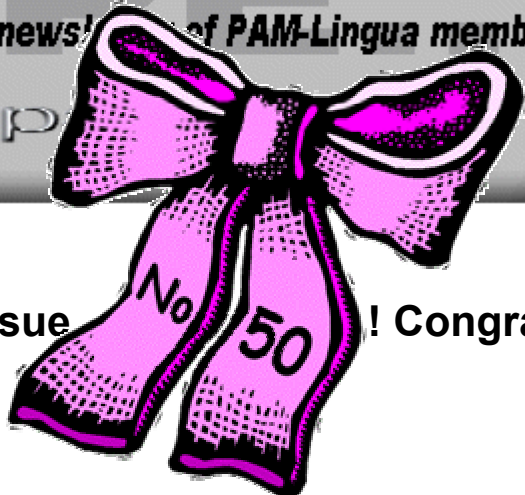


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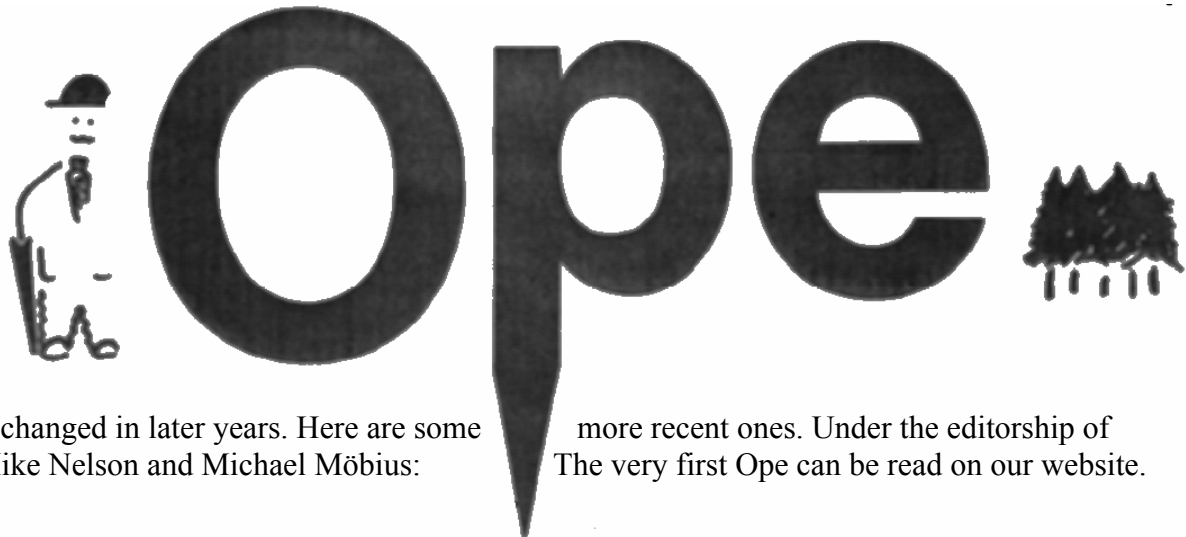
**50**

December  
2005



Dear readers, this is issue **No 50** ! Congratulations!

This is where we come from. The banner of the very first Ope ever made:



It changed in later years. Here are some more recent ones. Under the editorship of Mike Nelson and Michael Möbius:

more recent ones. Under the editorship of The very first Ope can be read on our website.



## A letter from your Chairman

By Daryl Taylor

employee@welho.com



As a PAM-Lingua publication, Ope reflects the public history of the union section. The first edition of Ope appeared in early 1985 when the section was still in its infancy, as the first foreign language teachers had joined the union only about six months before this. Even at this early stage it was clear, however, that the new section had a

costs. Through all of this progress, however, Ope remains a unique magazine written by ourselves for people like ourselves.

As a new Board member and new to Finland back in 1986, I was assigned the job of investigating and keeping records of all of the various processes that were involved in settling into my new

contributions that are relevant to the lives and work of its readers. News and views on the activities of the section, including "court and social" (and its famous slogan "teach now – sue later"), have always been highly prominent, but some quite lengthy academic contributions on pedagogical theory and practice have appeared,

## SHOTGUN of the MONTH

very distinct character and profile in the Finnish trade union movement. And for all of our subsequent experience and sophistication, this character and profile still unquestionably remains.

Ope has also been through various stages, and its overall production quality reflects the march of desktop publishing technology since the early 1980s. Shortly after joining the Board in late autumn 1986 I recall a meeting at Peter Shaw's flat in Siltamäki. There were about eight of us there, and the purpose of meeting was "Ope production". This meant typing up stories on scraps of paper that were then quite literally cut to fit and pasted into place. The move towards fully computerised DTP began in 1988-89 when we got our hands on appropriate software for the old Mac 512 KE. Nowadays the definitive edition of Ope is the PDF file that resides on my fidisk (accessible via a link on the section website), and with Ope 50 we are finally making the jump to professional out-of-house printing services – at least until we see how much this



home, and then writing up the results for Ope. The first grand battle with officialdom came when trying to get a Helsinki travelcard (which was essential for a peripatetic language school teacher), and I discovered that in order to enjoy the public subsidies for the city's "great integrated transport system", I had first to run the gauntlet of Finland's far less well-integrated domicile Registration system. Similar bureaucracy surrounded the process of claiming unemployment benefit through the union's fund, securing a work permit for "freelance" work, checking that your employer had paid your pension contributions, getting a business license (now obsolete) and dozens of other aspects of the foreign teacher's life in the Finland of old. For many years Ope remained almost the only source of guidance

on these matters that was available to many our members in a language that they could understand.

Ope has always been ready to offer space to any and all

as well as reviews of books that a contributor simply happened to find interesting. Banner headlines have varied enormously over the years, but I still remember "Shotgun of the Month" and I still chuckle at "Neste Goes Down the Tubes", reporting on the dismissal of about ten language teachers that eventually led to an award of compensatory fines of just over EUR 40,000 against Finland's State-owned oil corporation.

Having been personally responsible for producing 12 of those 50 Opes, I have the greatest respect for the brave souls who have volunteered for (or been press-ganged into accepting) this job over the years. It is far from easy to co-ordinate receipt of materials from contributors (and as always, the people with the most interesting stories to tell always have the least time to tell them), typeset and otherwise organise the publication, find the time and energy for proof-reading, co-ordinate printing and posting, and otherwise attend to a host of tiny but important details that are necessary to get this unique publication into your eager hands, dear reader. Contributions are always welcome in any language. And as Ope embarks on its second half century, let's not forget that it remains OUR magazine.

Daryl

## They really had us by the balls!

Interview with Leslie Hyde, founding member of our section.

By Michael Möbius

michi@dlc.fi



Preparing anything jubilee-like, makes you want to recall how this thing got started. The same applies to the 50th issue of our newsletter. Who was there in the beginning and what was it like then? So Ope went out to the Carousel restaurant and met Leslie Hyde, union member of the first hour and one of the first editors of Ope.



