

Russian-speaking immigrant students in Finland: Searching for the meaning of languages and cultures

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Abstract

This article focuses on the language identity of young Russian-speaking immigrants in Finland. The concept 'Russian-speaking' is used to refer both to the descendants of Ingrian Finnish returnees as well as to other young immigrants from the former Soviet Union whose mother tongue is Russian. The phenomenon of language identity is considered with reference to identification with the Russian and Finnish languages and the speakers of these particular languages. It is assumed that attitudes towards the languages and their speakers, language use, and language of communication as well as perceived language proficiency are connected to one's language identity. These issues, as well as ethnic self-identification

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and ethnic identity, will be explored.

The methods for gathering data were survey and interviews. The survey data for the study were collected during spring 2000. These data were complemented with interviews in the spring 2001. The subjects of the study consisted of 256 Russian-speaking immigrant students studying at the upper secondary level or in vocational education in 13 cities in Finland.

The preliminary findings of the study indicate that the language identity of the Russian-speaking immigrant students is mainly Russian and that the Russian language identity is more stable and more distinct in its character than the Finnish one. The attitudes towards the two languages, language use and contacts with the speakers of the languages seem to be connected with language identity. Ethnic identity, in turn, appears to be closely related to language identity. Positive Russian language identity supports Russian ethnic identity and, in contrast, positive Finnish language identity supports Finnish ethnic identity. It also appears that a positive bilingual and biethnic identity is possible.

Introduction

Finland is considered a fairly monocultural country with a small number of foreigners. Proportionally, the number of immigrants is the smallest in Europe, even though it has grown rapidly since 1990's. At the moment, there are some 97 600 foreigners living in Finland, constituting about 1,8% of the population (October, 2001). The largest group of immigrants have come from the former Soviet Union. These groups constitute, according to some estimates (see eg. Kytäjä 1997), about one-third of the total foreign population. The large number of immigrants from the former Soviet Union follows partly due from the fact that Ingrian Finns, i.e. citizens of the former Soviet Union who are of Finnish origin, were officially granted a right to remigrate to Finland in 1990¹.

The older generation of those Ingrian Finns who immigrated to Finland can speak some Finnish and they usually identify themselves as Ingrians or Finns. The younger generation, however, is mainly Russian-speaking, and frequently identify themselves as Russian or Estonian, depending

on their cultural growth milieu (Kyntäjä 1999, Jasinskaja-Lahti 2000). As pointed out by Kyntäjä (2001), it would be more correct to speak about Russian or Estonian children and adolescents than Ingrian Finns, because of their monolingualism in Russian language and their Russian (or Estonian) identity. Finnish authorities, however, expected that the remigrants from the former Soviet Union were Finns and spoke Finnish. Unavoidably, this misapprehension caused problems in many areas, for example in minority education, language teaching and in social and psychological adaptation in general. At the moment, there is an extensive debate going on about making the remigration policy more stringent. According to some statements of the ministers, the special status of Ingrian Finns in the Aliens Act should be abolished. There is already an outline for a demand for a certain level of Finnish proficiency in the new Aliens Act. Especially the language proficiency of the younger generation has given rise to a lively debate, because with poor skills in Finnish it is difficult to integrate into the Finnish society. Language training courses are important for them to succeed in finding a place to study and getting through with studies, and later on, to integrate into working life.

The question of identity and integration of the younger generation of immigrants from the former Soviet Union raises special concerns because of their education and future in Finland. There is a continuing increase in the remigration and migration of speakers of Russian (see e.g. Kyntäjä & Kulu

1998) and, at the same time, the attitudes of Finnish people towards immigrants from Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union are becoming increasingly negative (Jaakkola 1999). Younger Finns, in particular, have negative attitudes towards Russians, which presumably makes both relations and negotiations of identity and cultural space between Finnish and Russian adolescents more complicated, especially in schools (see e.g. Keskiälo 2001).

