

# Creating Images through English on Yellow Pages: Multilingual Practices in Advertising in the Helsinki Region

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## *1. Introduction: English in Finland*

In recent years Finland, like the other Nordic countries, has experienced an explosion in the use of English in various domains of public and private life. This trend has caught the attention of linguists and laymen alike, and has become a popular topic of scholarly investigation in several language departments and the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland,<sup>1</sup> in addition to being a topic of lively public discussion. With increasing internationalisation, English has become an essential part of the professional life of a steadily growing number of Finns in various fields, be it politics and government, science and education, business, communication and media, transportation, tourism, sports, culture or entertainment. Those Finns who are not actually involved in international affairs are also heavily subjected to English through the mass media, being thus passive consumers of the language.

According to the latest statistics available, 60 per cent of all Finns speak English (*Les Européens et les langues* 2001). The percentage is considerably higher among the younger generations. The number of learners of English increased greatly with the introduction of the comprehensive school system in the 1970s, as the entire age group began to learn a foreign language at the age of nine.<sup>2</sup> English has thus been the first choice for the great majority (more than 90 per cent) for more than

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Haarmann and Holman (2001), Hiidenmaa (2003: 53-107), Latomaa and Nuolijärvi (2002), Moore and Varantola (2004) or Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003). For an on-going project on English voices in Finnish society, see <http://www.jyu.fi/tdk/hum/englanti/EnglishVoices/EVmainpage.htm>. For earlier discussions, see e.g. Sajavaara (1986) and Haarmann (1989).

<sup>2</sup> In the 1950s, German was still the first foreign language. In the 1960s English won the position, but studying foreign languages was largely limited to secondary schools and thus did not reach the whole population.

twenty years. Today almost all pupils include it in their curriculum; e.g. in 2001, 98 per cent of pupils in their last three years of the comprehensive school learned English (*KIMMOKE Loppuraportti* 2001). The fact that English is accessible enough to be intelligible to the majority of the population also makes it possible to use it in intranational contexts. One of the sectors exploiting this potential is the business world, where English is today used extensively in both communicative and non-communicative, purely symbolic, functions.

The use of English in commercial advertising and naming practices is attested on a global scale, and has been addressed in numerous studies on different language communities.<sup>3</sup> The prominence of English in posters, billboards, electric displays and shop signs is now one of the most noticeable manifestations of the global spread of the language (Crystal 2003: 94). This trend is also evident in present-day Finland.<sup>4</sup> In recent years, many originally Finnish companies "going global" have adopted English or English-sounding names as part of their new corporate image. English is also common in the names of companies that operate in the domestic market. In commercial advertising, English is frequently used for key words and slogans, sometimes side by side with Finnish and Swedish, the official languages of the country.

Linguistically, the setting that Finland provides for contact with English differs from the other Nordic countries in two important respects. The first one is the long-standing history of societal bilingualism. At the end of 2002, Finnish was the mother tongue of 92 per cent of the population and the proportion of Swedish speakers was 5.6 per cent.<sup>5</sup> Despite the difference in the proportions of mother-tongue speakers, Finnish and Swedish are officially on equal standing. All Finnish speakers study Swedish at school and Swedish speakers, many of whom are in practice bilingual, study Finnish. Because of official bilingualism Finns are used to seeing languages in juxtaposition in various public contexts. This state of affairs also provides more opportunities for exploiting language-mixing than a monolingual setting would; there simply are more languages available.

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<sup>3</sup> See e.g. Haarmann (1989: 249 ff.), McArthur (2000), Piller (2000), MacGregor (2003) and Schlick (2003), or Friedrich (2002) and the references therein.

<sup>4</sup> For examples of the use of English in the "outdoor media", see Moore and Varantola (2004).

<sup>5</sup> In addition, Lappish and Romany also have the status of minority languages. For discussion of the language situation in Finland, see e.g. Mantila (2001), or Latomaa and Nuolijärvi (2002).

The other crucial difference is typological: unlike the Indo-European Scandinavian languages, Finnish, an agglutinative Finno-Ugric language, deviates greatly from English. This disparity means that the incorporation of English into Finnish utterances is potentially a more complicated process than accommodating it to one of the Scandinavian languages, all lexically and typologically close to English. Complex hybrid forms combining English lexemes with Finnish inflectional endings undoubtedly provide more chances for creativity, but also for confusion.

