one language to another in multilingual situations. Not all of them do really like to act / work in multilingual situations, and only a few are actively looking for situations where they can use the languages they speak.

Languages in the business studies: The business students are mostly satisfied with the fact that there are several obligatory foreign languages in business studies, and that there are courses in both official languages, which is on the other hand strongly opposed by a small group of students, who would like to remove all obligatory language studies from the curriculum, especially the Swedish courses. However, students describe problems with integrating their language studies into their timetables and study-plans. At some universities it is almost impossible to take more language courses than the obligatory ones, even if the students were interested in doing so. The students are also asking for more flexibility in the scheduling of the courses. There were several respondents commenting that there should be more resources for language

education and a broader offer of different languages and courses. They would be ready to study even more languages, but time seems to be an issue. A lot of business students seem to work beside their studies and under those circumstances languages do not necessarily have the first priority. Time is also the most frequently mentioned reason for dropout of courses.

Important factors for choosing or not choosing language courses: The most important factor for business students in choosing a language is prior knowledge. Most of the students continue with languages they have already studied before university. In accordance to this, students often do not choose certain languages when they think that they can't reach a high enough level in these languages during their studies at the university. This factor is often connected with the perceived difficulty of a language (in the case of Russian, French and Japanese). Perceived difficulty is also a common reason for dropping out of language courses. Other important reasons for choosing languages are instrumental ones, such as usefulness for future profession, studies and studying abroad as well as the status of a language. Analogically the factor that a language is not important for professional life is an important factor for not choosing certain languages, like Italian, Spanish or Japanese. Affective factors, interest in the culture, spare-time interests as well as institutional factors and the teachers' personality are more important in the case of "smaller", optionally studied languages than in the bigger ones. This applies especially to Romance languages, Spanish and Italian, and Japanese.

Sex: The majority of business students as well as the majority of the respondents are women (57% women, 43% men). The female students taking part in the survey studied more foreign languages before coming to the university than the male students, and they studied a broader variety of languages, including, for example, more Romance languages, which men did not study that often. The same trend continues at the university. Women also have had more language experiences outside school than men. Men evaluate their English skills to be higher than women, and they also aim at better skills in English than women. In all other languages it is the other way round. Women seem to have more stable views on their language choice or more long term plans. They state more often than men that they made their decision on which language to take at the university long before starting their university studies; on the other hand, they also more often used the information / guidance offered by the language centre / departments. Women are also ready to put more effort into language learning, and their attitudes towards foreign language learning are also more positive than those of men. This is the same with the attitudes towards plurilingualism. Women are looking for situations where they can actively use their languages a little more than men.

Universities: There are very little differences between the universities. Some of the differences are explained by differences in the curricula or in the concrete language offer. There seems to be also some differences due to regional factors. LUT students (23%) had studied Russian more often before university than students from other universities. At TSE, for example, only 6% had studied Russian prior to university. LUT students also took Russian twice as often at university as students from other universities. They also have higher aims in Russian than students from other universities. LUT students have in general slightly more negative attitudes towards foreign language learning, and also their effort is slightly lower. HSE and TSE students have had more language experiences before university studies, which can be explained by the responses of students of International Business studies. This major does not exist in all universities.

Majors: There are no big differences between the students of different majors, with the exception of International Business students. More of them have other mother tongues than Finnish, more of them are bilingual, they studied more foreign languages before university, and also more of the smaller languages, 60% of them had already significant language experience outside school and they evaluate their skills higher than the other students. The language of instruction in their major is partly English, which can explain that they study less English as a foreign language at university and more other languages than the students of other majors. They are ready to put more effort into language learning, and also their attitudes towards foreign language learning and plurilingualism are more positive. They like more using actively the foreign languages they know. A lot of these results correlate with the higher number of female students here than in other majors.

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to provide a broad picture of different aspects connected with language learning, including students' language backgrounds, their attitudes towards languages, language learning and plurilingualism. The study also aimed to find the factors involved when students are choosing certain languages or not choosing other languages. The study was conducted at five major Finnish Business Schools and the data consists of 2412 questionnaires.