So far, there have been fairly few studies on identity issues concerning Russian-speaking youngsters in Finland. For example, Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000) has examined ethnic identity, psychological acculturation and adaptation among Russian-speaking adolescents in Helsinki. Laihiala-Kankainen (1999) has carried out research into the problems of Russian pupils in Finnish schools, and Keskiälo (2001) into boundary making between Finnish and Russian pupils. Kyntäjä (1997) has explored the patterns of ethnic identity and acculturation among the Ingrian Finns.

Further research needs to be carried out to better understand the process of identity formation among young immigrants. In my opinion, the relationship between language and ethnicity is worth exploring more closely, especially among young immigrants who have left their country in their childhood or early youth. With respect to the younger generation of Russian-speaking immigrants the juxtaposition between being Russian or (Ingrian) Finn is in many ways complicated. Officially, they are regarded as Ingrians if they

have immigrated to Finland with a returnee status, they are usually considered Russians but by the Finnish majority. This contradiction adds to the immigrants own uncertainty about their identity. An important question is to what extent do the young descendants of the returnees identify themselves as Finns and Finnish-speaking, and if they do, is it because of their earlier experiences and old cultural roots or because of their present experiences and aspirations to integrate into the Finnish society? Russian-speaking immigrants are thus searching for the meaning of the Russian and Finnish languages and cultures as basic tools for their integration and identity formation in the new host country. They are faced with the problem of having to find a balance between their mother tongue and cultural heritage and Finnish language and culture.

The present article draws upon some of the findings of a larger study on language and ethnic identity of young Russian-speaking immigrants in Finland (see also Iskanius 1999, 2001, 2002). The study is part of my doctoral thesis in applied linguistics and part of the Finnish-Russian research programme "Language and Education in Intercultural Context", funded in 1996–2000 by the Academy of Finland and coordinated by the Centre for Applied Language Studies at the University of Jyväskylä (Laihiala-Kankainen 1997).

Concept of identity

Language identity is explored in this study by examining Russian-speaking students' identification

with the Russian and Finnish languages and the speakers of these languages. Further, attitudes to the languages and their speakers, language use and language choice in different situations as well as perceived language proficiency will be explored. It is assumed that these factors are connected to a person's language identity. Also, the ethnic self-identification and ethnic identity of the subjects are looked at.

The terms 'linguistic self-identification' and 'ethnic self-identification' are used to refer to that particular language or ethnic group of which the respondents defined themselves as members when they were asked about it.

Identity is seen in this study as a matter for negotiating, a relation between an individual and other people. An individual's own subjective identification with a particular group is the dominant criterion, but also other peoples' categorisations are part of a person's identity, at least to some extent. (see e.g. May 2001). Thus, an individual does not have only one stable and unchangeable identity. Rather, the identities are dynamic, multiple and changing in relation to social settings, interaction, and speech contexts. (see e. g. Hall 1999, Bauman 1999). An individual has a sense of belonging to his or her own group, i.e. to "us", which is separated from "them". With this juxtaposition, an individual not only distinguishes between the groups but also forms an idea about the features that unite "us". A person's social identity and his or her individual identity are not, however, mutually exclusive but they interact with and complement

each other. "Them" are also significant in the formation of a person's identity, because one's idea about oneself and about "us" is formed in relation to outsiders while interacting with them.

Language is one of the major factors used to categorise others, and it plays a significant role in the development of social identity in general and ethnic identity in particular (May 2001, Gudykunst & Schmidt 1987, Liebkind 1999). However, even though a language may be identified as a significant cultural marker of a particular ethnic group, there is no inevitable correspondence between language and ethnicity (May 2001). The present study aims to examine whether the Russian language can be considered as a salient marker of ethnic identity among Russian-speaking students.

Methodological considerations of the study

The methods for gathering data were survey and interviews. The survey data for the study were collected during spring 2000, with the help of a questionnaire to Russian-speaking students (n = 256). This data was complemented by interviewing 21 students in spring 2001. The respondents were given the choice of answering the questionnaire either in Finnish or in Russian, Russian being the preferred alternative (74%). The questionnaire was designed for this particular study and it contained a total of 260 items that covered topics such as attitudes to the Russian and Finnish language, language use and frequency of use in

different situations, the perceived need of Russian and Finnish language, ethnic relations, attitudes to Russian and Finnish people, and self-assessed proficiency of Russian and Finnish.