Like any changes in patterns of language use, the increase of English in advertising in Finland has taken place gradually. It has been claimed that English has ranked high in the strategies of giving fashionable names to Finnish companies and products since the 1980s (Haarmann and Holman 2001: 231; for an analysis with examples, see Haarmann 1989: 258-270). However, American influences already prevailed in advertising in the 1960s, the decade of “creative revolution in the advertising business”, when modern consumer society was rapidly developing in Finland and advertising underwent internationalisation (Heinonen *et al.* 2003: 5-7). There is little actual empirical research documenting the process from a linguistic point of view.<sup>6</sup> This pilot study makes a start to remedy the situation.

The organisation of this essay is as follows: In section 2 we describe our aim, material and method. Section 3 characterises commercial advertising, with a focus on yellow page advertisements. Section 4 discusses motivations for using English for commercial purposes. Sections 5 and 6 present the analysis, and section 7 contains the concluding remarks.

## *2. Aim, material and method*

In order to verify tendencies in the use of English in commercial language practices, we decided to study advertisements on the yellow pages of the Helsinki/Helsingfors telephone directories over the past fifty years. Our hypothesis was that in the early part of the period English would be used rarely and primarily for communicative purposes. We assumed that this would change in the course of time and English would gain non-communicative functions. We set out to investigate whether linguistic

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<sup>6</sup> For recent work from a sociological point of view, see e.g. Heinonen *et al.* (2003) and Kortti (2003).

humour, word play, or any other features connected with more advanced-level use are encountered, or whether some features peculiar to local circumstances could be detected.

As our data we used the telephone directories for the Helsinki region from the years 1953, 1963, 1973, 1983, 1993-1996, 1998 and 2003. The reason for assessing several telephone books from the 1990s was an interesting feature in the 1993 telephone book that we wanted to trace in more detail: the 1993 directory was trilingual, with sector headings and an index in Finnish, Swedish and English. In 1996 the directories returned to a bilingual format, perhaps for economic reasons, but in 1998 it was trilingual again. The early directories were analysed in their entirety; from 1983 on they were skimmed through, with special attention being focused on the fields of beauty and fitness; office/computing and new service branches; advertising and public relations; and new activities imported from the Anglo-American world. In this essay we shall focus on the findings from these sectors, providing some highlights from other fields of business as well.

### *3. Commercial advertising and yellow pages*

Advertising is a form of non-personal communication intended to inform and influence a dispersed audience (Gieszinger 2000: 85). It can be used for a variety of purposes, including political or social ends, or, like the advertisements on the yellow pages, for commercial ends. In modern society, commercial advertisements are part of an “arena permeated by competitive consumption” (Cook 1992: 230), i.e. their main aim is to promote the consumption of a commodity – a product or service – by making potential customers familiar with it and creating a positive attitude towards it. This idea has been central in advertising since the massive breakthrough around the turn of the twentieth century of consumer society, by which “selling became an active strategy whose principal tools were public words and images” (Falk 1994: 151). The decisions made by all advertisers in modern society are said to reflect this competitive consumption context (Graur 1999: 144).

The medium in which the advertisement appears is an important parameter influencing its content and structure. Telephone books contain information in a concise form. The early telephone books in our sample do not expand beyond this basic function, whereas more recently advertisements and various kinds of special offer clipouts have been added. Advertisements on the yellow pages are different from most other printed commercial ads in that

they do not primarily aim at boosting consumption. They are typically directed at people who are looking for an agency that will help them to solve a problem, i.e. they are intended "to inform people where they can obtain the tools they require for need-satisfaction" (Falk 1994: 151). Thus telephone book advertisements can be characterised as being closer to plain consumer information than the standard modern commercial advertisement. Still the telephone book advertisement appears in a competitive context and has to sell the commodity it is set out to advertise. Like other ads, the yellow page advertisement also has to produce a positive end effect of transforming the potential consumer looking for a particular commodity into an actual consumer of the item promoted by the advertiser (Falk 1997: 69).

Printed advertisements generally consist of five elements: headline, illustration, body copy, signature lines identifying the product or brand, and standing or contact details (Leech 1966: 59). The difference between advertisements on the yellow pages and publications such as newspapers or fashion magazines is perhaps best seen in the use of pictures. Whereas other advertising media can make use of multimodal discourse, the telephone books primarily contain verbal messages, sometimes with minor illustrations or sketches; the latest telephone directories also make use of multicolour pictures. The verbal messages are kept short. The brand name, part of the signature line identifying the commodity verbally, is arguably the most central linguistic item of an ad, irrespective of the advertising medium (Piller 2000: 267). Other elements commonly used for identification in modern advertising are a logo and a slogan. The slogan emerged as a feature of commercial advertising during the nineteenth century and the logo in the twentieth century; until the 1980s they were relatively rare (Crystal 2003: 94; Gieszinger 2000: 99-102). The use of multiple identification symbols is one way of coping with increasing competition and information overload; multiple symbols can make advertisements easier to recognise, understand and remember. To put it in other words, they serve "the need to speak more loudly and clearly than competitors" (Falk 1997: 71).