The study showed that business students have a very broad range of language skills when they come to university. They consider language studies to be an important part of their university degree and they are mostly satisfied with the fact that there are several obligatory foreign languages in business studies and that there are courses in both the official languages of Finland. Most students are quite satisfied with the languages offered at their universities and they are in general ready to put a lot of effort into language learning and many of them want to take extra language courses in addition to the obligatory ones. Furthermore, the students' attitudes towards plurilingualism are highly positive. The students' most important factor for choosing a language is prior knowledge. Most of the students continue with languages they have already studied before university. Other important reasons for choosing languages are: usefulness for future profession, studies and studying abroad as well as the status of a language.

However, students described problems with integrating their language studies into their time-tables and study-plans. A rather big threat comes from the actual tendency that languages are taken up less and less in schools. In order to avoid the same tendency in business education, stakeholders should be appealing to policy makers, institutions, society, parents and pupils. Earlier language experience is the essential precondition to reach functional language skills at the university. With reference to the central findings of our study we deduce some conclusions relating to external – outside the universities – and internal fields of language education.

5.1 Language policy recommendations

Languages are an important part of business education. This is stated in the study regulations, required by studies carried out in business life, and this is also the opinion of the majority of the respondents in this study. The positive attitude towards languages and language needs of business life match each other. Therefore changes in study regulations are not recommendable.

Earlier language experience is the essential precondition for reaching functional language skills at university. This finding stands in contradiction to the actual tendency that languages are taken less in schools, which has not yet been clearly visible in this study, but which is a frequently discussed subject at university language teacher's meetings. In order to avoid the negative effects of this tendency on language studies in business education, stakeholders should be appealing to policy makers, institutions, the society, the parents and pupils. In addition to Swedish and English, it is highly recommendable to study another foreign language properly and for a longer period already before the start of their academic business education. A good path, for example, would be taking this second foreign language as an 'A-language' starting in primary school.

Opiskelijoita tulisi kannustaa jo hyvin varhaisessa vaiheessa (esim. lukiossa) aloittamaan toisen vieraan kielen opinnot ■ Students should be encouraged at a very early stage (e.g. in senior high school) to start learning a second foreign language. (TSE)

Kielivalintoja voisi helpottaa yleiset tiedotus- ja esittelytilaisuudet niiden käytännön tärkeydestä ja mahdollisuuksista - tämä esittely ja orientaatio tulisi kuitenkin aloittaa jo peruskoulussa. ■ Language choice could be made easier by informing about the importance and the opportunities [of languages] – this presentation and orientation should however start already in primary school. (LUT)

A longer stay in the land of the target language - a year abroad or school exchange, for instance, is recommendable.

5.2 Language education in business education

The business students taking part in this study have positive attitudes towards languages, language learning and plurilingualism. However, there are some threats, which should be taken into consideration.

Typical organizational problems are timetabling and the pressure to complete the studies in a timely manner. A well arranged structure of the studies can reduce such problems. Specific demands (for example of working

students or students with specific previous knowledge or specific objectives) should be met with flexibility.

Still there seems to be a lack of information on which languages the students will need later on in business life. Moreover, the study advice / guidance for the language courses can be improved by giving information on students' typical motivational factors for and against choosing / studying particular languages. Through this, dropout could be reduced.

In some cases the time and mode of the guidance for the language choice could be improved.

The positive attitudes towards languages, language learning and plurilingualism can be seen as huge resources for further curricular development. Business students study several languages; they get the prerequisites – at least theoretically – for plurilingual competence, which means the ability to act successfully in multilingual workplaces by using all of their acquired language skills. One remaining risk is that students only use their strongest foreign language, which in most cases is English, and that they don't dare to leave their linguistic "comfort zone". The crucial step to take here could be some training to deliberately step out of this comfort zone and to act outside the comfort zone. One way to reach this objective could be through plurilingual courses, focusing on continuously switching between several languages. Another way can be task based learning approaches, where the students have to focus on solving a task and not on linguistic accuracy.

And finally, the differences in the motives for particular languages could be used as one aspect for the curricula work (designing objectives and content) for language courses for professional communication.

5.3 Further studies

To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first survey of language choice in academic business education in Finland covering all languages offered. The results show positive attitudes towards languages, plurilingualism and language learning. They also clarify positive and negative motivational factors in the process of choosing languages to study.

The study did not explore the relation of motivation and learning results. Do instrumental factors have a stronger effect than leisure orientated factors, or is it the other way round? The study did not focus on the impact of motivational factors on the language courses either. Do motives for language choice relate to motivation during the learning process? The study focuses on business students and their motivation for languages. Do other students act in the same way? These questions would offer interesting directions for further research.