In this article, I will concentrate on the language identity of the Russian-speaking immigrant students by presenting some findings, based on the survey data. The questions discussed here are:

1. What are the ethnic and linguistic self-identifications of Russian-speaking students, i.e., to which ethnic and language group do they feel they belong?
2. What is the structure of language identity and ethnic identity of Russian-speaking students?
3. What is the relationship between language identity, language attitudes, language of communication and ethnic identity?
4. What are the relationships between gender, age, country of origin, language spoken at home and with friends, length of residence, type of education and frequency of contacts with the language identity of Russian-speaking students?

Informants

A total of 256 Russian-speaking immigrant students were studied. The sample consisted of 115 female and 141 male students who were aged between 16 and 30, the mode being 18 years. The respondents had arrived in Finland between 1989 and 2000 and resided in 13 cities in Southern, Eastern and Central Finland and were studying in 35 upper secondary or vo-

cational schools. At the time the data were collected, they had been residing in Finland, on average, for 4 years and seven months (from four months to 11 years and five months; mode 2 years 10 months). The majority of the respondents (72%) had immigrated to Finland from Russia, 17% from Estonia and 11% from other parts of the former Soviet Union. As mentioned in the introduction, many Russian-speaking immigrants are of Finnish origin. 33% of the respondents in this study had Finnish roots, as either their father or mother was a Finn (or an Ingrian Finn). It can be assumed that an even larger part of the respondents would have had Finnish roots if their grandparents' nationality had been asked.

Ethnic and linguistic self-identification

Ethnic self-identification among the respondents was assessed by asking them to express the ethnic group they felt they belonged to. The ethnic self-identification of 67% of the respondents was Russian, while 8% identified themselves as Finns and 18% as both Russian and Finnish. Only one respondent declared an Ingrian identification. Four percent of the students identified themselves as belonging to other nationalities in the former Soviet Union while some four percent of the respondents did not identify themselves ethnically at all.

Linguistic self-identification among the immigrant students was mainly Russian: 90% of the respondents ($n = 229$) reported Russian as their mother tongue, two

reported Estonian, and 14 respondents reported bilingualism in Russian and Finnish, 11 in Russian and some other language than Finnish. The analysis of the linguistic background of the subjects indicated that there was some inconsistency between the parents' and the subjects' declared mother tongue. This may result from different interpretations of the concepts 'mother tongue' and 'bilingualism' (see eg. Wei 2000).

Language identity

Russian-speaking students' language identity as opposed to their linguistic self-identification was assessed by using statements dealing with Russian and Finnish language identity. The response options were represented on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Factor analysis was used to form summated variables for Russian language identity and for Finnish language identity, respectively. The range for the variables was from 1 to 5. Scores between 1–2.49 were interpreted to reflect a low degree of identity, scores between 2.5 and 3.49 neutral degree and scores between 3.5 to 5 high degree of identity.

On the basis of the factor analysis, the Russian language identity seemed to be best described by a one-factor model, explaining 44.5% of total variance. The final factor, named as 'Russian language identity' (Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$) consisted of nine items, and it characterizes both the importance of Russian language to oneself and the perception of one's language proficiency (For example, Russian is the language closest to

me, I like to speak Russian, It's easy for me to speak Russian, I feel confident when speaking Russian).

Items connected with Finnish language identity formed two factors, one characterizing the importance of Finnish language to oneself (five items) and the other characterizing one's own perception of one's Finnish language proficiency (five items). The factors were labelled as 'Finnish language identity' (Cronbach's $\alpha = .77$) and 'Perceived Finnish proficiency' (Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$). These two factors explained 46.9% of total variance.