#### *4. Why English?*

The use of English for commercial purposes is motivated by a range of language-external and language-internal factors.<sup>7</sup> The language-external frame is provided by the social context, including the participants in the

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<sup>7</sup> For discussion, see also e.g. Haarmann (1989) and Friedrich (2002).

communicative situation, in this case the advertisers and the target audience of the Helsinki telephone directory. Because of the language-education policy of the past decades, a large proportion of the c. one million inhabitants in the greater capital area today can be expected to be literate in English; in the 1950s the situation was quite different. The number of native speakers of English living in the area has never been very high: in 2002, there were fewer than 6,000 native speakers of English in the whole of Finland, the majority of them residing in the Helsinki area. As a *lingua franca*, English caters for native speakers of many other languages as well: in 2002, the number of inhabitants having to rely at least to some extent on English may have been as high as 95,000 in the whole country,<sup>8</sup> a large number of them in the Helsinki region. In comparison, the proportion of speakers of other than domestic languages in 1950 was only 0.3 per cent of the population, approximately 8,000 people. (*Statistics Finland*.) Also, as a metropolis, Helsinki has always had an international flavour that is likely to be reflected in a utilitarian document that mirrors the sociohistorical reality of the region. With growing internationalisation, the number of foreign visitors unable to understand information in the domestic languages but potentially utilising the yellow pages as a source of information has radically increased in the past decades.

Another social factor reflected in the frequency of English is the increasing internationalisation of the business world, and the fact that a greater number of advertisers today are in fact international companies. Many advertising agencies in charge of creating business images in Finland, as elsewhere, are subsidiaries of American, British or global agencies, for whom English may seem a logical choice. Furthermore, American impact on the growth of the consumer society and on the practices of advertising in general undoubtedly contributes to a tendency to use English. The role of English as a tool for specialised functions in modern society, including the shaping of modern terminologies through transfer of technical terms, is also likely to be reflected in the language of advertisements (cf. Haarmann 1989: 250). The increase of actual international communication, mobility and cultural exchange thus provides an important source for the use of English.

Other extralinguistic factors influencing the use of English include the various symbolic values that are attached to it. They enable advertisers

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<sup>8</sup> This is the figure of citizens of countries other than Sweden living in Finland (*Statistics Finland*).

to appropriate English for creating images of their choice. Particularly in developing countries that are undergoing modernisation, English brand names are often used for creating an image of credibility and superior standards of production. This explanation is not plausible in today's "Nokialand", where the widely recognised high quality of products "Made in Finland" is traditionally a matter of national pride. More valid also in the Finnish context is one of the most frequent explanations for the use of English in brand naming today: its connotation of modernity – crucial for the image of being "in", young, trendy and fashionable (cf. Haarmann 1989).

One of the linguistic properties of English that may make it attractive for commercial purposes is the length of its words: e.g. in comparison with Finnish, short English words are catchy and cost-effective, they take less physical space in signs and advertisements. They are also easy to memorise and repeat. The use of English in combination with the two domestic languages provides additional material for creativity and innovation that is important for catching the customers' attention, thus serving the needs of the genre. Bilingual play on words is attested e.g. in advertisements in German and Italian newspapers, containing forms of punning using elements from English and the native language (see Görlach 2003). In recent years linguistic mixtures have been used in advertisements in Finland, too; an example is *Meri Christmas* (*meri* "sea"), used for advertising cruises at Christmas time. Such mixtures build on Finnish as much as English, and it is the unexpected combination of the two that is supposed to make them work.

### 5. *Frame of linguistic analysis*

As shown above, the international community in the Helsinki region has grown and the need for English in communicative use has been recognised e.g. by providing trilingual telephone directories. The present situation with its multilayered influence of English also creates good conditions for non-communicative use as the potential for understanding messages in English is considerable. It is likely that single, frequently occurring English words are processed almost like Finnish words. Loan words have entered the Finnish language at different times and the degree of accommodation varies, e.g. the tendency to add vowel sounds at the end of the word is very common (*softia*, *swetari*) and makes it easy to add various case endings and treat the words like native ones. Some recent loans, such as *cheerleader*, do not readily fit the Finnish phonological structure and must be accommodated in other ways (see below).