REFERENCES

- Ammon, Ulrich (2009) Macht und Sprachenwahl. In: *VAKKI Symposium XXIX. Kieli ja valta. Språk och makt. Sprache und Macht. Language and Power*, ed. by Mona Enell-Nilsson & Niina Nissilä, 10–29. Vaasa: Vakki.
- Commission of the European Communities (2008) *Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment*. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/com/2008_0566_en.pdf [17.02.2009].
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)* (2001) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Zoltan (1990) Conceptualizing Motivation in Foreign-Language Learning. *Language Learning*, Vol. 40 (1), 45–78.
- Dörnyei, Zoltan (1994) Motivation and Motivating in the Foreign Language Classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, Vol. 78 (3), 273–284.
- Dörnyei, Zoltan (1998) Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, Vol. 31, 117–135.
- Dörnyei, Zoltan (2001) *Teaching and researching motivation*, Harlow: Pearson Education.
- EK press release to EK-report (2010) *Englanti ei yksin riitä työelämässä - Kielikoulutukseen tarvitaan remontti*. http://www.ek.fi/www/fi/index.php?we_objectID=11555 [02.06.2010].
- EK-report (2010) *Työelämässä tarvitaan yhä useampia kieliä. EK:n henkilöstö- ja koulutustiedustelu 2009*, Helsinki: Elinkeinoelämän keskusliitto EK.
- ELAN (2006) *ELAN: Effects on the European Economy of Shortages of Foreign Language Skills in Enterprise*, London: CiLT The National Centre for Languages.
- European Commission (2006) *Europeans and their Languages. Special Eurobarometer 243 / Wave 64.3 – TNS Opinion and Social*. http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/doc631_en.pdf [17.02.2009].

- Garam, Irma (2010) *Kansainvälinen liikkuvuus yliopistoissa ja ammattikorkeakouluissa 2009*, Helsinki: CIMO.
- Gardner, Robert – Lambert, Wallace E. (1972) *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning*, Rowley: Newbury House.
- Hankila, Paula (2007) ”Kyllä tämä aina neulomisen voittaa.“ *Eine Untersuchung zur Deutschlernmotivation finnischer Senioren*, Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopisto.
- Helsingin Sanomat (2009) Peruskoululaisten kielivalinnat ovat köyhtyneet reipasta vauhtia. *Helsingin Sanomat* 31.09.2009.
- Huhta, Ari (2010) *Innovations in diagnostic assessment and feedback: An analysis of the usefulness of the DIALANG language assessment system*, Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Huhta, Marjatta (2010) *Language and Communication for Professional Purposes. Needs Analysis Methods in Industry and their Yield to Stakeholders*, Espoo: Aalto University School of Science and Technology.
- Julkunen, Kyösti (1998) *Vieraan kielen oppiminen: A2-kielen opiskelijoiden motivaation ja kielen valintaan vaikuttaneet tekijät*, Joensuu: Joensuun yliopisto.
- Karppinen, Mervi (2005) *Lernmotivation der Deutschlernenden in der gymnasialen Oberstufe in Finnland: eine Vergleichstudie über den Motivationsstand der A- und B3-Deutschlernenden*, Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopisto.
- List, Gudula (2002) Motivation im Sprachunterricht. *Fremdsprache Deutsch* Nr. 26, 6–10.
- Maalouf, Amin (2008) *A Rewarding Challenge - How the Multiplicity of Languages Could Strengthen Europe*. Brussels: European Commission. http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/archive/doc/maalouf/report_en.pdf [21.06.2008].
- Maijala, Minna (2007) Perspektiven für den Unterricht Deutsch als Fremdsprache in Finnland. In: *Curriculum Linguae. Sprachenvielfalt durch Integration, Innovation und Austausch. Lingistic Diversity through Integration, Innovation and Exchange. Diversité linguistique à travers l'intégration, l'innovation et les échanges*, ed. by Kim Haataja, 229–241. Tampere: Opetusalan koulutuskeskus Opeko.
- Opetushallitus (2009) *Koulutuksenmäärälliset indikaattorit*. Helsinki: Opetushallitus. http://www.oph.fi/download/119433_Koulutuksen_maaralliset_indikaattorit_2009.pdf [27.6.2010].

