

LEARNING SWEDISH IN FINLAND:

HEJ!

FIRST LANGUAGE,
SECOND LANGUAGE,
FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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CRT-4.34, RUN RUN SHAW TOWER, CENTENNIAL CAMPUS, HKU

Finland is officially a bilingual country with two national languages, Finnish and Swedish. Swedish is a minority language which 5.2% reported as their mother tongue in 2017 (Central Statistical Office of Finland). The position of the Swedish language has always been a somewhat controversial topic in the Finnish societal debate. As a school subject, Swedish is mandatory for all Finnish-speaking pupils in the basic education, but in practice Swedish skills vary considerably. In politically oriented web discussions and other popular forums, compulsory Swedish is often referred to as *pakkoruotsi* ('forced Swedish'). While the state is officially bilingual, functional multilingualism is rare and the situation is often described as "parallel monolingualism" which the Finnish school system is an example of, in that Finnish-language and Swedish-language schools are separate. In my talk, I discuss the challenges in learning and possibilities to learn Swedish in Finland.



Sinikka Lahtinen is a professor in the department of Scandinavian languages in the School of Languages and Translation Studies at the University of Turku.

Her research interests are focused on learning Swedish as a second/foreign language (L2), especially in the learning and development of written Swedish, writing process and interlanguage pragmatics.



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All are welcome. No registration needed.
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