

# Students' and parents' views towards Language Awareness activities in the Nordic and Baltic countries

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## Developing the Language Awareness Approach in the Nordic and Baltic countries (DELA-NOBA)

- 08/2013 07/2016
- 21 partners from seven Nordic/Baltic countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden)
- Partnerships between seven pilot schools (primary and secondary) and institutions in higher education



### DELA-NOBA's general objectives

- to examine how plurilingual language awareness education can be integrated and further developed in the Nordic/Baltic context
- to examine the impact of plurilingual language awareness education on learners' and parents' attitudes towards language diversity and language learning
- to contribute to the societal discussions on language diversity and language learning in the Nordic/Baltic countries.

### Seven pilot schools

 List of plurilingual LA teaching activities (Primary 1, Primary 2, Secondary 1)

Three teaching activities

Language autobiography



#### Surveys (based on EVLANG and JaLing)

#### **Teachers**

- Preexperience survey
- Postexperience survey

#### **Parents**

- Preexperience survey
- Postexperience survey

#### Teaching activities' evaluations

- Students
- Teachers





#### The Parents

**Denmark** (Children in two Grade 2 and one Grade 6 classes, ages 8 yrs. and 12 yrs. – The International Profile School in Copenhagen)

Preexperience: n=44

Postexperience: n=41

**Iceland** (Children in three Grade 5 classes, ages 10-11 yrs.)

Preexperience: n=33

Postexperience: n=30

**Lithuania** (Children in 2 Grade 2 classes, students in 11th class, gymnasium)

Preexperience: n=62

Sweden: n=30

#### The Parents

Finland (Children in one Grade 6 class, age 12 yrs.)

Preexperience: n=18

Postexperience: n=7

Sweden (Children in two groups, 13-14 yrs. and 14-15 yrs.)

Preexperience: n=35

## Background information - Iceland

Most commonly known languages – parents: Icelandic, English, Danish

Languages most commonly spoken in the home: Icelandic

Most common languages spoken by children: Icelandic, but some children also speak Polish, English, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Danish, Spanish or Serbian



## Background information - Denmark

Most commonly known languages – parents: English, Norwegian, German, Swedish

Languages most commonly spoken in the home: Danish

Most common languages spoken by children: Danish, **English (37%)**, German (8,7%) – some children also speak Estonian, Faroese, French, Latvian, Sami, Turkish

## Background information - Lithuania

- Most commonly known languages parents: Lithuanian, Russian, English, German, French, Polish
- Languages most commonly spoken in the home: Lithuanian (100%)
- Most common languages spoken by children: Lithuanian, **English (45%)**, Russian, German – some children also speak French, Polish or Italian

## Background information - Finland

Most commonly known languages – parents: Finnish, English, German, Swedish, Italian, Spanish

Languages spoken at home: Finnish, Swedish, French, Lingala and English

Most common languages spoken by children: Finnish, Swedish, English, French and Spanish

## Background information - Sweden

Most commonly known languages – parents: Swedish, English, German, Spanish, French

Languages spoken at home: Swedish,

Most common languages spoken by children: Swedish, English, French

### Languages children learn at school

#### Iceland:

Icelandic (Grade 1)

English (Grade 4)

Danish (Grade 7)

#### Denmark:

Danish and English (Grade 1)

French (Grade 5) – 48%

German (Grade 5) – 57%



### Languages children learn at school

#### Lithuania:

Lithuanian

English

Russian, French and German in 11th class

Chinese

#### Finland:

Finnish (Grade 1) – 73%

French (Grade 1) – 100%

English (Grade 3/4) – 100%

Spanish (Grade 3/4) – 6%

Swedish (Grade 3/4) – 11%

Sweden: English, Swedish, French, German

### Language learning preferences

Denmark: Danish and English (vast majority)

German, Spanish, French, Swedish

**Iceland:** Icelandic and English (vast majority)

Danish, Spanish

Lithuania: Lithuanian and English (vast majority)

Russian, German, French

Finland: English, French and Swedish (3 most common), Finnish, sign language, Spanish, German, Italian, Chinese, Estonian

**Sweden**: Swedish, English, French (most common), Spanish and German

## Parents' views – pre experience

Parents in Denmark, Iceland, Lithuania, Sweden and Finland overwhelmingly agree that:

- it is important for children to be introduced to different languages at school (I: 100%, DK: 95%, L: 97%, F: 94%, S:100%)
- it is important to know a variety of languages (I: 100%, DK: 95%, L: 98%, F: 94%, S: 100%)
- knowing other languages helps you to learn new ones
   (I: 97%, DK: 98%, L: 95%. F: 100%)



## Children's interests (according to parents)

Children are interested in learning about new languages and cultures.