An increase in English language items over time could also be expected. If our hypothesis is right (see 2 above), we should have primarily communicative use to start with, but some more advanced patterns may emerge in later samples; the trend could be from single words to phrases and slogans, from simple to more complex structures and multilayered meanings. Possible patterns include antithesis by placing different statements next to each other in order to emphasize a contrast, playing with words or punning on sound, e.g. using the same sound patterns, homonyms or homophones (same sound/different spelling/different meaning). Other devices may include repetition; amplification and diminution; various tricks and ploys, which are all common in persuasive language (Cockfort and Cockfort 1992: 127-8). The possibility of playing on several languages may also show in the material.

## *6. Telephone directories in a chronological sequence: assessment and discussion*

### **1953 and 1963**

The yellow pages of the 1953 and 1963 telephone directories are very similar in their general appearance, contents and language use. They contain far fewer actual advertisements than the more recent ones. Information is mainly given in lists containing the names, addresses and phone numbers of the companies providing the services. The general impression is that English is fairly rare, as are other foreign languages. English is primarily used communicatively, as we presumed. In the 1953 directory it occurs in company names and, more rarely, in trademarks. Some firms with English names are branches of foreign companies operating internationally, such as *Industrial Overseas Products* and *United Press Association*, or companies involved in foreign trade: *Aura Import*, *Factory Agent*. In some cases English company names are probably targeted at foreign visitors, such as car rentals called *Auto-Pilot* and *Auto-Letting*. English is also found in the names of companies that operate domestically, but are clearly connected with international fashions and styles, and perhaps also importing products. These include the antique shops *Commission*, *Occasion*, *Old-Style* and *Old Home*, and shops selling ladies' and men's wear: *Sir*, *London*, *Old England* and *Master Dress*. Both communicative and symbolic uses of English appear e.g. in the names of



beauty salons, and hairdressers' shops: *Beauty Salon, Fifth Avenue, Lady, Miami, Salon Cosy, Salon New York*. However, in this sector French is far more common for creating images of fashionable style (e.g. *Babette, Belle-Amie, Charme, Fift, La Boite des Parfums, La Mer, Salon Chic, Salon des Dames, Salon Paris*), and other associations – classical, Italian, Spanish – are also found (*Astra, Artemis, Cosmetica, Divina, Donna, Seniorita*). A few restaurants bear English names: *Bowling, Cotton Club, Sea Horse, White Lady*. Only one of the many cafeterias has an element of English in its name, the word *city*, which has since become a frequent epithet in business vocabulary (*City Kahvila* “city café”). Some photographers also use English in their company names, e.g. *Adphoto* and *Royal*. Rarer industries making use of English include the transparent names of *Ribbons, Building, Investment, Machine-care* and *Printing*. New English trademarks in the 1963 directory include coinages like *Topcoat*, and new loans like *Bungalow* for holiday cottages.<sup>9</sup> English occurs in some names combined with informative slogans in domestic languages, e.g. *Reform School of Languages - landets äldsta* “the oldest in the country”.

It is noteworthy that in the early directories other languages are also used in naming practices. Italian, Spanish and French appear occasionally. Latin is more common, occurring in the names of antique shops like *Artistica* and *Lux Väliälyliike*, advertising companies like *Linografica*, and photographers' shops such as *Polyfoto* and *Novofoto*. Company names are sometimes coined with the suffix *-ex* or other forms containing the letter *x*, which never occurs in indigenous Finnish words; the intention is to lend a foreign, perhaps Latinate flavour. This custom is still present in today's company names like *Forex* (< foreign exchange), and many others. The suffix is often added to a foreign stem, real or made-up (*Correx, Copex, Artifex*), or it can be added to a native word. In the latter case it sometimes acquires additional meanings through punning, e.g. a cleaner's name *Pesex* in the 1953 directory sounds exactly the same as the 2<sup>nd</sup> person colloquial interrogative for *Do you wash?*

## 1973

The 1973 yellow pages largely follow the same trends as the earlier ones. The use of *x*-suffixes increases and compounds containing e.g. *-flex, -tex* or

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<sup>9</sup> “A one-storeyed house”, “a house for holiday-makers”, originally “a lightly built house for Europeans in India”; the word has gained additional shades of meaning connected with leisure and good living. The modern sense has spread with small local differences all over Europe. The time of adoption varies from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the late 20<sup>th</sup>. (*DEA* s.v. *bungalow*)

*-lyx* abound in trademarks and company names. Occasional real English words are found in the stem, e.g. *Spraytex*, but most compounds are just foreign-sounding mixtures. Occasional new coinages resulting in compounds like *lymphadrainageterapia* “- therapy” can be found, and signature lines with adjectival use of an English company name are new: *aitoa Luxor Waves laatua* “genuine Luxor Waves quality”. Technical loan words like *offset* are used, and the word *logo* occurs with a Finnish inflection in the ad of an advertising company called *Tähtimuovi* “star plastic”, which promises to produce shop signs *asiakkaan omalla logolla* “with the customer’s own logo”. The word *acryli* “acryl”, also used in the same advertisement, has later been accommodated to the Finnish spelling system as *akryyli*.