**Les, you were not only one of the first members of Tekeri Language Teachers, what later became PAM-Lingua, but you also were among the editors of Ope. The history of forming our own section within Tekeri is closely connected with the history of Ope. Tell us how it**

**all started.**

Ope was an important development in organising teachers. There was a lot of motivation from us all to do something. Everyone was so angry with the situation. Working in the sector of private language teaching was nothing like today. Work permits were restricted to just one employer and employers used their position as sole employer. Even relatively benevolent officials said “foreigners cannot join a trade union in Finland” and stuff like that. Threats from the more disgraceful employers were made on the grounds of a person’s sexuality, and sometimes so crass and offensive as to be unbelievable: one employer would make personal remarks on the pay slip about physical attributes (tits, legs and bum etc.)

**... and at what point did Ope come in?**

We lived in the limbo world between out there in ulkomaa and Suomi. Misinformation was often intentional but occasionally simply mistaken. The assumption was that if you weren’t Finnish then you had no rights. In fact it felt like it: there were also lots of limitations like moving around, couldn’t buy your own house, could do anything remotely political, couldn’t get a credit card and so. So first and foremost OPE set out to provide information so teachers could discuss whatever mess they found themselves in with some kind of framework. Here is an example; one employer had a good wheeze going, a real cost-saving idea; double the length of the lesson so that when anyone discussed lesson pay rates the poor so and so would not know just how awful the pay was. Schools had 40 or 60 minute sessions but when Languista teachers talked about the

27 markka lesson rate they didn’t realise just what a pittance it was: Languista lessons were 90 minutes! This is one way in which Ope was so important. In one issue we listed the schools, length of lesson and actually lesson pay.

People in the industry were so angry and really needed an organisation to defend them, claim their lawful rights and also – not least – provide unemployment benefits. We had started to organise at a time when we believed to do so was illegal for foreigners. Before we joined the union some of at BTC discussed what to do and decided we would seek recourse to the law. As a result one of us was sacked on the spot. He left Finland with a court case going. After that on the 24th of August in 1984 I and a colleague named Keith Howard went down the road to the union office and became the first two language teachers to join Tekeri. I had got a call from a lawyer from another union who was a contact of Howard McKee another early member and OPE’s first editor. With the crucial help of Tuula Lehmusto the section Tekeri Language Teachers (TLT) was quickly formed. Without her things would have got going a lot more slowly. I devoted myself entirely to the cause, every moment! I regarded it as an important one for me but also for all immigrants. Keith and I realised that labour law gave us rights. Knowing we could get them was just so exhilarating. The trade union gave us the means to enforce and develop those rights. Other early members included Peter Shaw, who played a vital role by unionising Inlingua and turning it into our largest branch. Peter was dedicated. I have very fond memories of him, one of the good guys!

But getting your rights also often involves getting hurt. My turn for the job chop duly came as did Julie Hunt from Languista. We both had successful legal actions and were possibly the first in Finland brought by foreigners. But to answer your question about when Ope arrived, it was sometime in 1985, I don’t remember exactly.

It was in a fairly early issue we ran a banner setting out our aims and one was for a thriving industry. Though there were a lot of court actions and aggressive activities, we were concerned to develop private language schools along right lines. Peter Shaw worked productively and his was the first school to reach a working agreement between

employer and union. I haven't worked in the private sector for many years so I am out of touch. Is it possible to have a career in private language schools in Finland, I mean where job responsibilities specialise or deepen, where skills are developed?

Some of us also went on shop steward courses and passed on information through seminars. I learnt something that I still pass on to young immigrants today: that joining institutions, clubs and so on is a very good way to join in, it's what local people do! I remember the pleasure on the shop steward course of being treated as a fellow worker, rather than someone from Mars.

### **I heard you talking to the guy in the cafeteria, your Finnish sounds great.**

It gets better with the years; it's nice to be able to say that, but back to Ope. As I said, it provided a forum to practise free speech, let injustices be known and it also gave form to the anger, named names, bad schools and their practises. Top of our list was Languista, which we actually wanted to be shut down by the authorities. It is out of the business now. Then Linguarama, which would make money on you twice, once by teaching their clients, which is OK, and then by renting out flats to their foreign staff at absurd rents. They owned you; they really had you by the balls – both of them! Other schools included Josbel (which was a more progressive school) Marckwort, AAC, BTC and so on. Other forms of publicizing included stories in the press and we had pictures of us all with our eyes blacked out to preserve our anonymity – all very theatrical but actually required because people were being fired.

Ope was also needed to form a network. Via Ope one would hear about vacant jobs, one could find work, distribute phone numbers etc. We published a list of schools along with their rates of payment. I believe this was a very helpful instrument at the time.

**... and a good one, we should do this again!**

### **How was the first edition produced and who were the editors?**

The first issue was produced by cutting and pasting, using lots of glue, a typewriter and a pair of scissors.

All joined in at the time. Howard McKee was editor for some time. Peter Shaw was King of the Hill, because he owned a Mac. Basically, we would sit around the table and put the newsletter together.

### **What was the main story of the first Ope?**

Head story was about a Lahti school headed by some Kaarina Uusitalo, who had sent the police to an English employee who wanted to leave the school for another job. After sending him improper bills and questioning his sanity, the school actually accused the employee of being a drug dealer, and I remember the line as 'on the weighty evidence that he had received letters from Holland!' I think I borrowed the 'weighty evidence' bit from Bertrand Russell on Bishop Berkley's eye blinking arguments on the existence of God. It fitted well because many of language schools of the time were such unlikely phenomena that the good Bishop himself would have had a problem believing.

### **Les, what do you do today?**

I was very lucky as Chairperson because I had good people to take up the load: Peter Shaw and Daryl were on the scene. Afterwards I continued teaching but helped set up a theatre in education group, which morphed into a somewhat bawdier comic show. I did serious theatre and got very good reviews in the national press as Nag in Endgame where I worked with Glyn Banks, Jonny Hutchings and Frank Boyle. Together with the last two mentioned we performed a sketch on a Tekerri cruise. It was a professional engagement and that was my last involvement.

Now I am Vice-Principal at Eiran aikuislukio (Eira High School for Adults). We have 1,600 students, and our output is 250-300 high school degrees (ylioppilait) per year. I head the maahanmuuttajien peruskoulu which is in Finnish and has immigrant young adults from 60-70 countries, and I am also responsible for the 95 students of the High School in English.

### **Thank you for this interview and good luck for your future projects.**

*Leslie Hyde was interviewed by Michael Möbius.*

## **Editing Ope in the 80s**

Memories of one of many editors of Ope

By Peter Shaw

[petershaw@kolumbus.fi](mailto:petershaw@kolumbus.fi)



My assignment: write a few words about editing Ope back in the 80s. Sure, I said, no problem. That was nearly a month ago and I've only just sat down to put finger to key. If this sounds familiar it's possibly because you have at some time in

your life been harangued by an editor to write an article for a newsletter.

Ope has always been important for this union, but it was a vital publication in those days. It was a time of transition: we had emerged

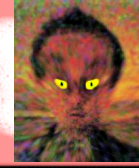
from the dark days of our underground roots into an atmosphere of cautious optimism (or at least that's what I felt at the time). But there was still fear and uncertainty.