#### Children have asked questions about:

languages and cultures in other countries – I: 73%, D: 89%, L: 72%, F 78%, S: 86%

language and languages in general – I: 70%, D: 68%, L: 55%, F: 90%, S: 74% the language(s) used at home – I: 53%, D: 82%, L: 60%, F: 73%, S: 31% the language(s) used at school – I: 57%, D: 73%, L: 56%, F: 95%, S:77% the origins of the family (country, city) – I: 60%, DK: 84%, L: 90%, F 73%, S:43%

the language(s) used with relatives – I: 34%, DK: 71%, L: 65%, F 45%, S:37%



## Parents' views – post experience

#### Children have asked questions about:

languages and cultures in other countries – I: 83%, DK: 51%, F:29%

language and languages in general – I: 80%, DK: 42%, F:29%

the language(s) used at home – **I: 63%**, DK: 65%, F:14%

the origins of the family (country, region, city) - I: 13%, DK: 67%,

F:14%

the language(s) used in the family (with relatives) – **I: 70%**, DK: 65%, F:14%



## Parents' views – post experience

Parents overwhelmingly agree that doing language awareness activities at school are important because they contribute to children's:

- knowledge about languages and cultures (I: 100%, DK: 88%. F:71%)
- positive attitudes towards languages and cultures (I: 100%, DK: 88%: F:71%)
- abilities to talk about languages, to analyse languages, to compare languages (I: 100%, DK: 86%, F:71%)



## Students' voices – Finland What did you learn?

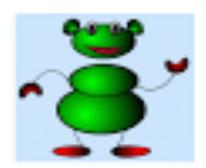
I learnt greetings on different languages



Hyvää päivää!

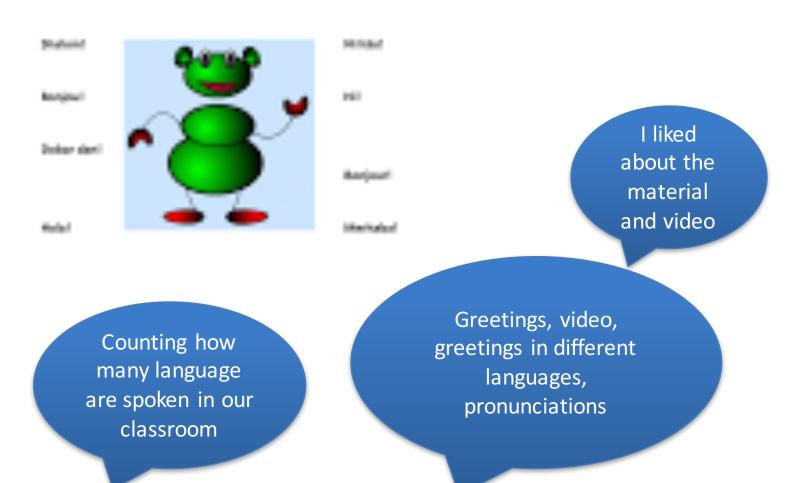
Greeting in different languages, pronunciations and about languages spoken in different countries

I learnt to greet in Arabic and official greetings in different languages





#### What did you like about the exercise?



## I would like to learn more about the languages that I speak:

- Totally agree and agree 53%
- I don't know 47%

## I would like to learn more the languages I study with Finnish/French

- Totally agree or agree 61%
- I don't know 31%
- Totally disagree 1

#### Conclusions

- Parents and teachers have very positive attitudes towards plurilingual language awareness activities in schools
- Plurilingual teaching activities may contribute to students' reflection on languages and cultures
- The recognition of minority languages and the integration of plurilingual teaching activities in across the curriculum are areas that need emphasis



#### Questions? Comments?

https://www.ruc.dk/index.php?id=22283

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