



Vaasan yliopisto
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

International perspectives on immersion

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Immersion 2014: Mainstreaming access
to multilingual communities

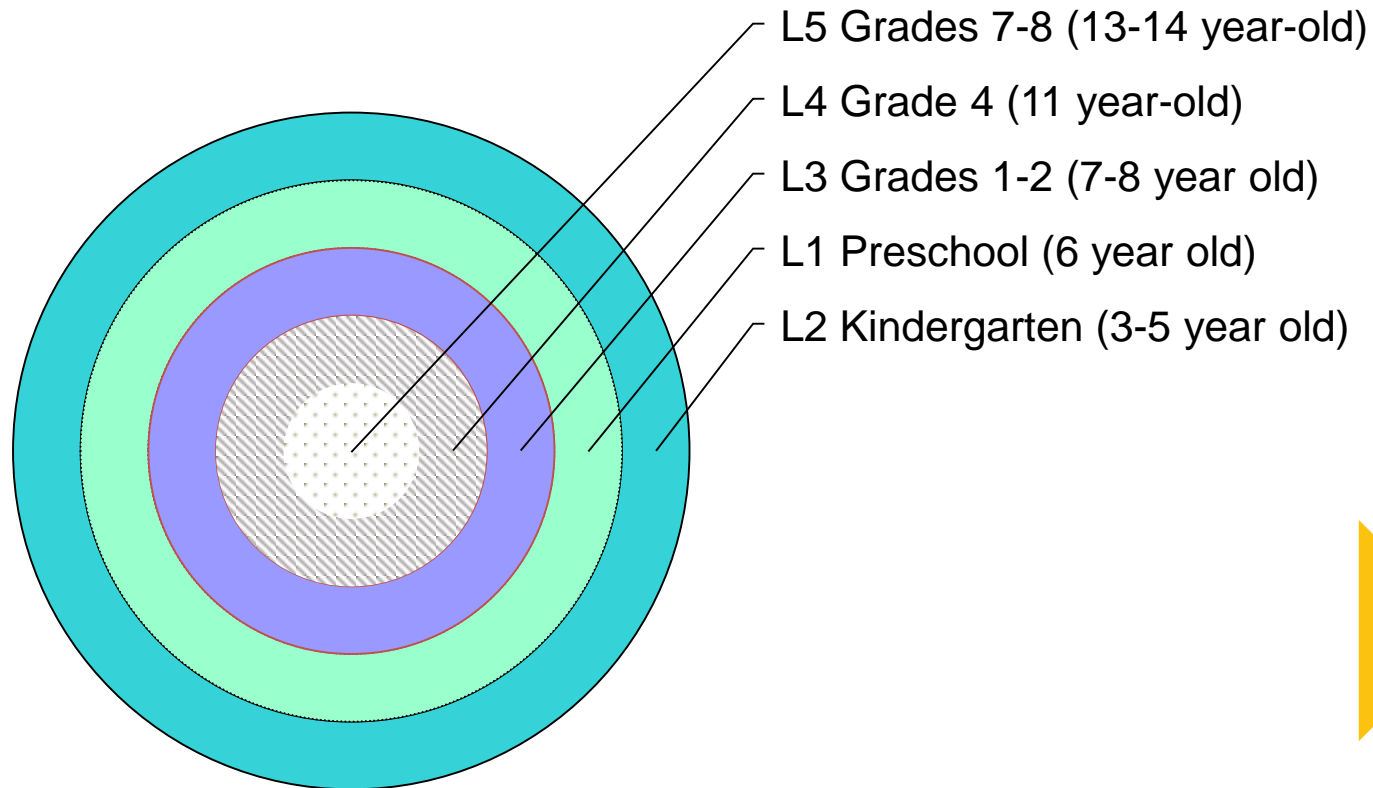
Salt Lake City, Utah

Swedish immersion

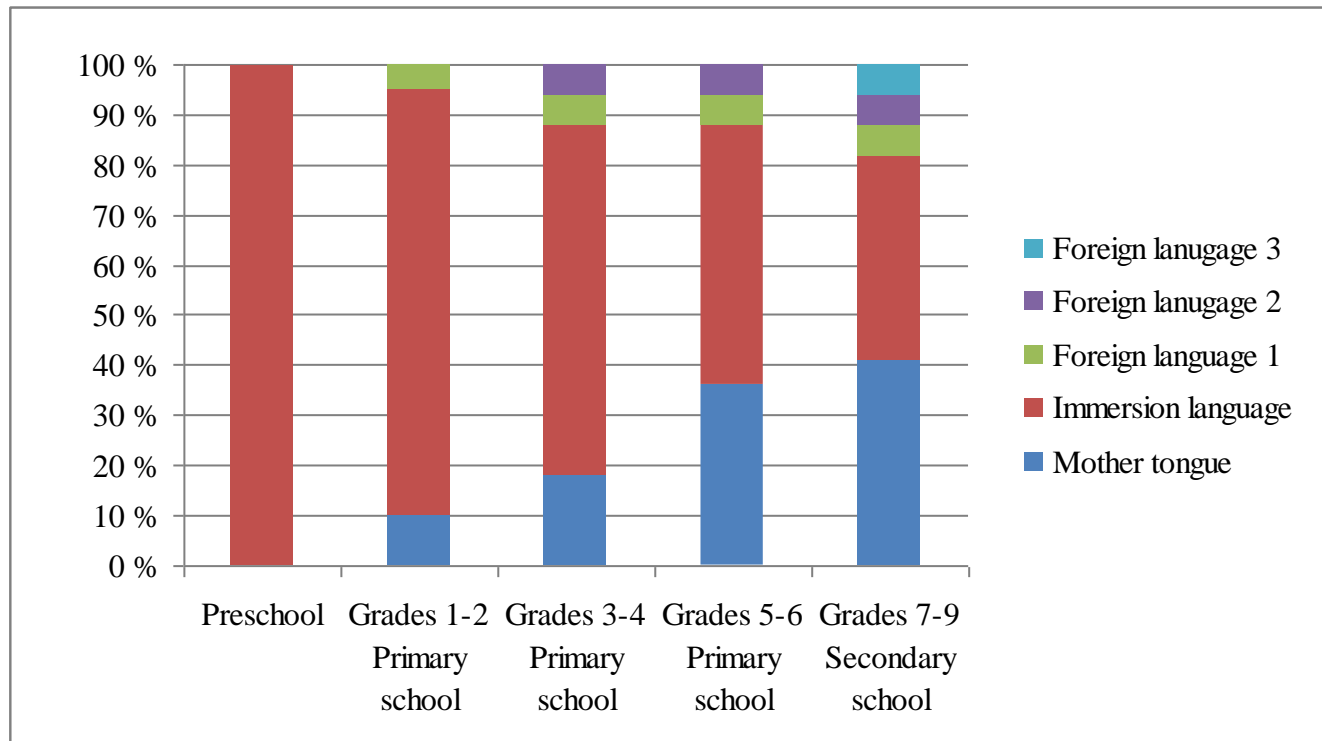


- Student enrolment predominantly from monolingual Finnish-speaking homes
- A clear establishment of one main L2 (Swedish), but the program includes 1-3 additional languages as well.
- L1 as language of instruction is introduced in preschool or the first school year (10 % of the instruction time). The