- Riemer, Claudia (2002) *Wie lernt man Sprachen?* In: *Neue Sprachen lehren und lernen. Fremdsprachenunterricht in der Weiterbildung*, ed. by Jürgen Quetz & Gerhard von der Handt. Bielefeld: wbv-Verlag.
- Riemer, Claudia (2011) *Warum Deutsch (noch) gelernt wird – Motivationsforschung und Deutsch als Fremdsprache*. In: *Deutsch bewegt – Entwicklungen in der Auslandsgermanistik und Deutsch als Fremd- und Zweitsprache*, ed. by Hans Barkowski, Silvia Demmig, Hermann Funk & Ulrike Würz, 327–340. Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren.
- Rossi, Vuokko (2003) *Motivation im Fremdsprachenunterricht: eine Fallstudie im B2-Deutschunterricht in der 8. und 9. Klasse*. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopisto.
- Ruska-Becker, Hanna – Schlabach, Joachim (forthc.) *Kauppatieteiden maisterien työelämän kielitaitotarpeet – Kohtaavako koulutus ja käytäntö?* Turku: Turun kauppakorkeakoulu.
- Schlabach, Joachim – Boström, Eeva (2008) *Plurilingualismus konkret – Le plurilinguisme au concret*. In: *Käännösteoria, ammattikielien ja monikielisyys*. VAKKI:n julkaisut, N:o 35, ed. by Mona Enell-Nilsson & Tiina Männikkö, 291–303. Vaasa: Vakki.
- Takala, Sauli (2008) *Plurilingualism – can it help solve the current crisis in our language education?* Paper given at Kauppakirjeenvaihdosta plurilingvaalisuuteen-seminary at Turun kauppakorkeakoulu, 26.9.2008.
- Takala, Sauli (2009) *Kieliohjelmapolitiikan tulevaisuus – Språkprogrammpolitikens framtid*. Paper given at Kielikoulutuspolitiikan seminaari 26.3 2009, Helsinki Säätytalo / Ständerhuset.
- Tuokkala, Sari (2007) *Deutschlernmotivation finnischer Schüler in der sechsten und neunten Klasse*. Oulu: Oulun yliopisto.
- University law decree 794 (2004) *Valtioneuvoston asetus yliopistojen tutkinnoista 794/2004*. Sähköinen säädöskokoelma. <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/2004/20040794> [17.02.2009].
- Williams, Marion – Burden, Robert L. (1997) *Psychology for Language Teachers. A social constructivist approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

Choices of Foreign Languages

The questionnaire consists of 9 pages.

= Multi select answer

= Selection answer (only one alternative)

_____ = open ended / text field

I: Background information

1) Sex

Female

Male

2) University

Helsinki School of Economics

University of Jyväskylä

University of Kuopio

Lappeenranta University of Technology

University of Oulu

Turku School of Economics Turku

Turku School of Economics Pori

3) Starting year of present study

before 2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

4) Degree

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

postgraduate degree (licentiate, PhD, MBA ...)

III Language choice and language studies at the university

12) Which languages are you studying or have you studied during your present studies?

- English
- Swedish
- German
- French
- Spanish
- Russian
- Italian
- Japanese
- other, which? _____

13) Which languages do you plan to study in addition to the languages mentioned in the question 12) during your present studies?

14) Would you like to have studied other languages, which are not offered, during your present studies?

- no
- yes, which language? _____

15a) When did you decide which languages you will choose at the university?

- Long before starting my university studies
- A couple of weeks before starting my university studies
- When starting at university
- After the information I got at the university (e.g. information and guidance for the new students)
- During my first year of studies
- I decide every semester
- I haven't yet decided
- Some other time, when? _____

15b) Did you use the information / guidance offered by the language centre / language department when you chose the languages?

- yes
- no --> cont. 16)

15c) Was the information you got useful?

- yes
- no
- possible comments _____

16) Your own effort towards language learning in general

- I put effort in my language studies and I plan to take also additional language courses.
- I take only the obligatory courses, but I do them properly.
- I will use as little time and effort as possible for language studies.
- other: _____

17) Attitudes towards foreign languages, foreign language learning and communication in foreign languages

- 1 Completely Agree, 2 Partly Agree, 3 Partly Disagree,
4 Disagree Completely

	1	2	3	4
In my opinion I am talented in languages.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to learn foreign languages and learning is easy for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to learn foreign languages, even though it is sometimes difficult.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speaking foreign languages is important.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language learning is my hobby.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to use the languages also outside of the language courses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language learning is too laboured.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't like language learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18a) Which factors are important when choosing language courses at the university?