The growth of the advertising (Fi. *mainos*) and marketing (Fi. *markkinointi*) business is reflected in the increasing number of companies appearing in the 1973 directory. The names are in Finnish or English, or mixed. All Finnish names are transparent to Finnish speakers, whereas even a fluent English speaker could not connect all of the English names with the business branch in question: *Informex*, *Intersurvey*, *Suomen Gallup*, *Taloustutkimus*, *Mainos-art*, *Briefing*, *Freelancer*, *Interplan*, *Goodwill*, *Juniormainos*, *Artifex*, *Unimark*. Sometimes the name is given in both Finnish and English: *Suomen Markkinatiedot - Finnish Market Facts* and *Marketindex - Markkinaindeksi*. One advertising agency has a signature line indicating partnership with an American company: *Finnad-Gumelius, Osakkaana Compton Partner Agency Network’ssa*.

Gyms were new and few in the Helsinki region in 1973; in general the domestic languages prevail in their names. The first advertisement of “a place for fitness (Fi. *kunto*)” combines Finnish and German: *Kuntola Ruttmann (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Chiro-Gymnastik e.v.)*. *Kuntola* advertised various therapies in German and English: *Chirogymnastik*, *Neuraltherapie*, *Lymph drainage massage*; in the advertisement these terms are accompanied with explanations in Finnish. Beauty salons and hairdressers’ continue to use earlier naming patterns.

## 1983

The impact of English as a tool for specialised functions in modern society, including the shaping of modern terminologies, is also reflected on the yellow pages. The advent of the computer age in the 1980s can be seen in

the 1983 directory in trademarks and company names like *Apple Computer*, *Prime Computer* and *Finland International Computer*. Productive endings in company names naturally include the word *data*, derived from Latin through English, and other English words connected with the field, like *Datapoint* or *Softway*. But perhaps rather surprisingly the Finnish word *tieto* “information, knowledge” is at least equally productive, yielding compounds like *Tietoavain* “- key”, *Tietokanava* “- channel”, *Tietoura* “- career”, *Tietolinke* “- link” and *Tietotyöt* “- girls”.

Hairstyles are important in creating personal images. French continues to symbolise beauty business in the names of hair salons (*Chacun*, *Chez*, *La Femme*), but English is also frequently used. Most of the English names are stereotyped, such as *Beauty City*, *Beauty Hair* or *Best Salon*, but some surprises occur, too: *Dizzy*, *Finnstar*, *Black and White* and *Polar Hair*. Some names have cultural connotations. A cult film has inspired the name of *Bonnie & Clyde*, and Shakespeare’s lovers have lent their name to *Romeo ja Julia*, using the Finnish form of the names. The particularly appropriate name of a fairy tale figure is found in *Goldilocks* and its Finnish equivalent *Kultakutri*. Several hair salons have Finnish names with some inventive and humorous touches, e.g. *Päämaja* “headquarters”. A rather sophisticated cultural pun occurs in *Ylähuone*, the Finnish term for the House of Lords, literally “upper room”.

The advertising business expands, and company names become more diverse, containing purely Finnish or English names, and various types of hybrids and made-up words: *Ammattimedia* “professional media”, *Admark*, *Markkinointi Elo* “marketing Elo”, *Ilmoitusmiehet* “announcement men”, *Tradver*, *Pressmark*, *Helsingin Kilpi- ja Mainosmaalaamo* “Helsinki sign and advertisement painting house”, *Finn-Mareka*, *Modulex*, *Kilpex*, *Zorro*, *System-Text*, *Mainostoimisto aadee* “advertising agency a d”, *MainosPoint* “advertisement point”, *Copywriting Hot Shop – Tekstitehdas* “text factory”. A public relations office called *PRick-PRint* has clearly chosen its name on the basis of the suitable initials, probably unaware of the rather unfortunate connotation of the name for native speakers of English. Firms importing and selling company gifts are new. Their names are almost exclusively in English: *Company Image*, *Sweet Time*, *Top-Print*, *Top Media*, *Moonstyle*, *Day-Dream*, *West City*, *Eurosales*.