aim is to promote students' oral L1 skills and strengthening of their cultural and linguistic identity.
- Literacy is formally taught through students' L2.
- Additional languages within an immersion program may be introduced
 - earlier than in traditional language programs (though not used as extensively as language of instruction as L1 and L2 of the program)
 - with more mixed approaches (experiential-analytic teaching strategies).

Chronological order of introduction of languages in Swedish immersion



Allocation of languages in early total Swedish immersion



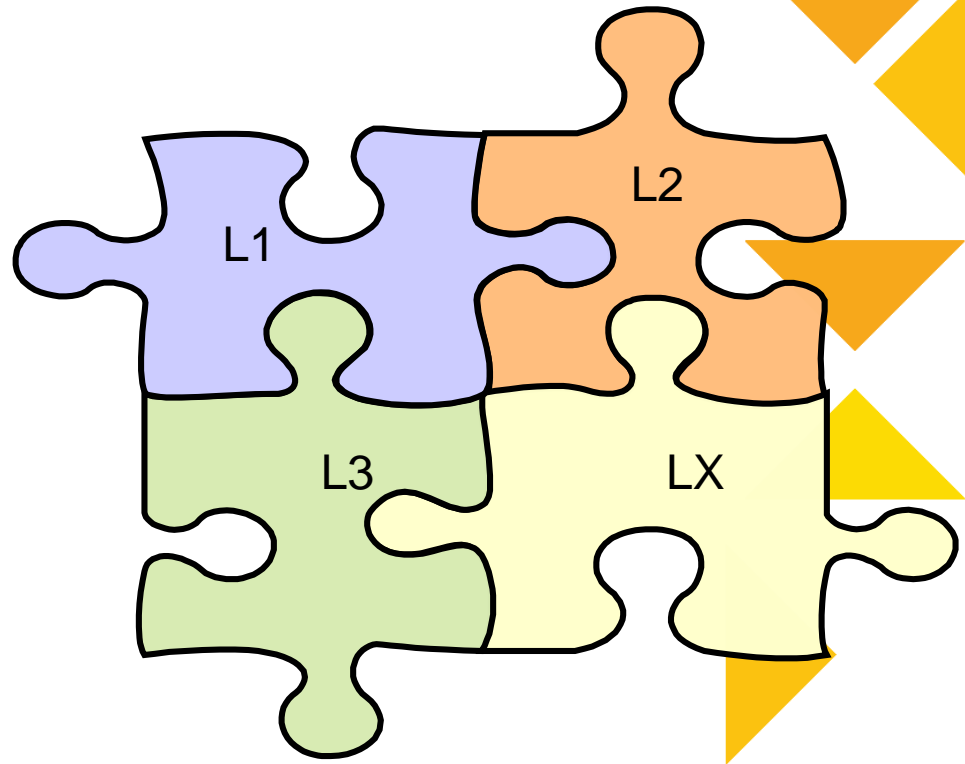
The use of multiple languages in Swedish immersion