*Continued on page 15*



## in Tietoranta 2005

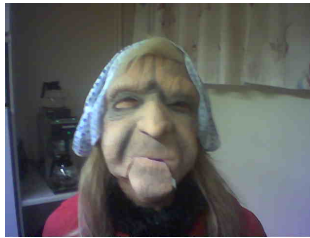
By The Raging Earl of Suthwirth'm's Hall



Once again their cohorts poured into my quiet place. And they wouldn't see me, but I was around, the whole time from 5 to 11 p.m. Today they wouldn't talk union life and who to sue next. But they were in a more sinister mood. Celebrating the US-earthling's feast of Halloween, where everybody tries to look scary but in fact only makes one laugh upon such poor effort. They'd hang up pumpkin heads and put candles everywhere – huuh, God was I scared; they prepared food in unnatural colours: a “scary” carrot soup and a really nasty looking pasta salad, along with groovy fake caviar.



They even served punch with the hand of a dead grave digger in it, Jesus, how intriguing. They also tried to buy the children who came along with



cheap sweets, and what's worse, it seemed to work. There were an awful lot of children fooling around everywhere, disturbing my peace and quiet, laughing and being just a little scared. They had never brought their children in that numbers. I just hope that this doesn't become a habit! Despite the weird costumes of skeletons, witches, vampires, fools, the adults weren't scared a bit,



Just look at them in their “scary” outfits, especially on the right! Huh, I can't hold myself!

### Fixing the Headstone

Two men were walking home after a Halloween party and decided to take a shortcut through the cemetery just for laughs. Right in the middle of the cemetery they were startled by a tap-tap-tapping noise coming from the misty shadows. Trembling with fear, they found an old man with a hammer and chisel, chipping away at one of the headstones.

instead they stood around in the kitchen sipping cool drinks and having fun. Or maybe they were scared after all because the room of the main “activity” was only frequented by people who liked to hear themselves talk or to be talked to; the noise was awful, spooky music from some CD, scary movies from some DVD, probably diligently collected by those people to scare each other out of their pants.

The skeleton functioned as the doorman asking everybody, whether there were dumb children around “Onko siellä tyhmiä lapsia?” Well, they weren't stupid a bit, they figured out right away where the food was, and where the best hiding places for the ongoing game of hide and seek were. For myself, it was just watching Scooby Dooby Doo, it's awesome in spite of the ignorance of film makers towards ghosts and monsters like me.

And after 9 their got rid of their children! And only one parent returned to continue with the feast! One can tell they didn't have a female human with offspring along while planning the event. She would have told the guys that after bringing home the kids, few would come back. At least they got some guy from upstairs to clean up the mess!

I hate Halloween and what they made of it! And I sure hope they go ahead with the idea of having a summer party for their children and themselves – outdoors!

*The deeply disturbed Earl*



“Holy cow, Mister,” one of them said after catching his breath, “You scared us half to death -- we thought you were a ghost! What are you doing working here so late at night?” “Those fools!” the old man grumbled. “They misspelled my name!”

What goes “Ha-ha-ha . . . THUD!”  
A monster laughing his head off.

## Where is the family atmosphere of Tekeri?

Findings from the June Questionnaire  
Compiled by Rod Dowling

rodney.dowling@kielipalvelu.inet.fi



The questionnaire has provided the board with some useful information. Altogether 28 responses were returned: 13 from English speakers, 4 from Finnish, 4 from Russian, three from Italian, 2 from German, 1 from French, and 1 from Chinese speakers respectively. I will not try to extrapolate these results across the whole membership, but simply tell you the dispersion among the respondents. It comes as no surprise though that the largest number of responses came from English speakers, as they constitute the biggest linguistic group in our section.

The respondents' duration of membership was as follows: ten over 15 years, six in the 10-15 years bracket, six in the 5-10 years bracket, five in the 1-4 years bracket, and one respondent who has been a member for less than a year. Their Finnish/Swedish proficiency ranged from beginner to native speaker.

6 respondents said they were fully self-employed. They are really old union stalwarts because I can say in all honesty that the union does not give them fair value for their dues. The board has been beating its head against a brick wall ever since PAM was formed to get the parent association to lay down a clear set of benefits for self-employed members.

With respect to union-related services, most respondents had availed themselves of the information services available, and about half of the respondents have had dealings with the unemployment fund. Legal and unemployment fund services were the union offerings respondents appreciated most, closely followed by infor-

mation services. The respondents were fairly evenly divided as to the importance of social activities and professional support. I strongly suspect that respondents from the Helsinki district found the social activities useful, whereas they played a minor importance for those living elsewhere. Most respondents wished not to play an active role in union activities, preferring instead to play a rank and file role. With respect to effectiveness the majority of respondents perhaps surprisingly found the provision of unemployment fund services to be very effective and the provision of legal, social, informational and professional support services fairly effective. The majority of respondents considered that union staff were friendly, but were evenly divided on the dimensions bureaucratic-member friendly and flexible-inflexible.

Employer attitude towards the union seems on the whole slightly more favourable than unfavourable.

Six respondents considered membership of PAM

more important than membership of Pam-Lingua. I can understand that perspective when one considers that unemployment fund and legal services are provided by the parent union. However, I would like to remind members that direct membership of PAM is not possible, only indirect membership through an affiliated association like Pam-Lingua. Most members considered that both PAM and Pam-Lingua worked to further the interests of their members, Pam-Lingua more than PAM.

As to the difference between Tekeri Language Teachers as a part of Tekeri, and Pam-Lingua as a part of PAM, the questionnaire brought

to light strongly conflicting opinions. One respondent wrote: "I do not see any difference; just the same. Pam-Lingua is for some group of people (English-speaking) who don't care about others." On the other hand another member (an English speaker) opined: "Staff of both PAM and PAM työttömyyskassa are less flexible, less approachable, less friendly and less committed." Pam gives the impression of a big organization with all those associated effects; careerists rather than those who believe in improving the lot of working union members, remoteness caused by the counters and reception area; staff turnover and a shift system which leads to dealing with a different person every time. This last has, in my experience, meant different requirements and instructions each time especially from the PAM-työttömyys people. The overall result has been the disappearance of the family atmosphere of Tekeri and its replacement by a cold, formal bureaucratic approach that makes the Työvoimatoimisto welcoming in comparison."

The criticism that Pam-Lingua is just an English club is not without foundation. The majority of our members are English-speaking, so the professional support has overwhelmingly been directed at English teachers. Board meetings are conducted in English, although there is French/Spanish and German representation. The two most recent parties - the German event in autumn 2004 and the Spanish event at Ruoholahti were attempts by the board to reach out to two of our minority groups. By the time the Christmas issue of Ope is published, a labour seminar will have been held, the purpose of



which is to reach out to our Russian-speaking members and other Russian-speaking workers inside PAM. In addition a spring 2006 party with a Russian theme is under consideration. And autumn 2005 will have seen a party with a



Halloween theme in honour of our North American colleagues. The present board hopes that our Russian speaking membership will increase. To cater for their needs it would be desirable to have a Russian-speaking board member. Hopefully, someone comes forward.