Tick important factors for each language you have chosen. You can tick more than one box.

	EN	SE	GE	FR	SP	Rus	IT	JA
This language is obligatory for my studies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommendations of the study guidance / students / tutors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The course schedule of this language fits into my time-table.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This language has interesting courses on offer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nice / good teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I chose this language because my friend chose it too.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I studied this language already earlier.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have personal contacts with people speaking this language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like this language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is seen as important to speak this language in Finland.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This language is important for my studies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need this language for studying abroad.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This language is important for my future profession / job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This language is important for my spare-time (e.g. travelling, hobbies).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to live in this language area in future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am interested in the culture of this language area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18b) Other factors: _____

19a) Do you have special reasons for not choosing certain languages?

no --> cont. 20)

yes --> which language(s)? _____

19b) Why do / did you not choose certain languages?

Tick important factors for each language. You can tick more boxes.

	EN	SE	GE	FR	SP	Rus	IT	JA
I don't like this language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't like the language area or the people living there.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This language is (too) difficult.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This language is not important for my professional life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I didn't choose the language because of the information / guidance I got at the university.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This language is in general not seen as important.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't like the teachers of this language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The course offer in this language is not attractive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can't reach a high enough level in this language during my studies at the university.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19c) Other reasons _____

20a) Have you started with foreign language / language courses at the university, but dropped out?

no --> cont. 21)

yes --> which language(s)? _____

20b) Why did you drop-out? _____

IV Plurilingualism

Plurilingualism: An individual's multilingualism, knowledge of several languages, both mother tongue and foreign languages. The competence in the different languages can be on different proficiency levels, beginner's level included.

21) Attitudes towards plurilingualism

1 Completely Agree, 2 Partly Agree, 3 Partly Disagree,
4 Disagree Completely

	1	2	3	4
It is desirable to speak several languages.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills in several foreign languages improve the chance to get a job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It would be enough, if everybody in Europe could speak English.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In my opinion it is good that there are several obligatory foreign languages in business studies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In my opinion it is good that there are courses in both official languages in business studies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speaking several languages supports international cooperation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When / if I have children, they should also learn several foreign languages.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22) Attitudes towards using and knowing several foreign languages

1 Completely Agree, 2 Partly Agree, 3 Partly Disagree,
4 Disagree Completely

	1	2	3	4
I choose deliberately languages from the same language family (e.g. Romance languages: French, Spanish, Italian...), because this way it is easier to learn them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I choose deliberately languages from different language families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speaking one foreign language helps to learn other foreign languages.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to act / work in multilingual situations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I switch without difficulties from one language to another in a multilingual situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is difficult to keep the languages apart when knowing several languages.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am actively looking for situations, where I can use the languages I speak.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I rather speak English, because I am insecure in other languages.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23) Other arguments pro and contra plurilingualism:

positive / negative

24) Do you have any concrete suggestions on how to make choosing languages easier?

25) Comments on the questionnaire:

Here you can leave your contact address if you want to take part at the drawing of cinema tickets.

The answers remain anonymous, contact data will be disconnected.

Given name: _____

Name: _____

Street: _____

ZIP code: _____

Town: _____

I will send the answers.

Send

**TURUN KAUPPAKORKEAKOULUN JULKAISUSARJASSA
KESKUSTELUA JA RAPORTTEJA OVAT VUODESTA 2010 LÄHTIEN
ILMESTYNEET SEURAAVAT JULKAISUT**

- KR-1:2010 Niina Nummela & Mélanie Raukko (eds.)
Managing cross-border acquisitions
- KR-2:2010 Anna-Maija Kohijoki
Päivittäistavara-kaupan palvelujen saavutettavuus
liikuntavammaisten kuluttajien näkökulmasta
- KR-1:2011 Sabine Grasz & Joachim Schlabach
Business students' choices of foreign languages

Kaikkia edellä mainittuja sekä muita Turun kauppakorkeakoulun
julkaisusarjoissa ilmestyneitä julkaisuja voi tilata osoitteella:

KY-Dealing Oy
Rehtorinpellonkatu 3
20500 Turku
Puh. (02) 333 9422
E-mail: ky-dealing@tse.fi

All the publications can be ordered from

KY-Dealing Oy
Rehtorinpellonkatu 3
20500 Turku, Finland
Phone +358-2-333 9422
E-mail: ky-dealing@tse.fi