The analysis showed that the language identity of the respondents was mainly Russian. The mean for Russian identification was 4.3 (std. dev = 0.6). The Russian language identity seemed to include both dimensions, the feeling of closeness and importance of the language to oneself as well as the perception of one's language proficiency. This can be expected, as the majority of the informants had immigrated to Finland in their early youth, having already adopted Russian cultural habits and language. It is worth noticing that there were only a few informants whose Russian language identity was weak or neutral. These students had immigrated to Finland in their childhood, and the Finnish-speaking community and the school have probably played an important role on the formation of their identity. According to teachers, the proportion of children and adolescents wishing to assimilate into the Finnish-speaking community has reduced in recent years; in the early years of immigration to Finland, assimilation and denying

one's origins were more common than at present. Teachers and other specialists have been consciously striving to inform parents stressing the importance of maintaining the knowledge of one's mother tongue and of one's origins, which obviously has had positive consequences in this respect. Nowadays, it is also easier to find friends and support among other Russian-speaking people. It has also been stated that Ingrian remigrant families with Finnish identity immigrated to Finland already in early 1990's while today's returnees are to a greater extent Russian and Russian-speaking.

The mean for the students' Finnish language identity was 3.1 (std. dev = 0.7) and somewhat higher for perceived Finnish language proficiency (mean = 3.3, std. dev. = 0.9). According to these results, identification with the Finnish language was weaker than with Russian language. The majority of the informants appeared to have neutral attitudes towards the meaning and importance of the Finnish language for themselves personally. The findings concerning the perception of proficiency in Finnish suggest that approximately half of the informants considered that their Finnish proficiency was intermediate, some 40% that it was on a higher level, and some 20% that their proficiency in Finnish was still fairly low. Thus, the identification with the Finnish language seems to include two different dimensions, one reflecting the closeness and importance of Finnish and the other reflecting perceptions of one's language proficiency. The interviews of the informants indicated that

they considered Finnish as a tool for getting a good education and work, and, consequently, for achieving a balanced life and future in Finland (see also Takala & Juote 1995). It is important for them to know Finnish but it is not as meaningful personally, mentally or for interacting with close people as Russian is.

According to these results, it appeared that half of the total number of Russian-speaking students (54%, $n = 137$) identified themselves as Russian-speaking and had a fairly neutral Finnish language identity (Table 1). Some 21% of the subjects ($n = 53$) had a strong bilingual identity and 18% of them ($n = 47$) had a strong Russian and weak Finnish language identity. The proportion of those with a neutral or weak Russian language identity is small, 7.5% ($n = 19$). Consequently, they had a strong or neutral Finnish language identity. To investigate the relationship between Russian language identity and Finnish language identity more closely, Pearson's correlations were conducted using the original scales. According to the results, the more strongly the subjects identified themselves with Russian language, the weaker their Finnish language identity was and vice versa ($r = -.43, p < .001$).

The other dimension of Finnish language identity – perceived language proficiency – seemed to have more positive connections to a strong Russian identity than the one reflecting closeness to Finnish language (Table 2).

43% of the informants with a strong Russian language identity assessed their proficiency in Finn-

ish as being at a high level ($n = 101$), 39% at a middle level ($n = 93$) and 18% at a low level ($n = 43$). Those with a neutral or weak Russian language identity appeared to assess their proficiency in Finnish as being mostly at a high level. The analysis of Pearson's correlations showed that Russian language identity and perceived Finnish language identity were only slightly negatively related ($r = -.13, p < .05$).

Relationship between language identity, language attitudes and language of communication

Attitudes towards the Russian and Finnish languages were assessed by using a semantic differential consisting of 11 pairs of adjectives. The adjectives used in the differential represent opposite characteristics (e.g. 'useful' – 'useless'). The informants were asked to express their opinions by marking an appropriate point on a continuum between the adjectives.

Two factors were extracted from the factor analysis, named as 'attitude to Russian' (Cronbach's $\alpha = .78$, explaining 35.9% of total variance) and 'attitude to Finnish' (Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$, explaining 39.5% of total variance). The analysis revealed that the informants' attitudes towards Russian (mean = 4.3, std. dev. = 0.5) were more positive than towards Finnish (mean = 3.3, std. dev = 0.7).