The comments on the PAM newspaper and Ope magazine were interesting. I admire the three respondents who said they archive Ope carefully. I, like most respondents, read it and keep it somewhere, whereas the typical fate for Pam magazine is to be read and then discarded. The comments on both magazines were generally favourable, although one person wanted more contributions to Ope. Another person considered Ope "strange." As the person who submits most contributions to Ope, I strongly support a broader contribution base. I suspect the perceived weirdness derives from the oddity of my character. One Russian-speaking respondent indicated a willingness to make contributions. If they are submitted in both Russian and English, I will gladly edit the English version.



There is one negative comment about Pam magazine that I would like to quote for readers: "Pam newspaper is a complete waste of trees. From one year to the next it never gives information to English

speakers. Can I please stop the PAM newspaper and get a reduction in my membership? I resent paying for something so useless and which blatantly ignores my existence and my needs entirely – year after year." Naturally this person was the only one who throws Pam magazine away without reading it at all.

As far as the respective websites are concerned, I was surprised at the large number of respondents who had never visited the websites. One person commented how long the Pam-lingua address was. That is true. However, both websites are easy to access without remembering or writing out the address in full by keying in either PAM or PAM-Lingua into Google's search engine. Another responded that there was not much activity on the Pam-Lingua website after information is posted. That also is true. However, the possibility exists for members to contact the webmaster on the website, who can respond directly or post your comments in news and events. Another way for members to be more active is to join the Pam-Lingua yahoo group (contact Michael Möbius at michi@dlc.fi) or the Working in Finland yahoo group (contact Daryl Taylor at employee@welho.com).

Surprisingly most of the respondents had met a board member, which leads me to suspect that most of the respondents live in the capital district. Almost as most many respondents thought that Pam-Lingua should be more active, as thought PAM should be more active. As a PAM-Lingua board member of long standing, I would just like to remind members that board members are practicing teachers who have to earn a living. Union activity is something we do gratuitously in our free time. To be more active Pam-Lingua needs more involvement from the rank and file, but a sizable proportion of respondents did not consider active

involvement important for themselves, so what we have is a Catch 22.

My review of the questionnaire is almost complete. Most respondents said they fill in and return questionnaires straightaway, which I think makes them a member of a very select group. Item 20 was left blank by most respondents. The comments contributed tended to be negative e.g. "Pam-Lingua is showing its age. PAM's työttömyyskassa is negative in its attitude to helping paying members. I am considering other organizations and options." To balance that I would like to quote something in more positive vein: "Pam-Lingua should liaise with the IEASF group (International English Speakers Association of Finland) www.iesaf.fi/com.



Referring back to the friendliness and effectiveness of PAM service, one member complained that the "telephone service is very likely to hang up on an English speaker" and if not to generally give you the runaround by passing you on from one dead end to another. This tells me that there is a need for PAM to invest in English lessons for its staff and for teachers to encourage their employers to assist in their acquisition of a working knowledge of Finnish. That being said, one must remember that teachers just arriving in Finland will have no knowledge of Finnish, and if they join the union, staff at head office must be able to communicate with them in English – the next best thing to a universal language.

That, ladies and gentlemen is a layman's analysis of the questionnaire's results. Hopefully, it presents a fair and truthful picture of the situation.

Ope – Official Newsletter for members of PAM-Lingua. Editor in Chief: Michael Möbius. Articles may be contributed in various formats (pdf, doc, txt, rtf, htm) to [michi@dlc.fi](mailto:michi@dlc.fi). PAM-Lingua website: [www.dlc.fi/michi/pam/](http://www.dlc.fi/michi/pam/) or search Yahoo groups for "pamlingua".

## Lovely warm weather we're having at the moment

A Swedish Experience  
Review by Rod Dowling

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As teachers of our mother tongue and products of our national culture, we are ambassadors of our respective counties, and in that capacity we prepare students for a sojourn in our beloved homeland. Students can, however, acquire information about another country through research, or through listening to the experiences of a compatriot who has spent time in that country. It is for this reason that I found Mari Manninen's article in Helsingin Sanomat (11.09.05) particularly interesting.

Based in Stockholm, Mari Manninen functioned as a foreign correspondent for Helsingin Sanomat for three years. When she returned home she wrote the article referred to above, in which she listed five aspects of Swedish society that surprised her.

### 1. Weird rules

The social rules are different from those in Finland. Initially Swedes are easy to talk to because they are masters of small talk. They give Finns an impression of self-importance when they inquire

about one's health and general wellbeing, and invite one's opinion on various issues. Problems arise, however, if a Finn dares to directly contradict what a Swede has just said. If a Swede says, "Lovely warm weather we're having at the moment," one shouldn't say, "Well, yes, but I think it's time we had some rain." The correct response would be to say something like, "Yes, it has been lovely, hasn't it. But don't you think it's time we had some rain?"

In their private lives Swedes avoid conflict and disputes. The ideal discussion ends in total consensus. In the public arena, however, they air their differences in the daily press.

### 2. Fennophilia

Mari discovered that Swedes do not have the same love-hate relationship towards Finns, as Finns have towards Swedes. They either like Finns, or are totally indifferent. Hate and envy do not enter the equation, despite the success of Nokia, just friendly rivalry.

### 3. A Class Society

Another feature of Swedish society that surprised her was the deep

seated class mentality that she encountered in a country that ostensibly espouses egalitarianism. She often heard sentences like "I come from a traditional working class family," or "My family has belonged to the middle class for several generations"

### 4. Linguistic subjugation

According to Ms Manninen Finland as a bilingual country appreciates linguistic diversity. Sweden on the other hand has tried, and continues to try, to stifle minority languages. Immigrants are dissuaded from speaking their mother tongue during lunch breaks through comments like, "In Sweden we speak Swedish."

### 5. Neophobia

Swedes love security and fear far-reaching changes, which is to be seen in the political arena. The Conservatives take great pains to convince voters that if they were elected, they wouldn't institute major changes.

Mari Manninen ends her article by graciously saying that despite their faults, Swedes are wonderful.

Dear Reader! Here are some illustrations and column headers used in Ope no.1 and 2. The "rain man" was originally designed by Les Hyde



UNION

REPORT

ställer oss på våra utländska arbetskamraters sida, de behöver vårt stö

..... from the chairperson

BOARD MEMBERS

← ...and YES, this is an imprint from a beer bottle! Must have been happy editing sessions!

## New Material for English

LONGMAN presentation 10.09.05

Review by Rod Dowling

rodney.dowling@kielipalvelu.inet.fi



Our first and presumably only academic event for the autumn has now been held. Because of the lack of interest expressed in a Macmillan presentation scheduled for spring 2005, I was somewhat sceptical as to the likelihood of success for this event. To prevent acute embarrassment, I also sent out invitations via the Workers' Colleges in Espoo, Vantaa and Helsinki. As the organizer of the event I am naturally biased, so it may be an exaggeration when I say it was a resounding success. About 30 persons attended the occasion, of which Pam-Lingua members were in the minority. However, I must thank two of our Spanish-speaking members who sensed the desperation in my flyer and attended the presentation, even though it was organized specifically for English teachers.

