The EU asks its citizens to learn the languages of their neighbours and linguistic minorities, and Russian is historically and geographically such a language in Finland. Our paper focuses on different registers of Russian language learning and use and attitudes towards Russian. These attitudes can be subdivided into four categories: enthusiasts, uninterested and unconcerned, Russophobes ("haters"), realists and pragmatists, with one person sometimes espousing all four. At present, we observe a rise in the number of realists, a new neutral attitude among youngsters (Russian as a useful language without special feelings), and a diversification of interests: there is a strong motivation to learn and use Russian in Eastern Finland, an idea to turn some historical monuments, natural objects and music festivals into places of attraction for the Russian tourists, and flexibility in the visa-issuing policy, in adaptation to tourists’ needs, and even in Finnish culinary habits. Quite a lot of printed materials appear in Russian for immigrants and tourists, and in May 2013, the Finnish TV has started to show news in Russian. From borrowing of special words thousand years ago to contemporary Finnish-Russian and Russian-Finnish pidgins, from first dictionaries of Russian to inscriptions and advertising in contemporary linguistic landscape, from first Orthodox missionaries and Russian ambulant merchants to the biggest immigrant minority and Russia as one of the most influential trade partners of Finland – the history of mutual influences is fascinating.

Keywords: Russian, language ideologies, language commodification.