In order to investigate the relationship between language identity and language attitudes, Pearson's correlations were conducted. According to the results, the

more positive the attitudes towards Russian, the more positive the Russian language identity ($r = .34, p < .001$). The same positive relation was found between Finnish language identity and attitudes towards Finnish ($r = .35, p < .001$). On the other hand, the more positive the Russian language identity was, the more negative were the attitudes towards Finnish ($r = -.12, p < .05$) and, similarly, the more positive the Finnish language identity was, the more negative were the attitudes towards Russian ($r = -.21, p < .001$), even though these relationships are rather small. To sum up, it appeared that the Russian-speaking students seemed to reflect either Russian or Finnish language preference in their attitudes which seemed to be positively related to their language identity.

The relationship between language identity and the language of communication was also examined. The informants were asked which language they used when communicating with family members and with friends. The language of communication seemed to be mainly Russian: 85% of the respondents spoke Russian with their family members, 14% both Russian and Finnish and only 1% spoke Finnish. With friends, the situation seemed to be somewhat different: 55% of the respondents spoke only Russian with their friends, 39% spoke both Russian and Finnish, and 6% spoke Finnish. The Russian language identity appeared to be more positive, the more frequently the subjects spoke Russian with their family members ($r = .25, p < .001$) and friends ($r = .35, p < .001$). In con-

Table 1. Crosstabulation for variables 'Russian language identity' and 'Finnish language identity'.

		Finnish language identity			Total	
		strong identity	neutral identity	weak identity		
Russian language identity	strong identity	Count	53	137	47	237
		% within Russian language identity	22,4	57,8	19,8	100,0
		20,7	53,5	18,4	92,6	
	neutral identity	Count	10	4		14
		% within Russian language identity	71,4	28,6		100,0
		3,9	1,6		5,5	
weak identity	Count	4	1		5	
	% within Russian language identity	80,0	20,0		100,0	
	1,6	0,4		2,0		
Total	Count	67	142	47	256	
	% within Russian language identity	26,2	55,5	18,4	100,0	

Table 2. Crosstabulation for variables 'Russian language identity' and 'Perceived Finnish proficiency'.

		Perceived Finnish proficiency			Total	
		strong identity	neutral identity	weak identity		
Russian language identity	strong identity	Count	101	93	43	237
		% within Russian language identity	42,6	39,2	18,1	100,0
		39,5	36,3	16,8	92,6	
	neutral identity	Count	10	3	1	14
		% within Russian language identity	71,4	21,4	7,1	100,0
		3,9	1,2	0,4	5,5	
weak identity	Count	4		1	5	
	% within Russian language identity	80,0	20,0		100,0	
	1,6		0,4	2,0		
Total	Count	115	96	45	256	
	% within Russian language identity	44,9	37,5	17,6	100,0	

trast, the more they spoke Russian at home ($r = -.24, p < .001$) or with friends ($r = -.50, p < .001$), the more negative was their Finnish language identity.

Relationship between background variables and language identity

The subjects were classified into groups according to gender, age, country of origin, language spoken at home and with friends, length of residence in Finland, type of education and frequency of contacts. In order to investigate the relationship between these background variables and language identity, t-tests of significance for independent samples and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted and if the data failed to meet their requirements, their non-parametric counterparts, Mann-Whitney Tests and Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance, were used instead.

The only background variable that did not have a statistically significant effect on language identity was the country of origin. The difference between genders was statistically significant only in connection with Russian identity: female students appeared to identify themselves more strongly as Russian-speaking than males ($Z = -2.0, p < .05$). The difference between age groups was notable only when examining the level of perceived proficiency in Finnish – respondents aged between 16 and 19 years assessed their proficiency at a higher level than those over 25 ($F = 5.6, p < .01$), while the differ-

ence between subjects aged between 16 – 19 and 20 – 24 was not statistically significant.

The language spoken at home and with friends appeared to be related to the language identity of the respondents. Those who spoke Russian at home ($Z = -3.1, p < .01$) and with their friends ($Z = -4.7, p < .001$) had a stronger Russian identity than those who spoke only Finnish or both languages. Respectively, speaking Finnish at home ($Z = 5.3, p < .001$) and with friends ($Z = 7.6, p < .001$) points to a more positive Finnish identity and higher perceived proficiency in Finnish (family: $t = 4.1, p < .001$, friends $t = 8.1, p < .001$).