The first part of the presentation dealt with Longman's TOTAL ENGLISH series. Only two levels are currently on the market – the elementary and pre-intermediate levels. The Total English course package includes a student's book, DVD/Video, Cassettes/CDs, workbook with and without catch-up CD-ROM, teacher's resource book and a pending website.

The Total English student's book has been written with a particular reality in mind: that students need to be interested and engaged in every lesson in order to learn, and that all the students won't come to all your lessons. Students who miss a class can make use of the reference and practice pages at the end of each unit, which provide a ready reference to the grammar points taught in each unit. The practice page encourages students to use the new language and structures along with what they have learnt in previous units. Each chapter has been set the task of providing students with specific linguistic abilities. In other words there is a

“can do“ target. Students are taught the necessary vocabulary and grammar and given the necessary practice so that by the end of the chapter they can perform the target linguistic function.

An incentive for attending the presentation was a free copy of a TOTAL ENGLISH textbook. The layout of the pre-intermediate book seems engaging enough with good-quality photographs and interesting topics such as money, travel, music, taste and work.

The student's book is available with a DVD, which has a short film or film clips for each unit. The student's book includes “film bank” pages with comprehension activities to be used with the DVD, as well as transcripts of the tapes available for use with the books. The DVD is supposed to feature authentic English. This claim generated some lively discussion after we had watched a sample from the DVD. The audience was perhaps ready to acknowledge that the language was authentic, but questioned whether some of the situations portrayed in the DVD gave a realistic picture of modern British life and the way people communicate with each other. There was also the question of whether the material was too difficult for students at these levels.

According to the Longman speaker, Nick Dawson, the Total English syllabus and learning objectives correlate with those of the Common European Framework. Developed through a process of scientific research and wide consultation, it provides a practical tool for setting clear standards to be attained at successive stages of learning and for evaluating linguistic skills in an internationally comparable way. The Framework provides a basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications across languages and EU countries, thus facilitating educational and occupational

mobility. It is increasingly being used in the reform of national curricula and for the comparison of language certificates. For instance, the Finnish National Certificate of Language Proficiency organized by the University of Jyväskylä under the auspices of the Ministry of Education applies the six-level Framework scale.

They are, respectively, A1/A2, B1/B2, C1/C2.

C1/C2 persons are proficient users of the target language. At C2 level (equivalent to Cambridge Proficiency) users can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read and can summarise information from different sources in coherent fashion. They can express themselves fluently and precisely and differentiate finer shades of meaning.

C1 users (at Cambridge Advanced level) can understand a wide range of demanding texts and recognize implicit meaning. They can express themselves clearly without marked searching for expressions and can produce structured text using connectors and cohesive devices.

B1/B2 users are regarded as independent users of the target language. B2 users (at Cambridge first certificate level) can understand the main ideas of complex text, and can interact with native speakers with a degree of fluency that enables interaction without strain for either party.

B1 users (at PET level) can understand the main points of text or spoken language on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.

People at A1/A2 level are basic users of the language. A2 persons (at KET level) can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. and can produce simple connected text on familiar topics of

personal interest. The Total English pre-intermediate textbook is targeted at persons at the A2 level and aspires to raise them to the B1 level, whereas the elementary textbook tries to raise A1 users (beginners) to a higher A2 "elementary" level.

A1 users have minimal language skills. They can interact in a simple

way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help. More specifically they have command of very basic phrases which enable them to satisfy concrete needs. They can answer personal questions and can introduce themselves and others.

That in a nutshell is what I managed to glean from this pre-

sentation. After a short coffee break the speaker described some of the features of the latest update to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. Suffice it to say that I shall be adding it to my collection, unlike Joel Pottala, who opined that he needs another dictionary like he needs a hole in the head.

## The Incomprehensible Zone revisited

Re: Ope 49 ...you don't speak Finnish?

By Daryl Taylor

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Paul Whybrow's contribution in Ope 49 (*What! – you've been here how long and you still don't speak Finnish?*) was one of the most interesting discussions I have seen for a long time on a common but too little-discussed phenomenon. Paul is an English-speaking immigrant who has been unable to progress as far or as fast as he would wish to in learning the Finnish language.

Paul's piece is quite long and detailed, and as proofreader for Ope 49 I found it necessary to punctuate his "stream of consciousness" writing style, both literally and metaphorically. I shall try to give a fair summary of each element in his problem and discuss various aspects of it.

Paul begins with a quotation from Wilhelm von Humboldt: "Languages cannot be taught... one can only create the conditions for language learning to take place." I must confess to some trouble in figuring out what this means, as it seems to me that all teaching amounts to "creating conditions for learning to occur", but perhaps it is this insight that von Humboldt was trying to convey: a teacher is essentially a learning facilitator. There is a logical connection between teaching and learning that is in many ways similar to the connection between, say, gardening and plant growth. I shall return to this point.

Although Paul is a language teacher writing in a magazine that is largely read by language teachers,

his interest in this case is language learning: specifically Paul's own lack of progress in learning Finnish. His problem is also far from uncommon, particularly among English-speaking immigrants. There is a stark contrast between some English-speaking immigrants (not necessarily native speakers of English) who seem to acquire the very highest standard of Finnish reached by adult learners and others who seem to be unable to achieve even threshold competence.

Paul denies that the problem is motivation or effort. He has taken the time to attend a variety of courses and work with various standard textbooks. He also confesses to considerable frustration at his own inability to decipher communications within his own family leaving him "marginalized in the life I now live". Social interactions with the extended Finnish family are seriously stilted by this inability, as are many practical transactions in daily life. With a clear and obvious focus on listening comprehension, Paul suggests that his problem is word recognition: "What I hear just seems to run into a drone of indistinguishable babble!" He cites an argument from Deborah Swallow to the effect that this is due to the inherent complexity of the Finnish language and particularly its inflection system. He also refers to certain negative learning experiences from those courses ("a very difficult language", "nothing can usefully be said until

you have learned all the cases"), and to specific difficulties with Finnish phonetics.

The fact of living in a Finnish-speaking society is of limited help because so many helpful people are willing to use English. Transactions that begin in Finnish are therefore easily deflected onto English, in which communication is more fluent. Furthermore, Finnish speakers typically have little experience of using simplified Finnish to communicate with learners, and a low tolerance threshold for inaccurate Finnish. These features tend to frustrate the "trial and error" process by which language learning often advances.

As a professional educator, Paul suggests that Finnish language learning materials could recognize a greater variety of learning styles, including those that approach the language as an instrument and not as a formal code. It would also be helpful if Finnish speakers could become more "learner friendly". He appeals for guidance from anyone who may have tackled such learner difficulties with any degree of success.

On reading Paul's piece more than once, it occurs to me that the alleged complexity of the Finnish language is a complete red herring in the discussion. Taken as a communication instrument, Finnish (or any other language for that matter) need be no more complex than the message to be communicated. A description of weather conditions will usually be

simple in form, while a description of why a clause in an employment contract is invalid because of a term in a collective agreement will be of much more complex structure. Finnish, like any language, has its own unique way of dissecting the world of fact and experience, but needless complexity is no part of this. Deborah Swallow's observation that learning a word in Finnish involves learning 34 possible forms of that word is simply the kind of tosh that you hear from people with only the most superficial grasp of the Finnish language.