Gyms increase in number, and English gains ground (*Helsinki Gym*, *The Fitness Center*, *Free Time Club*), but Finnish is found as well (*Hoikkakunto* “thin fitness”). A trace of the period is seen in *HI-Man*

*Sportin Universe Gyms Kehonrakennussalit*, where the meaning of the word *gyms* is for the sake of clarity glossed with a Finnish equivalent. One of the gyms uses a slogan *Bodi on mun koti* "body (Fi. *vartalo*) is my home". Dancing schools also increase in number. An older trend of using the teacher's name as the company name continues (*Aira Samulin, Tanssikoulu Blomqvist* "dance school Blomqvist"), but more imaginative English names are also found: *Tap-Step, Dance Factory*.

In addition to the earlier *-ex*, a new productive suffix *-set* gains ground, e.g. *Silkkiset, Kotkaset*. In these bilingual puns the English *set* coincides with the Finnish nominative plural of nouns ending in *-nen*, a common ending in family names, also used as a diminutive. Thus the name of a company called *Ketjuset* can actually be understood in three ways: "chain set", "small chains" or "the Ketjunens". Compounds combining e.g. English adjectives and Finnish nouns are common: *Economic Kaluste* "furniture". Some advertisements retain original English terms that are glossed in Finnish, e.g. *euro-routing opastinjärjestelmät* "routing systems". English slogans begin to increase, even with Finnish company names. Examples are provided by advertisements of a translation firm *Kielitalo - we mean business* ("language house") and *Mainoslahja - full service* ("business gift").

## 1993

In 1993 the yellow pages became trilingual, with sector headings and index in Finnish, Swedish and English, resulting in sequences like *Akvarioita / Akvarier / Aquariums & supplies* or *Laakereita / Lager / Bearings*. The change is significant as the status given to English is thus raised from EFL to L2.

Naming practices in the new industries remain much the same. The computer business relies on English elements with names like *Compupro, Data-Helsinki, Data Partners, Data-Anne, Datatrans*, and, perhaps more commonly, mixtures like *Nuordata* ("new, young"), but purely Finnish compounds containing the native equivalent for *data / information* are found as before: *Tietopari* "- couple", *Tietonauha* "- tape", *Tietotehdas* "- factory", *Tietovoima* "- power".

In the beauty business English names proliferate; examples are provided by *Pivot Point, Dream Hair, Lady Style, New Image Salon System, Blue Dream, Deep Lifting, Hair and Beauty Shop*, and *White Lies*. Mixed forms occur as well (*Hiusmuotoilu Updata* "hair stylist update"), and there

are several Finnish names that have special, often funny, connotations, such as *Pörröpää* “shaggy head”, *Säkkärä* “frizz”, or the somewhat puzzling *Puuteripupu* “powder bunny”. An advertisement for nail studio services creates a hybrid formation *Light-concept-kynsistudiopalvelut*.

A peculiarity is the use of the apostrophe, which seems to have spread from English into non-functional use in names. The original use is found in names with possessives like *Cat's Pride*, *Tina's Style*, *Salon Diana's*, or marking abbreviated forms like *Cuttin' Club*. But it also occurs in a hairdresser's name *In' hair* and even in the Finnish *Hius' vinkki* (*hius* “hair”, *vinkki* “tips”), where the only function seems to be the imitation of English. Other unexpected uses of the apostrophe include *conform'able systems* in an advertisement for shoes.<sup>10</sup>

Some new and productive coinages include short words like *zoo* with place names, e.g. *Malmi Zoo*, a local pet shop. Service branches exhibit English names with already established loans like *city* and *centre*, but some new ones, too. These include *Business Service*, *Help*, *Clerical*, *Businesslink*, *TipTop*, and *Office Team*. Advertising companies continue to parade new English names, such as *Badge Man* or *Fasten*, but Finnish as well, like the creative *Kilpikonna* “turtle”, where the first part of the compound is one of the Finnish equivalents for *sign*. The film business uses familiar phrases like *Also Starring*, but some names have a more artificial flavour, like *Smile Audiovisual* or *Image Audiovisual*. Public relations agencies use names like *PR-Consulting*, *PR-Group*, *PR-Image*. English names occur in other branches as well, e.g. *Print Center*, *Printing Belik*, *Knit & Wear*.

## 1998

The 1998 directory is trilingual as well, with English in a fairly prominent position. Some new trends can be noticed. For example, a very productive ending from the Helsinki slang *-is*, is now attached to English words, too, e.g. for physiotherapy one can go to *Helppis* or *Fysiosporttis*. New fields include graffiti cleaning services, with names like *Graffi-clean*, *PR-clean*, *Rose Road*, but also *Stadin puhtis*, where *Stadi* is the slang name for Helsinki and *puhtis* formed with the suffix *-is* from a stem meaning clean. Another slang name for Helsinki occurs in the strange hybrid *Hesasbest raksystems*, where *rak* is

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<sup>10</sup> This type of (mis)use of the apostrophe in native speakers' writing is one of the main topics discussed in Truss (2003), a best-seller of the winter 2003/4.

probably an abbreviation of Finnish *rakennus* “building” – the name can be interpreted as “the best building company of Helsinki”.