The maintenance of Russian at home and with friends is probably related to the students' tendency to orient themselves towards Russian culture and values without an intention to assimilate into the Finnish society (see e.g. Garner, 1989). Language shift to Finnish or the use of both Russian and Finnish, on other hand, can be markers for either willingness towards assimilation into the Finnish society or they may suggest (Ingrian) Finnish cultural heritage or mixed marriages (Russian – Finnish) in the family.

Also, the length of residence in Finland and type of current education seemed to be related with the language identity of the respondents. As expected, students who had lived in Finland for five years or longer assessed their proficiency in Finnish to be on a higher level than students who had been residing in the country for a shorter time ($F = 37.2, p < .001$). A higher level of perceived proficiency in Finnish was also reported by stu-

dents who were studying in the upper secondary school, in comparison to students in vocational education ($t = 2.4, p < .05$). One reason for this is that the upper secondary students have been residing a longer time in Finland than students in vocational education. An interesting finding was that the upper secondary school students also had a stronger Russian identity than those in vocational education ($Z = -2.2, p < .05$).

Ethnic identity of the Russian-speaking students

In order to investigate the relationship between language identity and ethnicity, the Russian-speaking students' ethnic identity as opposed to their ethnic self-identification was assessed by using a scale which consisted of questions regarding ethnic identification on the basis of a person's background, personality and contacts. The response options were represented on a 5-point Likert-type scale, one end reflecting Russian orientation and the other Finnish orientation. Factor analysis was conducted to form summarized variables for ethnic identity. The range for the variables was from 1 to 5 where scores between 1-2.49 reflected a Finnish ethnic identity, 2.5-3.49 referred to a bi-ethnic identity, and scores from 3.5 to 5 reflected a Russian ethnic identity.

The items supported a three-factor solution. The first factor consisted of seven questions connected with identification on the basis of personality (For example, Who understands your thoughts

and opinions best? Who do you have the most in common with? Who do you think you resemble in character?). The summated scale was named as 'Personality' (Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$). The second factor, named as 'Background' (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$), consisted of four questions and characterized identification based on views about ones' ethnic background (For example, Who do you think you are? What are your ethnic origins?). The third factor, 'Contacts' (Cronbach's $\alpha = .77$), consisted of four questions related to friendship and contacts (For example, Who are your closest friends? Who are the people you admire?).

The means for ethnic identity based on personality, background and contacts ranged from 3.7 to 3.9. By personality, 75% of the subjects identified themselves as Russians, 6% as Finns, and 20% of them had a biethnic identity. The structure of background and contact-based ethnic identity appeared to be quite similar: approximately 67% of the students identified themselves as Russians, 6% as Finns, and 27% declared biethnic identity. It seems that the subjects regarded themselves as Russians mainly with regard to their personality, while their origins and contacts played a somewhat less important role. There were some students whose ethnic identification with Russians was very strong or, respectively, weak with Russians and strong with Finns.

In order to investigate whether language identity was related to Russian-speaking students' ethnic identifications, Pearson's correlations were conducted. According to the results, the stronger the

students identified themselves as Russian-speaking, the higher was the degree of all dimensions of their ethnic identity: personality ($r = .56, p < .001$), background ($r = .53, p < .001$) and contact-based identification ($r = .54, p < .001$). In contrast, the Finnish language identity was related to a stronger orientation towards Finnish ethnic identity on all dimensions of their ethnic identity (personality: $r = -.58, p < .001$, background: $r = -.55, p < .001$, contacts: $r = -.59, p < .001$)².

Conclusions

The findings of this study indicated a wider variation in the ethnic self-identification and ethnic identity of Russian-speaking immigrant students than in their linguistic self-identification or language identity. The most frequently declared ethnic self-identification was Russian. The ethnic identity was composed of three components, reflecting ethnic identification on the basis of personality, background, and ethnic contacts. The personality-based identification was most often Russian. The background and contact-based identifications also appeared to be mostly Russian but the variation was wider and the proportion of subjects with biethnic identification was somewhat larger.