The languages of immersion are separated:

- A. one teacher-one language
- B. one subject-one language

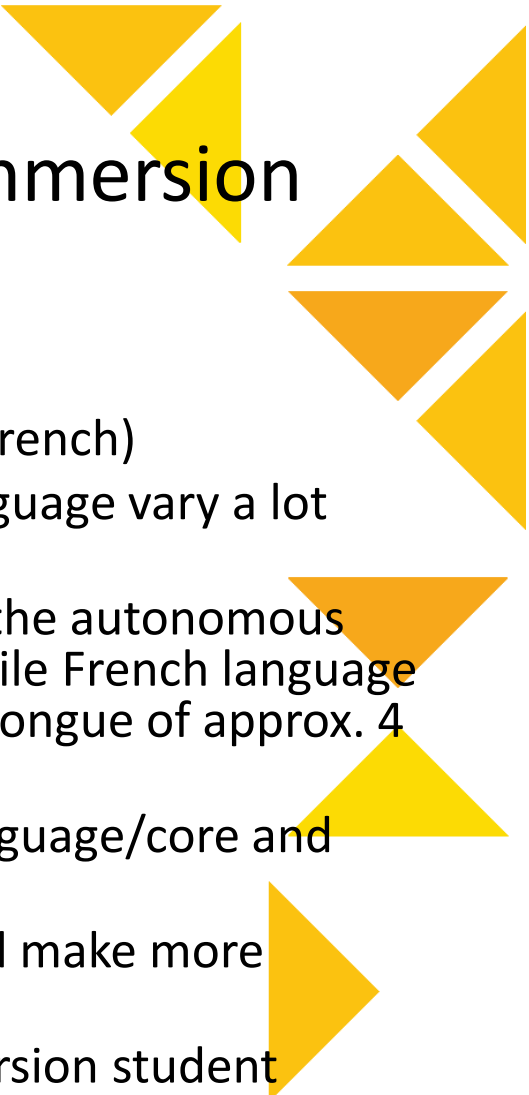
The languages of immersion are integrated:

- C. Teaching thematic units (thematic instruction integrates both different subjects and different languages of instruction)
- D. Daily schemes (during a school day students use at least two, mostly multiple languages)



The discourse of the classroom is most likely bilingual, often multilingual

Societal context; Swedish immersion vs. French immersion



Similarities:

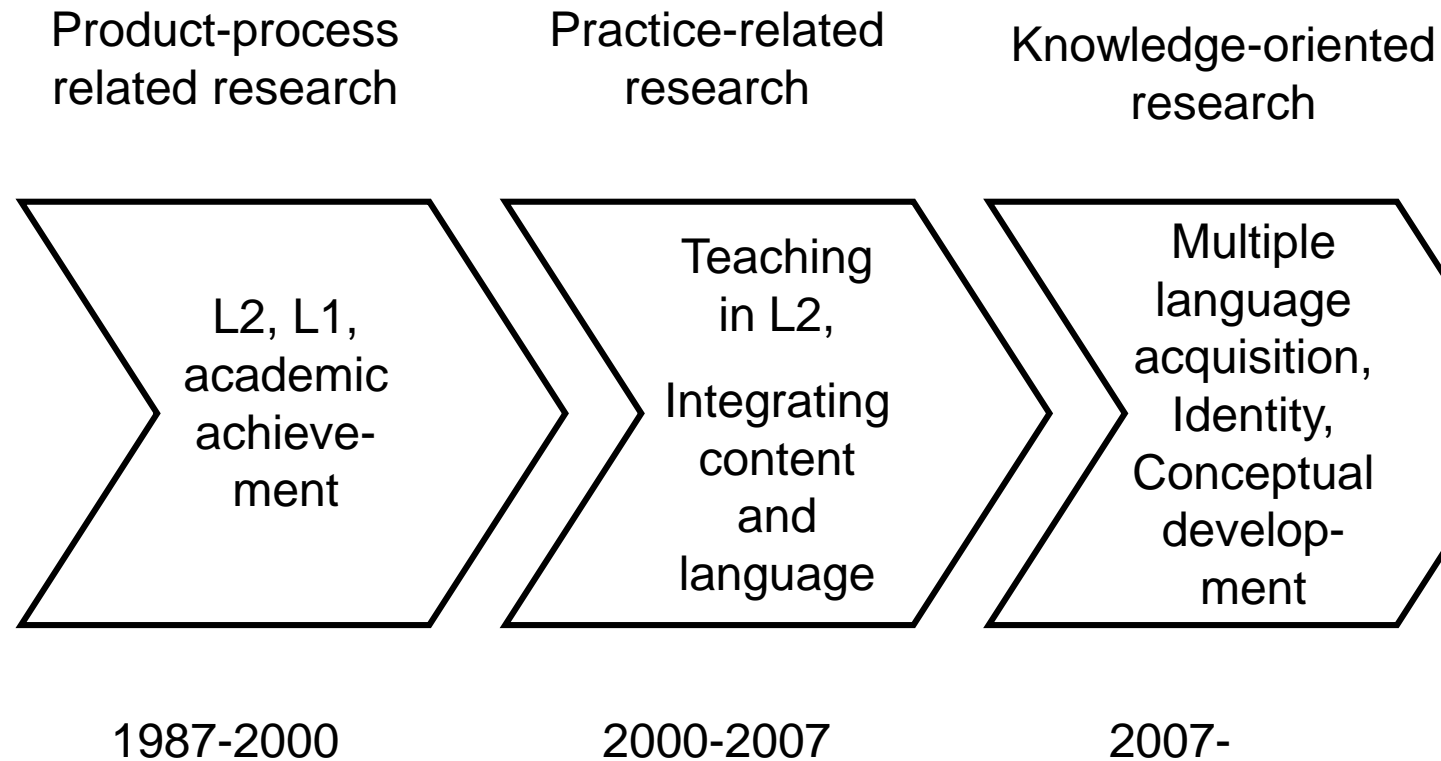
- A. Officially bilingual countries (Finnish-Swedish; English-French)
- B. The status and the use of the non-dominant official language vary a lot both locally and regionally
- C. 4,9 % of the population in mainland Finland (excluding the autonomous Åland islands) has Swedish as their mother tongue, while French language in Canada outside Quebec reported to be the mother tongue of approx. 4 % of the population
- D. Number of students interested in studying Swedish language/core and basic French is declining
- E. Language immersion mainly established to enhance and make more efficient use of the official bilingualism of the country
- F. Decades of language immersion during which the immersion student population has been rather steady

Societal context; Swedish immersion vs. French immersion

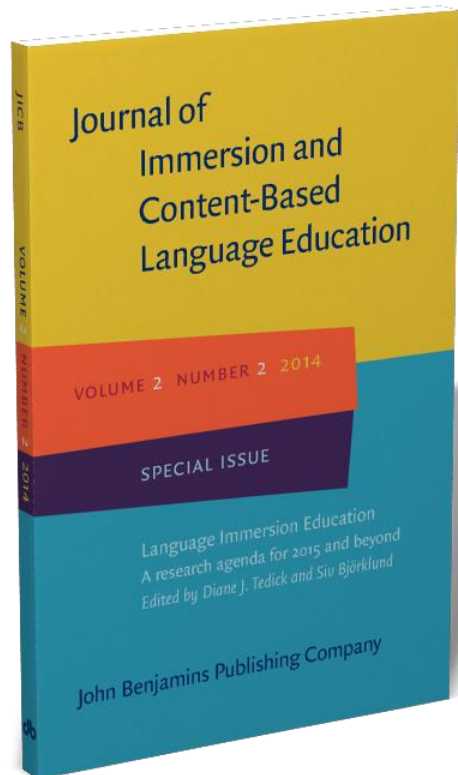
Differences:

- A. 0.5 % of the total student population in Finland enrolled in Swedish immersion while 14 % of the student population on the national level in French immersion
- B. Immersion programs offered only in the bilingual (Finnish-Swedish) coastal areas of Finland, whereas French immersion programs are offered in almost every province in Canada
- C. Only early total programs are offered in Finland, in Canada early, delayed and late programs, total and partial programs
- D. In Finland, multilingual orientation, in Canada predominantly bilingual orientation

Research on Swedish immersion



More information about European one-way immersion programs



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A research agenda for 2015 and beyond
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