Other new fields include *Copter Action* and *Helitour*, and a company called *Sky Breakers*, which in addition to *benjihyppyjä* “bungy jumping” also provides *stuntman-toimintaa* “stuntman services”. Caps with logos were a new fashion, perhaps connected with the rising popularity of golf, or imitating American baseball caps. Their production was connected with company gifts and dominated by English names, like *Brodeeraustalo HEF* (*House of Embroidery Finland*). This is the first time that we observed an English acronym for a Finnish company; the 2003 directory adds a quality statement of fame in the US as well. Other companies in the field also have English names: *Logo Door* and *Micke's*, which in the 2003 catalogue is spelled *Mickey<sup>s</sup>*, with the final superscript *s* visually resembling an apostrophe. Golf is dominated by English: *Golf-service*, *Golf-house*, *Golf-company*, *Golf-center*, *Classic Golf*, *Nevada Bob's Golf Superstore*, with occasional native compounds like *Golf-soppi* “- corner” and *Golf-resepti* “- recipe”.

It is somewhat startling that most security firm and alarm equipment advertisements are in English, like the following advertisement: *Detective Agency Exact-Find. Personsearch, following, protection, proofs, business-partners, checks ... 100% silence gar. Swedish, english [sic], spanish [sic] spoken 50 USD*. As the price is given in dollars, the target audience is probably not domestic, but reflects Helsinki becoming more international. Security services are also provided by *Telealert*, and *Defa Auto Security* adds an English slogan *To serve and protect*. Guns are also sold in English: *Classic Fieldsport*, *Finn Enterprise*, *Old Armoury*, *Gun Corner*, *Helsinki Shooting Club*, *Race Gun*, and so forth.

A hybrid form with a double use of the syllable *ma* is found in a company name focusing on renovating windows *SAUMASTERS*, joining Finnish *sauma* “seam” with English *masters* together so neatly that the seam cannot be detected. French and English are combined with Finnish in *Chic Catering Juhlalpalvelu* “party service”. Some very new business fields have no names in Finnish, so that Finnish companies offer e.g. *Franchising-konsultteja* “franchising consultants”.

Various fields of entertainment use English names, sometimes with humorous touches: *Noise House*, *Disco Enterprise*; the most innovative creation is a version of the Finnish family name Laitinen, spelled in the English way in the company name *LIGHTinen*. Features of American “high life” have entered Helsinki, e.g. it is possible to have fun by riding

with *International Limousine System* or *Limousine Transfer Helsinki*. Pet shops and veterinary clinics use English, e.g. *Eläinkauppa Petpost*, *Solid Gold*, and *TuusVet*, which combines the beginning of a town name *Tuusula* with the English *vet*.

A more varied use of foreign languages is found in second-hand shops and antiquarian bookstores. Second-hand clothes are sold in shops called *Play it again Sam*, *Old-Joy*, *Country Rose*, *Liisa's*, *Tomorrow's antique*. Second-hand books shops rely on Latin, e.g. *Laterna magica*, *Anno domini*, *Libris*, *Interfennica*, or Italian, like *La Reido*. *Divary* is a foreign-looking variation of the homely *divari*, a slang word for an antiquarian bookshop.

Swedish is present in some combinations, but not frequently, e.g. *Ny-net*, *Byrodata* [*sic*]. Words that could be either Swedish or English are used in new coinages, like *tips* in *Nikotips*, a tobacco shop with lottery.

Slogans and catchy lines become more common, e.g. *Jetfix 1 day service*, *Bitwit a bright idea*, *Improvator - We improve your system*. Some English lines are fairly long, e.g. *Finn Hansa 1st Office Baltic Business Software*. A slogan built on bilingual word play is found in *CAD Center - CADestä pitäen*. When read as a single word, the slogan containing *CAD* becomes Fi. *kädestä pitäen* "led by the hand". This is probably the most creative use of English adapted to local uses, and the target group is clearly domestic.

