Language Skills for Future Success

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Key ideas

Language Competence
Language policy and implementation
How to be successful, i.e. what employers want (ET2020)

Team working skills
Communication skills
Sector-specific skills
Computer skills
Adapting to new situations, acquiring new knowledge
Analytical and problem-solving skills
Personal skills for self-management, making sound judgments and managing risks
Social skills for management, leadership and conflict resolution
Language and employability

Knowledge of more than one language seen as a demonstration of cultural openness and adaptability (ET2020)

Lack of language skills can become a serious obstacle for companies (ELAN 2006)

Multilingualism is a key factor in the success of a company but only when linked to other competences (CELAN)

In many European countries, employment and language skills are positively linked (CRELL 2015)
One is hired because of knowledge and experience in the area but fired because of social skills.
On the EU level

Language competences = employability, mobility and personal development

Developing multilingualism
Teaching and learning languages effectively
Assessing language competences

Focus on the *quality of language teaching*, since FL competence remains below expectations in member states
Principles for FL in Estonia (Estonian FL strategy 2009-2017)

Commitment to multilingualism and meeting various language needs

Use of internationally recognised language proficiency certificates (students and teachers)

Supporting FL teachers’ associations and the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers
Principles for FL in Estonia (2)

Following the principles of CEFR
Encouraging CLIL studies and innovative methods
Languages for jobs – work on the role of FL in professional standards
Layered language needs

I – English is a basic skill

II – advantage gained by moving beyond English: German, French, Russian, Spanish, Chinese

III – need for languages of neighbouring countries (for trade and mutual understanding)
## Foreign languages in Estonia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>General education 2016/2017</th>
<th>Vocational education 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>120 779</td>
<td>10 230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>52 883</td>
<td>4546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>13 215</td>
<td>654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>4149</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1103</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I foreign language: 95.4% English, 2.4% German

II foreign language: 80.6% Russian, 10.7% German
## National examination results in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Level not reached</th>
<th>B1</th>
<th>B2</th>
<th>C1 and C2 (certificates)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015/2016</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5.1 and 2.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/2015</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3 and 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/2014</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.0 and 0.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Certificates submitted:
2016/2017: 743
2015/2016: 623
What do the figures tell us: national examination results

Level not reached – growing
B1 – growing
B2 – falling
C1, C2 certificates – growing (at the expense of B2)

Are we happy with this?
What do the figures tell us: layered language needs?

English as a basic skill
First FL: 95.4% English, 2.4% German, 1.3% French and 0.8% Russian

Moving beyond English
Second FL: 80.6% Russian, 10.7% German, 2.4% French, 0.6% Finnish, 0.3% Spanish, 0.2% Chinese, 0.1% Swedish

Languages of neighbouring countries (and other)
Third FL: 31.5% German, 19.2% Russian*, 14.9% French, 13.9% Spanish, 9.3% Finnish*, 2.3% Chinese, 0.5% Swedish*

Data for 2016/2017
Future of Estonian Language Policy

Development Plan of the Estonian Language 2011–2017

Estonian Foreign Languages Strategy 2009–2017

Estonian Language Strategy 2018–2027
- Status and prestige
- Infrastructure
- Language learning and teaching
Food for thought

Should we start earlier with foreign languages? How early?

Should we teach English as the first FL to everyone?

How can we bridge the gap between early language learning and language learning at schools?

How can we cater for sustainable language learning?
Food for thought (2)

How can we promote other foreign languages?
How can we help the ~50% of students who do not reach B2 in English by Year 12?
How can we raise the efficiency of teaching and learning?
Do and should all foreign language teachers demonstrate their level of proficiency in the language(s) they teach?
Let us know what you think:

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Some sources