It is vital to understand that grammar is at best merely common law; not statute and still less Divine edict, and that even this common law is regional and in other ways sectoral. Intelligible communication is necessarily prior to grammar, which is at best merely a description or codification of the assumed rules of intelligible communication as practised. If successful communication occurs using "ungrammatical" forms, then this is merely a new, hitherto uncodified type of language use. If the new forms are widely adopted, then the grammarians will be forced to follow, however unwillingly. The case endings in Finnish are simply a device for expressing certain kind of concrete and abstract relations between things. Their uses are broadly stable and predictable.

Thus when my 8 year-old warns me that "keittiössä on hämähäkki" and I don't hear her clearly or don't understand one of the nouns, then I ask "missä?", "mikä?" or "mitä?" depending on the information that I think I missed. I can internalise the basic structure here very easily and then recognise it and apply it in an unlimited variety of contexts without ever "learning" the inessive case in any formal sense. And for anyone who remains sceptical of how much can be learned in this way, I should add that the far more "advanced" temporal construction is hardly more than a slight variant on this simple structure. Both reading and listening comprehension are very largely matters of recognising

patterns of this kind, not individual words.

In the classroom I might expect to see this taught, at least initially, through the good old substitution drill ("keittiössä on hämähäkki" – "koira" – "keittiössä on koira" – "olohuone" – "olohuoneessa on koira" etc.), followed by progressively unstructured communicative activities. Perhaps it's a methodological prejudice on my part, but I think this would respond to Paul's plea for a less overtly structure-based approach.

It occurs to me that motivation to learn is not a decision first taken and then implemented, but more of an inference from actual behaviour patterns (ask yourself "how do I know that I am really motivated?"). It follows from this that we are not necessarily even aware of our own motivations. I may swear to everyone that Helsinki is a safe city to live in, but if I avoid the Central Railway Station in the late evenings and pay for a taxi to bring my children home so that they don't need to travel through this part of town, then it is clear what I really think, however much I may consciously deny this or rationalise my choices. Motivation to learn must similarly be read from actual choices made and risks taken in real situations. I should also add that once behaviour patterns have become established (as "survival strategies", if you like), then they may not be easy to change.

Paul describes the experience of being "deflected onto English", but I prefer to recall the (admittedly extreme) example of "world citizen" C.B. Hall in his dealings with the Kotka police back in the late 1980s. Hall was involved in a series of deportation interviews, each of which took several hours because he insisted on using the Finnish language. On the third occasion it proved impossible to deport him, in part because his command of the Finnish language gave him a tie to Finland that outweighed the grounds for deportation. At least part of that command was the result of sheer bloody-minded obstinacy in insist-

ing on using Finnish when dealing with public officials. Been there, done that. Bloody-minded obstinacy is simply a species of motivation viewed from a certain angle.

I have just completed six years of service as Vice-Chairperson of a national advisory board, of which about half of the members were immigrants. This involved spending hundreds of hours in committee meetings in which some participants were speaking Finnish as a foreign language. At least in this context I can testify that Finnish civil servants have an acceptable tolerance for non-standard or "incorrect" Finnish. In fact, I felt that this tolerance greatly exceeded my own (as I sat in the meetings, muttering the missing possessive suffixes and correcting the case endings under my breath). More than once when chairing a meeting I would begin to summarise a contribution from an immigrant member, only to be gently advised by the Finnish-speaking members that this was not necessary. Indeed the fact is that much of the formal grammar of written Finnish is redundant in normal conversation and native speakers can quite well understand the speech of even quite elementary level learners. This is why persistent "errors" in learner speech often go uncorrected in native speaker contexts.

To return to the point about gardening and plant growth, I think it fair to say that just as an over-zealous or dogmatic gardener may stunt the growth of a plant by attempting to force its development in various ways, so an overzealous or dogmatic teacher may do the same to a student's learning process. However, most of the factors that are involved in growth or learning have very little to do with the gardener or the teacher, and are mostly about how the sapling/student responds to the conditions. For a language learner this, in turn, is at least partly a matter of motivation in the proper sense as evidenced in the concrete choices that we make about how we lead our lives.



## “You’ll just have to deal with it”

Observations on the Finnish Health System

By Eddie Bonney

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I had heard a lot about the Finnish health service, both bad and good (most unequal in Europe, yet the most efficient use of available resources), but I had never expected to use its services - that was until one fateful day in July.

It is not a story for the faint hearted. I was one of those two per cent of people (mostly men) who possess a Meckels Diverticulum. It is a small pouch found at the end of the lower intestine - a rare relic of the egg yolk sack that we all have in the womb, and unbeknown to me a bleeding ulcer had developed inside. It had been a good day. I had just been shopping and had bought some new clothes, and I had no sense of what was about to happen.

Walking home to my flat in Puotila I was suddenly overcome by an urgent need to fart. It was then that I noticed that my trousers were wet. I rushed upstairs and into the toilet where about a litre of blood came gushing out of me before I had the chance to sit down. A wave of dizziness overcame me. Fortunately I had my phone with me, and before passing out I managed to alarm my friend in the flat below who had the key to my place. I remember being very frightened at the thought of dying. When I came to I found myself lying in a pool of dark clotted blood with two ambulance men standing over me. I had injured my nose as I fell.

On my arrival in the hospital a female doctor came and examined me, "Not much blood there" she said. The bleeding seems to have stopped. We'll keep you in hospital overnight for observation and then make an appointment to check your hemorrhoids.

"I don't think it is haemorrhoids," I said. I knew instinctively that it was more serious and felt frustrated that the doctor did not seem to be very concerned. Had she spoken to the ambulance men?

How long will I have to wait for the appointment?" I asked

"About a month," she replied. We will let you go tomorrow unless more bleeding occurs".

I was aghast! "I was just lucky that my friend happens to answer the phone when I called."

"You just have to deal with it," she replied curtly.

I brooded. "What to do? Did I have to take my telephone with me every time I visited the loo? Who could I invite to come and stay with me." For a whole month?

Then I remembered the strategy an acquaintance of mine had used. As the nurse hurried about her duties I smiled at her winningly because I did not want to be too confrontational "Excuse me, but if I refused to move until I received treatment, what would the hospital do."

She looked at me perplexed and said, "I really don't know". Later the same evening the doctor visited me again and said, "We will give you an examination tomorrow, after all. But if the endoscope doesn't find anything, you go home. Agree!?"

Fair enough, I thought. However I thought about some frail old age pensioner or some shy youngster in the same position. Would they have stood up for themselves in the same situation. It seems that the Finnish health service favours the strong and determined.

During the next few days I had several more collapses while in the toilet which caused the staff to take my condition more seriously. In one case six nurses had to remove me from a small cubicle toilet. This was reported to me by two friends who were visiting me and observed the whole thing.

All the time my haemoglobin levels deteriorated and I had to have my blood topped up on several occasions.