## 2003

In 2003, the trends found five years earlier continue. English abounds in beauty and fitness sectors. Fitness centres include *Blue Fitness*, *Finnbody*, *City Gym*, *Hot Gym*, *Silver Gym*, *Move! Wellness Center*, *Ideal fit*, *Let's Go Center*, dance lessons can be attended in *PilviSteps* ("cloud steps"). A large number of hairdresser's and barber's shops have English names. *Salon Hair West*, *Salon Sir*, *Clippers*, *Design Point*, *Hair Gate*, *Hair Space*, *Shortcut*, *Shaggy Head* and *Top-Hair* illustrate some common naming practices. *Micro-Maid*, *A4Com* or *QFIX & Mr. Quicks* offer help for problems with IT equipment. Companies providing temporary workers include *A 1 Business Service*, *Banquet Service*, *Capital Restaurant Services*, *Businesslike*, *Star People*, *Personnel*, *Materent*, *Manpower* and *Search & Selection - S & S Consulting*, hybrid formations *Proffis* and *Poolia*, and the Latinate *ProSelectum*. The English words *Center*, *Shop*, *Group*, *Service* and *Systems* are commonly used to form compounds with Finnish general or proper nouns.

Some new trends can also be found. New fields like virtual offices use English names: *Nova Call - Your contact center partner*, *Call Waves solutions*, *Virtual Office*. Veterinary services have the English component *vet* in common use now, e.g. in *Equivet*, *Vetek*, *VetSet*; Latin occurs in *Anident* and *Felina*. Other Latin names include *Juridicus*, *Unio mystica* and *Nova*. Creations of a new type making conscious use of English homophones are found e.g. in *Best Shop 4 Pets*. Hybrids and mixtures are common, such as *Voltmen* (electricity), *Apu Team* ("help team"), *Nettoy* and *Optospecial*. Driving schools use English names like *My Way*, *Young Drivers*, *Cool Drivers* and *Bestway*, but also Italian *Strada*, which in fact already occurred in the 1953 directory. In general, cars and services connected with them favour English mixtures, e.g. car washing services are provided by *Shining Center*, and *Ruoholahden Car Wash & Fix* or *Espoon Auto Cleaner*, both containing a Finnish genitive form of a place name. Windscreens are provided by *Smart Repair*.

Slogans continue to increase. Many slogans are in fact Finnish, but English also occurs. *FCS Logistics* attracts customers by the assurance *We take care*. A somewhat startling catchline from a feminist point-of-view *It's a MAN's world* occurs in a truck-drivers' announcement, making use of the pun in the name of the German MAN Group producing e.g. diesel engines. Some slogans use mixed language: *Wayne's Catering - Tilaisuus, jossa Wayne keittraa, on tuore* "an occasion where Wayne caters is fresh". The 3rd person present tense form *keittraa* is an adaptation, likely to occur in casual speech.

## Conclusion

This survey of multilingual practices on the Helsinki yellow pages provides a fifty-year perspective on the use of English, as well as other foreign languages, for commercial purposes in Finland. Major changes have taken place in the external social context during the period under scrutiny: Finland has experienced whole-scale modernisation and in particular the Helsinki region has undergone rapid technological development into a hi-tech information society, new business fields have emerged, internationalisation has taken place, and commercialisation and consumerism prevail, at least on the yellow pages. The English-language skills of Finns have also greatly improved during the past decades, making the use of English possible without sacrificing intelligibility. Language use requiring more advanced levels of fluency has also become possible: various types of word play and bilingual puns occur frequently in the recent



samples. All this has contributed to the growing impact of English on commercial language practices, mirrored in the escalating use of English on the yellow pages over time. In comparison with English, other languages have a relatively small role in commercial language use. Exceptions are French, which is common especially in the beauty business, and Latin, which has remained productive in naming practices throughout the period. At the same time, the conscious cultivation of the national languages in Finland is also manifested, e.g. in the application of native words in compounds in the IT sector.

The use of English is often explained by connotations of modernity. An English-language brand, trademark, company name, or slogan lends a commodity an up-to-date, fashionable and youthful image. In our data this trend is already attested in the 1950s sample but becomes increasingly common over time. However, an opposite connotation can be verified in the data as well, since English also occurs e.g. in the names of shops selling antiques. Rather than modernity, the choice of language in such cases symbolises conservative values of a long Western tradition of high living-standards. It also links up with cultural stereotypes, in this case with traditional English country style and an upper-class way of life.

Some of the new names and coinages in our material are in a language imitating English but not quite what native speakers would use. The aimed effect may be achieved via an association or connotation in the Finnish language, but would be incomprehensible to native speakers of English. What we have in these cases is English in Finland, intended for Finnish speakers – “Finglish” in a new sense, intended for intranational use. Cultural imperialism of the use of English gains new dimensions as it becomes coloured by local and national features; English in EFL and L2 countries is not a monolithic entity. The non-communicative use of English in an intranational context needs to be seen in a new light, reflecting local habits as well as cultural conventions and national stereotypes.

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