The Russian-speaking immigrant students identified themselves most frequently as Russian-speaking: some 93% of them had a strong Russian language identity. The attitudes towards Finnish were more neutral as over half of the subjects declared a neutral Finnish language identity and some 20% had a weak relationship

to Finnish. However, a bilingual identity seemed also to be possible as some third of the Russian-speaking students had a strong Russian and Finnish language identity and almost half of them declared a high level proficiency in Finnish. Russian is their mother tongue and important as such, while Finnish is more an instrument for getting a good education and work, and for becoming a member of the Finnish society. The earlier studies and the interviews conducted for this study also seem to support this conclusion.

These results indicate that a person is emotionally oriented towards languages in many ways. Interpretations of the personal meaning of languages to oneself, perceived language proficiency, attitudes towards languages, and language used for communicating with family and friends seemed to be interconnected. Also, the relationship between language identity and ethnicity appeared to be fairly strong, even though further analyses are needed before more detailed conclusions can be drawn. An interesting question is in what direction do the language identity and ethnic identity change in the course of time. Does the immigrants' language identity remain more Russian-oriented, as it is in the early years of residence in Finland? Or do they become more linguistically assimilated when Finnish becomes more and more important while Russian remains a "kitchen language"? The question of ethnic identity is also important because of the special character of ethnic remigration of Ingrian Finns. The bond of the

younger generation of Ingrian Finns to Finnish language and culture is often weak. The official considerations and discussions about the identity of these people do not seem to coincide with the reality which inevitably causes all kinds of problems in the politics of education and labour, to mention but a few examples.

Maintaining one's mother tongue and culture in the new host country, the acquisition of a new language, language use as well as attitudes towards languages and their relationship to a person's

ethnic identity are all issues that need to be more thoroughly investigated and discussed because of their importance to immigrants in their adaptation into a new society. Analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data will provide good opportunities for identifying those factors that are connected with the identity formation of Russian-speaking students and for finding out how identity is formed in different settings and situations.

This article focused both on the descendants of Ingrian Finns as

well on other young Russian-speaking immigrants who were studying in upper secondary or in vocational education. These findings can be interpreted as describing the patterns of linguistic identification of both groups and as supporting earlier notions about the Russian-oriented identity of the younger generation of Russian-speaking immigrants. The analysis of the results of this study is still in progress and a more detailed and profound description of the contents and patterns of language and ethnic identity will be presented in the dissertation.

Notes

- 1 For more detailed information about historical background of Ingria and Ingrian Finns, see. Eg. Kyntäjä 1997, Nevalainen 1998, De Geer 1992, Takalo & Juote 1995.
- 2 A low score indicated Finnish ethnic identity orientation on the scale which measured both Finnish and Russian ethnic identity. For Russian and Finnish language identity separate scales were used and, thus, a low score indicated a low degree of identity and a high score a high degree of it. This explains the negative mark in correlation between the Finnish ethnic identity and Finnish language identity.

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Turvapaikanhakijat vuonna 2001

Ulkkomaalaisviraston alustavien tilastojen mukaan Suomesta haki vuonna 2001 turvapaikkaa 1 590 henkilöä. Määrä on puolet edellisen vuoden hakijamäärästä.

Kymmenen suurinta hakijaryhmää olivat venäläiset (283), ukrainalaiset (137), irakilaiset (100), turkkilaiset (89), Jugoslavian liittotasavallan kansalaiset (86), slovakialaiset (83), bangladeshilaiset (60), entisen Jugoslavian passilla tulleet (60), iranilaiset (54) ja valkovenäläiset.

Turvapaikan sai vuonna 2001 neljä henkilöä: kaksi afganistanilaista, yksi irakilainen ja yksi

myanmarilainen. Oleskeluluvan sai 821 henkilöä. Kielteisen päätöksen – ei turvapaikkaa eikä oleskelulupaa – sai 1 083 hakijaa. Raukeamispäätöksen sai 300 hakijaa, koska he joko peruuttivat hakemuksensa tai poistuivat maasta.

Turvapaikkahakemusruuhkaa saatiin viime vuonna purettua, kun päätöksiä tehtiin 618 enemmän kuin uusia hakemuksia tuli. Turvapaikkahakemuksen keskimääräinen käsittelyaika vuonna 2001 oli noin vuosi ja kolme kuukautta.