The situation in which I found myself in was not entirely without risk and I tried to repair some fences. It came home to me that you should never let the sun go down on your anger. I also was worried for my two children and the thought that they would be left without a father caused me some distress.

I was subjected to various procedures in order to locate the problem involving an x-ray where I had to swallow 3 litres of some disgusting liquid the night before, and another where my blood was injected with a radio-active isotope. After the last procedure, a senior looking doctor came into the room and spoke to me (at least I guessed he was senior because he seemed to feel that he could ignore the usual dress codes in a hospital - he was wearing an absurd little woollen green winter cap on his head). He told me that they still had not been able to locate the source of the problem. He offered me two choices: either I could have the operation the same night, or I could wait until the next day to swallow a camera pill.

I really wonder why I was offered the choice. Anxious as I was to get out of hospital I wanted them to do everything possible to find out the problem without cutting me open. An investigative surgical operation, moreover, would also have required quite extensive surgery without any guarantee of success, especially as the source of the bleeding might be (as the surgeon pointed out) just a tiny little pinhole.

Eventually they gave me a camera pill to swallow (the pill took photos at the rate of two a second as it went through my digestive system relaying the information to a pack on my chest. The total cost of one pill is 1400 euros according to one estimate I have seen. It was surprisingly easy to swallow).

Generally the nurses did their best in difficult circumstances. However I did find it frustrating to have to express inadequately my needs and feelings in Finnish as it is not my mother language. The general level of English language skills among the nurses was not very high with some exceptions. I guess this is a problem because nurses with good language skills find it easier to work abroad or in the private sector where there are opportunities for better rates of pay.

The standard of food in Finnish hospitals, moreover, leaves something to be desired. I wondered if they got better food in prison. I also found the sweet juices I was provided with not especially refreshing, and would every so often beg the nurses for a glass of cold milk. I had liked it as a child and developed a taste for it again. In general I think the hospital does its

best, but there are budgetary constraints.

The Finnish NHS is anything but free however. It is true that I received KELA money. However I had to pay about 500 euros in hospital, medical and other related expenses. Moreover, the first 9 days of illness are at your own risk. So for a period a little under a month I ended up with just over 200 euros in my pocket – hardly enough to keep body and soul together.

The recovery period in hospital lasted six days.

The first few days after the operation I was hovering in a limbo between sleeping and waking. The drugs were very powerful, and on the second day after the operation I had what I can only describe as an hallucinogenic dream which, when I think of it now, still sends shudders down my spine. I was also very weak. Even a short visit to the

hospital canteen the day before my discharge caused me to sweat profusely and to fall into a deep exhausted sleep upon my return to the ward.

Finally there came the day of release. I sat outside the Meilahti main entrance waiting for my friend to come to fetch me in her car. My senses seemed to have sharpened after the long illness and the air was deliciously fresh and heavy with the fragrance of flowers after the typical hospital smells of the ward. It was sweet to be alive!

*Editor's Note:* A little follow up on the disease showed that the bleeding type of Meckel's Diverticulum is a very rare occurrence indeed. For more information on Meckel's Diverticulum go to <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000234.htm> - or google it!

## Fractured English Italian Style

For some relief  
By Rod Dowling

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I have always had a soft spot for Italians every since I read the novel, "They're a weird mob," and seen the movie with the same title. They both portend to portray Australians and Australian culture through the eyes of an Italian, but I personally appreciate the problems they highlight of an immigrant Italian seeking to be assimilated into the mainstream of his adopted country. One of these problems was language.

Recently I came across a little piece of Italian English I would like to share with you. I found it on the website [www.sparkycool.com](http://www.sparkycool.com). I am sure with a little imagination you will understand it.

It goes like this:



One day I gonna to Malta to a big hotel. In the morning I go down to eat a breakfast. I tell the waitress that I want two pieces of toast. She brings me only one piece. I tell her, "I wanna t... p...s." She say, "Go to the toilet." I say, "You don't understand. I wanna t... p...s on my plate." She say to me, "You better not piss on the plate, you sonna-

wabitch." I do not even know this lady and she call me a sonnowabitch!

Later I go to eat at a bigger restaurant. The waiter brings me a spoon and a knife but no fork. I tell her, "I wanna a f...k," and she tells me, "Everyone wanna fuck." I tella her, "You don't understand. I wanna f.k on the table." She say, "You better not fuck on the table you sonnowabitch."

So I go back to my room in my hotel and there is no sheets on the bed. I call the manager and tell him, "I wanna a s...t." He tell me to go to the toilet. I say, "You don't understand. I wanna a s...t on my bed." He say, "You better not shit on the bed, you sonnowabitch."

I go to the checkout and a man at the desk he say, "Peace on you my brother," and I say, "Piss on you too, you sonnowabitch. I gonna back to Italy!"

So much for the Italian experience. As we are in Finland, I thought I had better give you an example of a Finnish faux pas I found on another website [www.onestopenglish.com](http://www.onestopenglish.com).

This guy was teaching an intermediate business class in a Finnish company and the students were working hard to improve their conversational skills. The company had recently been acquired by a German corporation who often sent important visitors to Finland.

One of the students, looking a little confused, told the teacher of a visit by some of their German colleagues. She had chatted with them about the magnificent scenery in Lapland and the leisure opportunities available there (travel and tourism being listed as a "safe" topic in the small talk guidelines they had studied the previous week). The German visitors exhibited some discomfort when they were told that they should visit Lapland because there were many krauts there.

At the time she couldn't understand the bleak looks her visitors gave her in response to her comment. Her puzzlement turned into red-faced embarrassment relieved by nervous laughter when she was informed by her teacher that the word she was looking for was "trout" and not "kraut", the slang and disrespectful English word for Germans. If you have similar stories, please submit them to Ope.

## Bi- and multilingual Universities

Conference report and interview with Susan Silverton

By Carmen Boudreau-Kiviaho

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University delegates from around the world converge on Helsinki to talk about multi-lingual universities

From September 1-3, 2005, the University of Helsinki hosted a conference entitled "Bi- and multilingual Universities - Challenges and Future Prospects", which focused on three themes: multi-lingual higher education, the cultural, political and historical context of multi-lingual education and multilingualism in practice at the university level. The issue of English as a world language and the impact of globalization were central courses of discussion as well. Delegates came from all over the world including Canada, Finland, China, South Africa, the US, several countries in Europe and from around the world. This conference was held on the heels of a report in Helsingin Sanomat that more Finnish universities are offering programs entirely in English.

I caught up with Susan Silverton, who is one of two Vice-Presidents, Academic at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario. Silverton hails from Philadelphia, but has lived in Canada and in France for some period of time. Laurentian University is a unique institution, offering entire degree programs in both of Canada's official languages and being one of only two institutions in the whole country with a bilingual mandate. Susan Silverton tells us more about her time in Helsinki.

**Tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to be the Vice President of Academic Issues? You also have a Francophone counterpart is that correct?**

At Laurentian University we have programs in French and in English. There are two Vice-Presidents, Academic, anglophone and francophone. The institution has about 8000 students; approximately 70% of students are enrolled in programs given in English. We have five faculties, Science and Engineering, Management Studies, Social Sciences, Humanities, and a combined Applied Health Sciences and Education faculty. I came to Laurentian in 2004 from Las Vegas, where I was the point person for two big changes in the university there: a new biomedical research initiative and a new dental school. At Laurentian, we have a lot of new programs, including a new medical school and five new PhD programs. It is very exciting to see the university stretch and grow.

**How did you come to be involved in the conference "Bi- and multilingual Universities - Challenges**



**and Future Prospects"? Were there any special criteria for participants?**

I came to the "Bi- and multilingual Universities - Challenges and Future Prospects" conference because my institution is one of only two universities in Canada that have a bilingual mandate. Although I spent many years in Montreal, in the French-speaking province of Canada, universities there are monolingual: French or English. As the Vice-President, Academic of the dominant language group, I needed

to understand how bi- and multilingual universities maintain cultural and lingual diversity while providing a rich multicultural, bilingual environment. Programs in two different languages do not mean that the teaching and learning environment is bilingual.

**The conference covered three broad themes: Multilingual higher education, The cultural, political and historical context of multi-lingual education and Multilingualism at the universities in practice. Could you comment on how these themes were explored and discussed during the conference?**

The conference brought out several repeated themes - among these themes there were 2 key issues that I felt gave me a new perspective. The first theme that ran throughout the conference was a discussion about the prevalence of English as a language of communication. A second underlying idea that was repeatedly supported was the importance of maintaining language diversity to preserve cultural diversity. Both of these themes were interpreted in the cultural, political and historical context of

multilingual universities and the governments that support them.

**How was the conference helpful for Laurentian University? Is this a one-off or will there be future conferences with this theme?**

At the conference, Canada was repeatedly used as a model of a bilingual and bicultural country. The impact of the Canadian experience was far greater than I could have expected. It is sobering to realize how our previous history and recent experience with bilingualism has been interpreted internationally. While we have made tremendous progress toward language rights and access to services in each official language, we have ongoing challenges. I would like to attend a future conference on bilingual universities that drills down into these future challenges.

**This conference also included delegates from other Canadian universities; did you have any opportunities to speak with them?**

I was able to speak to and listen to many colleagues from around the

world, Canadian as well as from every continent that attended.

**What did other participants think of the conference proceedings?**

**You met people from all over the world; did any new partnerships blossom out of this conference?**

I hope to be included in the planning of the next conference. I made several good contacts and enjoyed many conversations in several languages.

**On the whole LU is a bilingual institution, but other languages are also considered important at the university level these days, including indigenous languages?**

**How do these other languages play in students' education at Laurentian?**

We have a large indigenous languages population in our region. Most, but not all of the indigenous communities speak Anishnawbe and there is a significant increase in the language and cultural instruction our university is fostering. We now hear those languages spoken and used at the university in cultural events. We are working

with indigenous people's communities to design language recovery programs and to provide for immersion experiences in Anishnawbe. This is just the beginning of a commitment to cultural diversity.

**Was this your first time in Finland? How did you enjoy your time here?**

I have been in Finland before and visited Oulu for a scientific conference. I love Helsinki!

**Any other comments?**

Thank you for your request. I hope that my comments translate my perspective and add to your discourse.

**Thank you Ms. Silverton we appreciate your time and effort. Come back to Finland soon.**

See more on the conference at: <http://www.palmenia.helsinki.fi/congress/bilingual2005/>

Find out more about Laurentian University at:

<http://www.laurentian.ca>

## Editing Ope in the 80s

*Continued from page 4*

In its own small way Ope helped to bring news and advice to our members throughout Finland. It was therefore an essential lifeline for people to hang on to – myself included.

My memories from those days are sketchy. I spent hours in Helsinki University's Porthania computer room laying out Ope pages on their Macs. Desktop publishing was a new and exciting thing in those days, and I welcomed the opportunity to use the PageMaker software on those machines.

My knowledge of page layout was virtually non-existent when I started. I had no idea about columns, fonts, or captions. At first, it was very tempting to get carried away. My early efforts were amazing fruit salads of layout.

They were pretty cool, but virtually unreadable.

Then I hit on an obvious idea: I would study how professional magazines were set out. I learnt to use 3 columns on an A4 page with a 10-point serif font such as Times Roman. The columns were flush along the left side, but jagged along the right. Hyphenation was avoided where possible, and spacing between columns was sufficient to prevent the eye wandering too easily on to the wrong text.

If you come across one of those Opes, you may discover some deviations from these good practices. But at least that's what I remember.

When I was done, I printed the copy on a laser printer and took it along to Tekerä (as it was then). The print run was equal to the number of members, plus some

extra copies for recruiting purposes. So about 250 in all. Each issue was distinguished from the others by having a cover in a different colour.

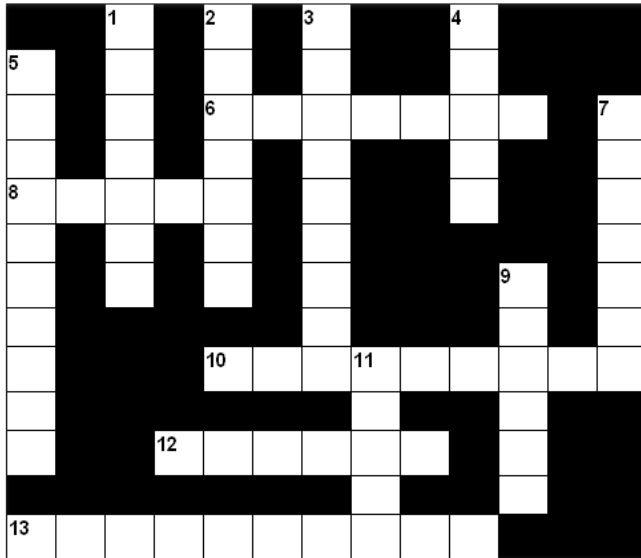
It was always very satisfying to receive my copy of Ope a few days later. It still had that newly printed smell, the clean pages and crisp text. It was my creation.

But of course, Ope wasn't really my creation at all. That was an illusion. My eternal thanks and apologies to all those contributors that I harangued.

*Editor's note:* Peter Shaw has been teaching EFL for many years throughout the Helsinki area and is now working for Nokia. Ope appreciates him picking up the pencil again to write a piece for his old newsletter.

# THE BACK PAGE

Ope's international crossword puzzle on this issue's contents. Have a blast! Solutions on our Website [www.dlc.fi/~michi/pam](http://www.dlc.fi/~michi/pam)



**Across:**

- 6. Home country of Ope editor in chief
- 8. Present working place of Peter Shaw
- 10. Home country of main Ope contributor
- 12. Former name of PAM-Lingua
- 13. Office yuletide bash

**Down:**

- 1. Sometimes smashing (singular)
- 2. Home country of PAM-Lingua chairman
- 3. Big bang
- 4. Either in the nose or down the throat.
- 5. German X-mas tune "O..."
- 7. Bloodsucker
- 9. Public enemy
- 11. Finnish hometown of board member Paul Whybrow

And finally...

**We wish you  
A Merry Christmas  
and  
A Happy New Year**



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